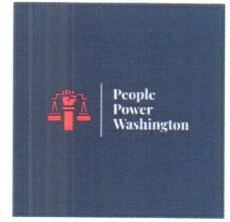


ACLU People Power Washington

2022 Policing and Public Safety Candidate Questionnaire – State Legislature



[People Power Washington – Police Accountability](#) strives to bring just and equitable public safety to our local communities through relationship building, education and policy reform. We champion policies that divest from police and reinvest in community-based solutions and alternate crisis response, decriminalize non-serious offenses, and implement accountability and enforceable standards for police officers and agencies. Our vision is for public safety in Washington to be community-driven and to meet the needs of all people equitably.

Our group's work advocating for police accountability in our local communities has made us well aware of the important role our local government and elected officials play in driving policy around this issue. Appreciating the impact the Washington State Legislature has on our day-to-day lives, our hope is to empower voters with a non-partisan resource to understand how to vote their values through a lens of police reform and re-imagining of public safety.

Candidate Information

Candidate Name

Lonny Ray Williams

Position Sought

7th Legislative District Representative

Campaign Contact Information

Website:

Email: Contact@LonnyRayWilliams.com

Part I – Yes/No Questions

1. Do you support prohibiting traffic stops by armed law enforcement officers for low-level, non-moving violations such as vehicle registration violations and equipment failure?

| | |
|----------------------------|---|
| Yes | |
| No | No |
| Additional Comments | <p style="text-align: center;">I Believe in empowering law enforcement to do their duty to support and defend our Federal and State Constitutions and to enforce constitutional laws that have been enacted in Washington. Conditioning individuals to disobey laws leads to chaos. Our Constitutional Republic was formed to preserve liberty and we must repeal unconstitutional laws by conducting a constitutional audit to ensure that the laws on the books allow the greatest extent of liberty possible. The problem is not the police (generally speaking) it is the leadership that does not have a high standard for it's officers.</p> |

- Traffic stops are one of the most common ways members of the general public interact with police. For decades, there have been significant racial

disparities in traffic stops, particularly for low-level violations, unjustified by the crime-fighting value. This undermines community trust, fairness, and wastes law enforcement resources.

- While there's a perception that traffic stops are dangerous for police, the reality is that they are far more dangerous for those being stopped, especially if they are people of color.
- As a result, Seattle and other jurisdictions, including Los Angeles, Philadelphia, and the State of Virginia, have restricted or banned traffic stops for low-level traffic violations.

2. Do you support establishing an Independent Prosecutor for cases of criminal conduct arising from police killings?

| | |
|----------------------------|--|
| Yes | |
| No | NO |
| Additional Comments | <p style="text-align: center;">Independent Prosecutors have a history of not being independent. A citizens Grand Jury would</p> |

| | |
|--|---|
| | <p>be more effective at determining whether the citizens feel that charges need to go forward. Then an unbiased prosecution can commence. Regardless of what procedure the people ultimately settle on, complete transparency and neutrality should be the goal.</p> |
|--|---|

- Police investigating themselves present an inherent conflict of interest. County Prosecutors work closely with law enforcement and rely on law enforcement for gathering evidence, interviewing witnesses, and providing defense to law enforcement.
- Prosecutors, exercising prosecutorial discretion, often fail to file criminal charges even when unarmed citizens are killed at the hands of law enforcement.

3. Do you support a state law that would remove obstacles, like qualified immunity, when suing police officers for violating a person’s civil rights?

| | |
|----------------------------|---|
| Yes | |
| No | NO |
| Additional Comments | <p>An agent of government needs some protections to do their job; however, everyone needs to be held accountable for crimes. I don’t believe in blanket immunity. I do support holding criminals accountable in or out of uniform. Civil rights are absolute, and officers need to understand that their power is derived from the people. The issue here is standards of employment and not holding leadership accountable for failing to set those standards. Opening officers up to personal litigation ensures that it will be nearly impossible to retain and recruit good officers in an already hostile atmosphere against law enforcement.</p> |

- Today when someone’s constitutional rights have been violated or they are seriously injured or killed by the police, victims or victims’ families can

- only sue police or the department under federal law 42 USC 1983.
- This federal law includes the legal principle of qualified immunity, which protects government officials performing discretionary immunity from civil suits unless the plaintiff shows that the official violated "clearly established statutory or constitutional rights of which a reasonable person would have known."
- In essence, there are little to no consequences for when law enforcement commits the above actions.

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- State legislation could give individuals a legal remedy under state law that does not currently exist.

