

Candidate Questionnaire on Housing Issues

2022



Jeremy Vinar

City/Town: Alexandria

Legislative District: HD 12B

Party: DFL

Candidate responses in italics.

1. In July 2021, a [national poll](#) found that 68% of the public believes that elected officials are not paying enough attention to the rising cost of housing and ensuring everyone can afford a place to live. **What do you believe is the role of government in ensuring everyone has a place to call home?**

I believe housing is a human right and the government stands to benefit from ensuring everyone has a home. Providing housing eliminates the costs associated with homelessness and provides opportunity for upward economic mobility.

2. Nearly all counties in Minnesota (92%) are not able to provide sufficient shelter or temporary housing to those who are homeless. **What will you do to end homelessness?**

I will lobby for more LGA to provide HUD assistance as well as expansion of the TIF programs, increasing partnerships with investors and builders to increase the supply of affordable housing options. I will also fight against efforts to monopolize local rental markets.

3. Emergency rental assistance keeps people stably housed, as we saw with federal pandemic-related funding. Historically, nonpayment of rent is the most common reason landlords evict their tenants. During times of financial crisis, families without access to financial resources may be displaced, evicted, or even become homeless. **What will you do to prevent evictions?**

I will vote and support legislation to ensure emergency funding is sufficient to meet demand and expand the ways in which people are notified of available assistance. I will also support measures to temporarily supplement funding for landlords of individual properties dependent on rental income, for tenants whose ability to pay rent may be interrupted.

4. Minnesota's housing crisis disproportionately harms families of color, especially Black and Indigenous households. Minnesota is one of the worst states in the nation for racial disparities in homeownership. Additionally, 58 percent of Black renters are paying more than they can afford on housing costs. **What meaningful steps will you take to eliminate racial disparities in housing?**

I would support policy initiatives that erase racial disparities in housing, such as most strictly enforcing FHA laws that prevent discrimination and proactively promote integration in housing. I would also bolster housing vouchers and equal pay, especially for families with children in extreme low income.

5. There are approximately 170,000 renter households in the state that earn less than \$31,200 per year. But rental assistance is only available to one out of every four income-qualifying households. Even though more than 100,000 lowest income households need homes, the state only supports the production of 100 homes each year for these families. **What will you do to support the housing needs of those at the lowest income level in Minnesota?**

I would again support the housing voucher program and fight against discrimination that hinders the ability for renters to use vouchers in the neighborhoods of their choosing. I would also support enforcement of non-discrimination laws and push for the production of affordable homes the state assists with to be expanded.

6. Energy efficiency improvements in multifamily buildings and weatherizing single family homes improve indoor air quality, eliminate drafts, and protect residents from extreme cold and heat—delivering health benefits and lower health care costs. **What strategies do you support to improve housing conditions and reduce utility costs?**

I would support a no interest loan program to provide renovation assistance with flexibility to repay based on income, as well as expand tax credit availability for implementing more energy efficient weatherizing and appliances.

7. Minnesota's home values are increasing rapidly, constraining low- and middle-income families from achieving affordable homeownership, including more than 64,000 households of color. **What steps will you take to increase opportunities for renters to purchase homes, condos, or cooperative ownership models?**

I will support initiatives like the rural development program to provide access to low interest loans with a lower down payment and federally protected fixed rate mortgages, lowering the credit score requirement. I will also make efforts to increase housing availability through state and federally subsidized programs like Habitat for Humanity. I will work with cities and counties as well, to ensure aid is expanded locally.

8. Including the recommendations of the community when developing policies and programs is a best practice for effective and lasting solutions. **How will you include those most impacted by housing needs in developing and implementing housing solutions?**

I will encourage local communities to hold forums and conduct surveys/assessments to the need, and provide readily available access to support through my office personally for those that need to be connected with assistance programs available.