

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	John Zingale
Position Sought	House of Representatives District 18 Position 1
Campaign Contact Information	Website: www.ElectJohnZingale.com Email: ElectJohnZingale@gmail.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	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
No	
Additional Comments	

- 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	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
No	
Additional Comments	

- 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	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
No	
Additional Comments	

- 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.
- 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	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
No	<input type="checkbox"/>
Additional Comments	

- 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	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
No	<input type="checkbox"/>
Additional Comments	

- 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	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
No	<input type="checkbox"/>
Additional Comments	

- 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?

Public safety means ALL citizens being able to live and feel safe in their communities. It means making sure social services are available to the people that need them, and that the correct people are responding to emergencies/crises. Progress is seeing not just police responding to every incident that occurs. Getting a mental health specialist to respond to a mental health crisis, or a housing specialist to respond to a housing/houslessness issue is progress. Seeing counties and cities creating and implementing these types of community services is progress, so that police officers can concentrate on a more specific role and not have to take on so many different pieces that they may not be properly trained to handle.

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

I would like to work with other legislators to bring a bill that would help fund my above ideas along with the body cams that I mention below. I believe that the state owes it to its citizens to help ensure they are all protected as equally as possible across the zip regardless of zip code. This will allow us to focus on building up safe communities while making sure the rights of citizens are at the forefront of our state's decisions around policing and community safety.

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

This fall Clark County will have a small tax increase on the ballot to help pay for body cameras on their sherriffs. I believe that this should be funded by the state, so that the civil rights of all citizens can be held to the same standard. Counties and cities that can afford them shouldn't be the only ones that have them. All Washingtonians, and those that travel to our state, should have the same level of protection and accountability from our officers at all levels.

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



Date: 06.21.2022

Printed Name

John M. Zingale