

# 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>               | Mike Nykreim   |
| <b>Position Sought</b>              | 41 LD House, position 1  |
| <b>Campaign Contact Information</b> | Website: <a href="http://EIWA.vote">EIWA.vote</a><br>Email: <a href="mailto:infor@EIWA.vote">infor@EIWA.vote</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>No</b>                  | <b>I support all efforts to keep crime low and citizens safe.</b>  |
| <b>Additional Comments</b> | <b>Obstruction of proper policing is proven to put our citizens at risk. Crime has risen in low income neighborhoods due to poorly thought out restriction on safe policing practices.</b> |

- 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>No</b>                  | <b>All citizens need to be treated equally.</b>                               |
| <b>Additional Comments</b> | <b>All employees, regardless of who employs them must be treated equally.</b> |

- 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>No</b>                  | <b>Police work is unique in its objectives in keeping us safe. I would not obstruct an officer’s ‘second guessing’ their own valuable actions.</b>                                   |
| <b>Additional Comments</b> | <b>Civil Right claims must balance equally with all other Constitutionally protected rights. Especially Search and Seizure even to the top levels of formally elected officials.</b> |

- 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>No</b>                  | <b>Well established standards are in effect.</b>   |
| <b>Additional Comments</b> | <b>We don’t need an expansion of a bureaucracy, we need an enforcement of existing laws to protect all citizens.</b> |

- 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

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*People Power is the grassroots arm of the ACLU - while we adhere to ACLU principles, we are volunteer-driven and do not work for or officially represent the ACLU. People Power activists work in and from their local communities to further civil rights and liberties for all.*

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>No</b>                  | <b>No further than what is in effect now for all public employees.</b>   |
| <b>Additional Comments</b> | <b>Competence levels need to be maintained amongst all public employees to include and not be limited to educators, building officials, tax auditors, etc.</b> |

- 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?**

|                            |  |
|----------------------------|--|
| <b>Yes</b>                 |  |
| <b>No</b>                  | <b>I leave it to the professional staff to make this judgement.</b>  |
| <b>Additional Comments</b> | <b>Safety of all public officials needs to be paramount when dealing with those who need to pay their debt to society.</b> |

- 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?

Increase public safety by increasing professional enforcement and judicial staff. Increase access to file criminal complaints and to allow us of all scientific based investigation systems, IE, finger print review, DNA testing, and video capture. Increase staffing of our courts system to expedite all criminal review. Reduce prosecution times with increasing staff.

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

Better funding for police and judicial review by mandating immediate release of Building Permit applicates, thereby increasing the Billions of Dollars of WSST income that the state derives from new construction. All new construction pays Washington State Sale Tax. Plus, Excise Tax of now and average 3% is paid THREE times when properties are developed. By expediting this process our state can increase revenues without having to increase tax rates.

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

Immediate roll back of bad, pro criminal laws that the Democrat Party has been promoting for the past decade.

Criminalize Crime Again!

Truth hurts your ears, doesn't it?

**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    | Mike Nykreim | 8-18-2022 |
| Printed Name | Mike Nykreim |           |