4. Do you support a state law that would authorize the Attorney General’s (AG’s) Civil Rights Division to investigate a law enforcement department where there are patterns of misconduct?

| | |
|----------------------------|--|
| Yes | |
| No | NO |
| Additional Comments | <p>The Attorney Generals office is a partisan office that has demonstrated a bias in going after individuals that are not aligned while not pursuing others that are aligned. Any office that is to be in a position of review with respect from a civil rights stand point should, be nonpartisan. Leadership from both parties has a track record of being unable to investigate things from a neutral perspective, we need to restore the faith in government by removing partisan oversight of civil rights issues.</p> |

- Today, in order to hold a law enforcement department accountable for patterns and practices of misconduct such as

discriminatory policing, the US Department of Justice is the only entity that can investigate the department and bring a lawsuit or consent decree to effect change.

- State legislation could authorize the AG’s Civil Rights Division to investigate systemic practices that deprive individuals of rights protected by the Washington Constitution, to address the most harmful practices in a department and ensure a minimum quality of policing across Washington.

5. Do you support strengthening law enforcement accountability by establishing statewide protocols for complaints, investigations, discipline, and disciplinary appeals for serious misconduct?

| | |
|----------------------------|--|
| Yes | |
| No | NO |
| Additional Comments | <p>Currently there is a generalization of law enforcement, due to mismanagement in many</p> |

| | |
|--|---|
| | <p>urban jurisdictions, and some rural ones. Statewide protocols strip away the Founding Fathers vision of local control of the people, by the people, and for the people. The way to deal with challenges in local jurisdictions is through local ordinances that ensure that civil liberties are protected. Once size fits all state laws often serve nobody well and create more problems than they solve. Our Founding Fathers knew that less government is more conducive to civil liberty, not more. Legislation that empowers local control is my preferred solution.</p> |
|--|---|

- Holding officers accountable through termination or

suspension for serious misconduct at the department-level is important for maintaining public trust and confidence in law enforcement.

- Currently, procedures for administrative accountability are determined separately for each police department or sheriff's office across the state resulting in inconsistencies and lack of public trust.

6. Do you support ending long term solitary confinement?

| | |
|----------------------------|---|
| Yes | YES |
| No | |
| Additional Comments | <p>Solitary confinement is inhumane for any long term situation longer than a reasonable period when an inmate gets out of hand and presents a danger to others. All human beings deserve respect, dignity, and the ability to maintain their physical and mental health through their periods of confinement.</p> |

- The UN Mandela Rules define long term solitary confinement as

torture.

- Human beings have a basic biological need to establish and maintain contact with others. The deprivation of human contact causes severe psychological consequences including depression, anxiety, paranoia, PTSD, psychosis, self-harm and even suicide, which interfere with rehabilitation of incarcerated people.
- The use of solitary confinement does not reduce violence or staff assaults in prisons.

Part II – Free Response Questions

What is your idea of public safety? What are tangible ways to measure progress toward this goal?

Our Founding Fathers made it clear. If you do not have the power or authority to tell your neighbor to do something, then we cannot give that power to government. We need to roll back many senseless, arbitrary, and entrapment laws that have turned law some law enforcement officers into piggy banks for the state. We need minimum standards of respect and acknowledgement that all government employees are servants of the people and not centurions. I believe in protecting officers from their dangerous duty, but they need not look like an Infantry Soldier ready to storm the trenches.

We do need peace officers to preserve the peace in our communities. We need law enforcement to ensure that the laws that the people enact through their government are followed. And we need to teach people that respect for the constitutional laws of the people is paramount to the survival of our Constitutional Republic.

What would you do, as a state legislator, to further your idea of public safety?

Roll back senseless laws that strip away liberties and have no constitutional validity. Second teach people their civic responsibility in standing up for their liberty by going to their local government meetings and participating in the process. This way they know and understand when legislators, commissioners, and local board members are carrying out their duties in a constitutional manner that takes their liberties into consideration.

Second the most important thing for people to understand that in this Nation your public safety is your own responsibility. We apportion a bit of our own power through our legislative process to empower a moral, fair, person to provide for our public safety through police, fire, and other agencies. Giving more of our power away to these agencies in the name of public safety is not the best idea if a people desire to be free. Having the state mandate what degree of power is given or taken away on a local level is the least supportive of liberty. Empowering local control for Counties

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and rolling back big government on a State and Federal level is where we should be focusing our efforts to bring back liberty.

Teaching the History of our Founding era using original sources such as diaries, letters, and material from the era to help develop critical thinking skills and a respect for the opportunities and responsibilities of liberty, is also crucial. When people understand that civil liberties require respect and work to maintain, and are not just an instrument of selfishness, then we can return much of the harmony that has been lost over the past few decades.


From my experience, conversation based on mutual respect, outlasts, and outperforms any lawsuit or injunction. We need to learn to talk to one another again and stop fighting each other.

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

Empowering local government to ensure that they can enact the types of reform or accountability is the way we should go. It is important to note that we should not legislate morality, yet we must protect those who chose to live a moral life. The balance here is when a person's liberty infringes on the rights of others they are in the wrong. How do we ultimately want to deal with that as a society without creating a career criminal who has little hope of reform or restitution?

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



Lonny Ray Williams

Printed Name

Date:

6/27/2022