



## 2018 Legislative Candidate Questionnaire

Please return by Friday, August 31 to:

[Sorr@ACLUAk.org](mailto:Sorr@ACLUAk.org)

For more information, call 907-263-2015

Candidate Name: Zack Fields  
Employer: Laborers Local 341  
Office Sought: HD 20 Representative  
E-Mail Address: zackfields@gmail.com  
Party Affiliation: Democrat  
Phone: 201-2895  
Occupation: Organizer  
Mailing Address: 1320 K St, Anchorage 99501

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

Response: I support the *intent* of reducing pre-trial detention for cases in which detention is linked to greater likelihood of future criminality, and the *intent* of reducing recidivism through improved reentry programs. However, it is clear that these goals have not translated into reality, partly because the legislature did not fund reentry programs envisioned by SB 91 and partly because of DOC's inability to translate policy goals into actual programs in institutions. If elected, I would strongly support implementation of effective reentry programs and more effective substance abuse treatment in institutions. While much of the media and political focus has been on the letter of the law in SB 91 (and subsequent reform bills), funding and program implementation have at least as much impact on public safety and recidivism. It is extremely frustrating that the legislature stated its support for reentry without funding reentry programs, and that DOC has failed to meaningfully expand reentry programs. In retrospect, it seems fairly obvious that it was a mistake to cut sentences before effective reentry programs were in place, and if elected I would focus on making reentry programs work (as well as having more expansive substance abuse/mental health treatment available in the community) as a first step toward meaningful criminal justice reform.

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

Response: I support stronger penalties for vehicle theft, and funding and programmatic reforms and DOC oversight to implement more effective reentry programs in DOC institutions.

**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? Explain: Yes.
- **Improved services for victims of violent crimes**  
Yes or No? Explain: Yes.
- **Strengthened community supervision of those on probation and parole**  
Yes or No? Explain: Yes, and I would support examination of more comprehensive and longer term electronic monitoring to reduce recidivism.
- **Expanded crime-reduction programs like violence prevention and substance abuse treatment**  
Yes or No? Explain: Yes, and this should include more diversion programs or expansion of existing programs such as Anchorage Youth Court, mental health courts, etc.
- **Expanded eligibility for parole to those with a record of good behavior who present minimal risk to the community**  
Yes or No? Explain: Only with sufficient and effective electronic monitoring and community supervision.
- **Establishment of an oversight committee and mandatory data collection and reporting requirements to ensure the law is working as intended**  
Yes or No? Explain: Yes.
- **Limited jail time for people convicted of misdemeanors**  
Yes or No? Explain: No, jail time should be an option for repeat offenders.
- **Making drug possession a misdemeanor offense, while maintaining felony penalties for drug dealing and distribution**  
Yes or No? Explain: No.
- **Placing non-violent, low-risk defendants awaiting trial under community supervision instead of prison**

Yes or No? Explain: Only if such community supervision can be shown to be effective in practice.

- 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: Yes.

- 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 support "ban the box" at the first stage of an employment application; employers should be able to review that information at a later stage of the application process.