



2018 Legislative Candidate Questionnaire

Please return by Friday, August 31 to:

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For more information, call 907-263-2015

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1. What elements of Alaska's criminal justice reforms passed from 2016 to present do you support?

Response:

I support the reinvestment in programs proven to reduce recidivism and protect public safety, and the implementation of evidence-based pre-trial practices with the focus on prison beds on serious and violent offenders. I also support the eventual strengthening of probation and parole supervision, and definitely support the element of improvement and an increase in available reentry programming, which will lead to insurance of oversight and accountability

2. What elements of Alaska's criminal justice reforms passed from 2016 to present do you believe should be amended further?

Response:

It is not enough to just reduce the numbers of prisoners in Alaska jails. We must go further. We must strengthen the foundations of our entire community as a whole. This includes, at a minimum:

1. Reinforcing our well-intentioned substance abuse treatment and domestic violence/sexual assault prevention programs.
2. Lowering our unemployment rate (so that those released from prison can not only have a job that keeps them busy from trouble, but is a meets or exceeds living wage standards for

Alaska). 3. Improving the quality of our educational system; this will ultimately reduce our state's crime rate. The more educated a community is the lower its crime levels. 4. Improving access to better and affordable healthcare. People that go through Alaska prisons face serious health care issues; which include substance abuse problems, psychological distress, and/or history of mental illness. Study after study has revealed the correlations between unemployment, education, healthcare, their effects on the crime rate, and vice-versa (Brookings Institute, National Center for Education Statistics, Hennepin Healthcare Research Institute, Journal of the American Medical Association). Addressing and improving all four of these issues, and more, will greatly decrease recidivism and/or entering the criminal justice system in the first place.

3. Would you vote to keep the following elements of Alaska's justice reforms?

- **Tougher penalties on violent crimes like 1st and 2nd degree murder**
Yes or No? Yes. Explain: I would vote on tougher penalties for these crimes.
- **Improved services for victims of violent crimes**
Yes or No? Yes. Explain: Victims of violent crimes are prone to PTSD, which brings along substance abuse, and depression, to name a few of the consequences. Improving services to better treat the victims of violent crimes is a way into the right direction.
- **Strengthened community supervision of those on probation and parole**
Yes or No? Yes. Explain: Until and when we get our educational improvement, healthcare improvement, substance abuse prevention, domestic violence prevention, and unemployment reduction programs on track. Also see answer 2.
- **Expanded crime-reduction programs like violence prevention and substance abuse treatment**
Yes or No? Yes. Explain: See answer 2.
- **Expanded eligibility for parole to those with a record of good behavior who present minimal risk to the community**
Yes or No? Yes. Explain: See answer 2.
- **Establishment of an oversight committee and mandatory data collection and reporting requirements to ensure the law is working as intended**
Yes or No? Yes. Explain: The more information the better decisions can be made.
- **Limited jail time for people convicted of misdemeanors**
Yes or No? Yes. Explain: See answer 2.
- **Making drug possession a misdemeanor offense, while maintaining felony penalties for drug dealing and distribution**

Yes or No? Yes. Explain: Dealers and distributors create an environment of hazard. If you improve someone's environment you will improve their chances of success at beating addiction and abuse.

- **Placing non-violent, low-risk defendants awaiting trial under community supervision instead of prison**

Yes or No? Yes, Explain: It would be conditional, but I would vote for this reform.
Also, see answer 2.

- 4. Under Alaska state law, inmates are required to be returned to the place of arrest, but this is rarely communicated to them and those from rural are often released from prison in urban areas without the means to return to their communities. This contributes to homelessness in urban areas as well as statewide recidivism. Do you support funding to ensure that parolees are returned to their place of arrest at the time of their release?**

Response: Most definitely, yes. Also see answer 2.

- 5. In 2015, President Obama removed the box requiring disclosure of prior criminal conviction from federal job employment applications. Do you support or oppose similar measures on the state level to increase employment opportunities for citizens who have paid their debt to society and want to lead productive lives?**

Response: I would support a similar measure to reduce the high recidivism rate in Alaska.