

# 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

<b>Candidate Name</b>	Chipalo Street
<b>Position Sought</b>	State Representative, 37 <sup>th</sup> LD, Pos 2
<b>Campaign Contact Information</b>	Website: <a href="http://www.electchipalo.com">www.electchipalo.com</a> Email: <a href="mailto:electcstreet@gmail.com">electcstreet@gmail.com</a> , <a href="mailto:info@electchipalo.com">info@electchipalo.com</a>

## 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?

<b>Yes</b>	
<b>Additional Comments</b>	<p>Police also shouldn't be able to stop you on the street unless they have probable cause you committed a crime. During college, my friend and I were walking from campus onto a public street when campus police stopped us and asked to see our IDs. Brown University's campus is open to the public, and so are public streets, so we were annoyed that we were being harassed for our IDs. I kept on walking but my friend stopped, showed the police his ID, and identified me. Instead of letting the issue drop, the Brown police called in an APB for me.</p> <p>The Providence Police Department picked up the APB and caught up with me. If you read the police reports, an officer approached me and asked me to talk. I walked around the cop. The cop grabbed me. I tried to push the cops hands off me and spin away with my hands up. At which point the cops used the "least amount of force on the subject to safely subdue [me]."</p> <p>The "least amount of force" injured me badly enough that the police had to take me to the hospital for medical attention before taking me to jail. The least amount of force was enough for a bystander to say she was traumatized by watching the incident. Even if you believe the police's account of the incident, I find it disturbing the police thought that was an acceptable level of force to use to simply identify a person who wasn't even suspected of a crime.</p> <p>But, I don't believe the police report because I was that student. All I remember is getting hit in the back of the head, being beaten, screaming my name and that I was a Brown student in the hopes someone would hear and I wouldn't just disappear. I got beaten so badly that the police had to take me to the hospital before they took me to jail.</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?**

<b>Yes</b>	
<b>Additional Comments</b>	none

- 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?**

<b>Yes</b>	
<b>Additional Comments</b>	none

- 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?**

<b>Yes</b>	
<b>Additional Comments</b>	none

- 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?**

<b>Yes</b>	
<b>Additional Comments</b>	none

- 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.

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## 6. Do you support ending long term solitary confinement?

<b>Yes</b>	
<b>Additional Comments</b>	none

- 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?

We need to think more comprehensively about public safety as more than just police officers. Let's start by looking at people involved in the criminal justice system, determine underlying drivers for why they are involved in it, and then fund measures to prevent those issues from happening.

This includes a legal system that centers restorative justice and rehabilitates people, instead of being strictly punitive. The goal is to prevent crime from happening in the first place, remove biases from investigation and judgement of crimes, and create sentences that address the root causes of crime, helping the person reenter society as a productive citizen. This is especially imperative for juveniles who are still in the process of growing up and have their whole lives ahead of them.

Currently we only gauge public safety by incidents of crime while ignoring prevention and rehabilitation. Focusing on increasing the success of diversion programs and decreasing recidivism rates would decrease the amount of crime that happens in the future.

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

Our prison system has been systematically defunded and the first things to be cut are programs that help rehabilitation. We need to realize that funding these programs is not only the moral thing to do, but also the financially prudent thing to do as locking people up is extremely costly. Reducing recidivism leads to less crime, fewer fractured families, and reduced costs in our prison system over the long run.

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

As part of thinking comprehensively about public safety, I think we should set our police force up for failure or poor outcomes. They are not trained in mental health, so we should not have them responding to non-violent mental health crises. We should have mental health professionals do this. This will provide better services for the person in crisis and reduce the chances that the situation escalates.

We should not have police in schools. Instead, we should have counselors. Our kids will get help with the issues they are struggling to work through, and we'll reduce the chances they end up in the school to prison pipeline.

Finally, we should also expand discretionary parole which was severely limited in 1984.

**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	<i>Chipalo Street</i>	Date: 9/2/2022
Printed Name	Chipalo Street	