

# ACLU People Power Washington

## 2020 Police Reform

### Candidate Questionnaire



<b>Candidate Name</b>	John Stafford	
<b>Position Sought</b>	State Representative, 37 <sup>th</sup> Legislative District, Position 1	
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### Part I – Yes/No Questions

Please answer the following questions		Yes	No	Additional Comments
1	Do you support statewide policy for:			
	Banning chokeholds	x		
	Banning tear gas	x		
	Use of body cameras	x		
2	Do you support abolishing qualified immunity for police?	x		
3	Do you support de-escalation standards and accountability for police?	x		
4	Do you support independent, civilian review of complaints of police use of force?	x		
5	Do you support eliminating investigation and discipline of use of force against civilians as topics for collective bargaining by law enforcement unions?	x		
6	Do you support decertification for serious misconduct by law enforcement officers?	x		
7	Do you support ending police use of and access to surplus military equipment?	x		

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## Part II – Free Response Questions

What is your idea of public safety?

Public safety has multiple dimensions. The first is in the creation of a society that does not rest on a foundation on intense inequities that are based on race, which will inevitably lead to a variety of problems, including public safety issues. This is a major problem in our society. For example, in Seattle Public Schools, 83% of black students are on free and reduced lunch price programs, whereas the figure for white students is less than 10%. These types of inequities will ultimately manifest themselves in public safety problems. The second is the establishment of a broad array of economic, educational and social programs that provide meaningful educational and career opportunities for individuals of all types of backgrounds in society. The failure to achieve this will again lead to issues with public safety. Third, their needs to be strong communities and neighborhoods within a society to create the cohesion necessary to dissuade activity that threatens public safety. Finally, there does need to be a well-organized and well-run police organization in order to respond to threats to public safety when they arise.

Have you taken the [#ElectedsForJustice pledge](#)? If so, what actions do you intend to take to support the 5-part plan? If not, what points are barriers to your support, and why?

I have taken the pledge (I just completed it). In my view, the most promising area to support the 5-part plan for police reform is with a comprehensive analysis of 911 calls to identify which segments of these calls need a police response, and which of these calls can be handled by other first responders – mental health workers, social workers, paramedics, etc. This will lead to a lower percentage of calls being addressed by police, and thus the opportunity to decrease police budgets, and thus the opportunity to release these funds for the purpose of funding community social programs (that will, in turn, play a role in crime reduction).

Under current state labor law, Collective Bargaining Agreements (CBAs) with law enforcement unions are often a barrier for meaningful police reform. What efforts do you support that differentiate police unions from other labor unions so that change can happen without eroding other workers' rights?

If a police union is not willing to align its values and standards with those of larger affiliations of labor, then I believe it is reasonable to no longer allow the police union to affiliate with the larger organization (and the same principle would, of course, apply to all other unions). Thus, I believe the decision by the Martin Luther King County Labor Council to expel the Seattle Police Guild earlier this year was reasonable. I also believe that there should be a larger community oversight role in the negotiations between governmental entities and police guilds. For example, I believe the Seattle Community Police Commission should have increased input into the collective bargaining process.

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Are there police reform/accountability measures that are not addressed here that you think would be productive to pursue?

I support a variety of proposals to reform policing. These include removing police officers from public schools, focusing on criminal justice system reforms (e.g., increasing the emphasis on diversion courts, more focus on rehabilitation and re-entry programs, eliminating privately owned and operated prisons, restoring the voting rights of ex-felons, etc.), and also focusing on initiatives to increase funding on areas that will address underlying societal inequities – for example increasing per pupil funding levels for schools with a high percentage of students on free and reduced lunches.

**I affirm that all the information provided in response to this questionnaire is true, complete, and correct to the best of my ability, and that no relevant matter has been omitted.**

Signature	John Stafford	Date: September 9, 2020
Printed Name	John Stafford	