Candidate Questionnaire on Housing Issues

2022

Ron Thiessen

City/Town: Clear Lake
Legislative District: HD27A
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 agree that housing is a universal necessity and that it is the proper role of a "government for, by and of the people to ultimately insure access to it. Many fundamental changes to the status's quo would be necessary to achieve this, eg building and zoning codes, bank regulations, income equity and, most importantly, public attitudes. Given the fact that we are in the midst of an attempt by religious fundamentalists and corporate funded fascists to destroy our Democracy, I look at stopping that as job #1.

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?**

   See #1

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?**

   Promote emergency rental assistance.

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?**

Stop this ridiculous attack on CRT in schools. It is a blatant attempt to stop free speech and the teaching of fact based history. It is a brazen fascist attempt to defend a pillar of white supremacy, systemic racism.

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?**

   Income inequity, as your question implies, is the problem. The market will supply housing to those who can afford it. Far too many can't.

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 promote this concept in environmental terms and as a fundamentally conservative issue as we have in the past she conservatives were actually interested in conservation and public health.

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?**

   Income equity and progressive taxation are the keys to dealing with this.

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?**

   Elect more of them and their advocates to all levels of government so that their voices are heard within the government.