

Responses:

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Liz Watson

1. Describe your platform by telling us what populations are most impacted by your platform policies, as well as your specific plan to reach out and work with the affected groups. If you do not explicitly cover marginalized populations in your initial response, tell us what influence you believe your policies will have on marginalized populations, especially Black and brown citizens. Finally, describe how your previous work in politics or elsewhere has impacted Black and other marginalized populations.

The American dream is that anyone, regardless of background or circumstance, can get ahead. But that is not the case any more, especially for people of color, low-income workers and their families. At the very beginning of my campaign, I outlined a social and economic justice agenda to restore the American dream, which includes the \$15 per hour minimum wage bill that I led the development of and advocated for in Congress, Medicare for All, strong public schools, affordable child care and universal pre- K, protection from wage theft and an expansion of overtime rights, the right to paid family and medical leave, predictable schedules, strong harassment protections, equal pay for equal work, protections from predatory lenders, ban the box legislation, amendments to our civil rights titles to include sexual orientation and gender identity, and the right of workers to come together and bargain in a union, among other goals.

Every one of these policy goals addresses inequities in our country that disproportionately impact marginalized communities. I am proud of the contribution I have made to forwarding these important goals, but of course they are goals I share with the larger progressive community, including Black Lives Matter, the NAACP, the National Organization for Women, the Leadership Conference for Civil and Human Rights, and the Congressional Black Caucus, whose members and staff I worked with closely during the two years I spent as Labor Policy Director for the Democrats in the House. During that time, my boss was Bobby Scott, a senior member of the Congressional Black Caucus.

Throughout my campaign, I have made a point of reaching out to people of color in the community and holding as many town halls and open public meetings in every county in the district as possible. I have held town halls on the tax law, health care,

public education, jobs and infrastructure, medical marijuana, the opioid crisis, and the environment. In contrast to my opponent, who never appears in public events and has never held a town hall in his life, I put a premium on listening to people in our communities and developing constructive solutions together.

None of these priorities is new for me. As an attorney, I represented working people who had been mistreated on the job, and I saw how deeply race and gender are linked to economic exploitation. In my staff role in Congress, I worked personally to address those issues by developing bills for better wages and reliable scheduling, and to crack down on pay theft and union-busting.

I also served as Executive Director of the Georgetown Center on Poverty and Inequality, which focused on supporting marginalized girls, and in particular girls who become involved in the juvenile justice system, a group that is disproportionately African American girls. I co-authored a report highlighting how the juvenile justice fails girls, because it is a system that was designed for boys. “The typical girl in the system is a non-violent offender, who is very often low-risk, but high-need, meaning the girl poses little risk to the public but she enters the system with significant and pressing personal needs. The set of challenges that girls often face as they enter the juvenile justice system include trauma, violence, neglect, mental and physical problems, family conflict, pregnancy, residential and academic instability, and school failure. The juvenile justice system only exacerbates these problems by failing to provide girls with services at the time when they need them most.” After the publication of this report, Congresswoman Rosa DeLauro introduced legislation to address the needs of girls involved or at-risk of involvement in the juvenile justice system, citing my report.

In all of these ways, I have tried to have a positive impact on the lives of marginalized Americans, including people of color. I am running against a man who has not once even acknowledged that these problems exist.

2. To the best of your knowledge, describe why people of color are disproportionately targeted and arrested by the criminal justice system. What ideas do you have to make the justice system more equitable and impartial? What do you consider to be the top priorities for reforming our justice system?

For generations, slavery and Jim Crow preserved a racial caste system in which the exercise of black economic and political rights was criminalized. On a psychological level, police perceive black men as hostile and threatening, and too often respond with deadly force that could have been avoided. Awareness of this bias and training to correct it are essential to reducing the inequities that pervade the criminal justice system.

Today, the language of colorblindness coexists with anti-drug policies that systematically and disproportionately target communities of color, and with a prison system that warehouses and disenfranchises vast numbers of black men – with devastating effects for families and communities. Addressing these problems requires a reckoning not only with the racism of individuals, but with the economic, social, and psychological consequences of 400 years of state violence against people of color on this continent.

The deep historical roots of this problem, though, don't mean that we can't take action to address it in the present. In my view, sentencing reform is the most urgent priority for criminal justice reform, because it directly addresses the crisis of mass incarceration. I support the Safe, Accountable, Fair and Effective (SAFE) Justice Act, which would reform federal sentencing rules and probation policies. I support the Marijuana Justice Act, which would remove marijuana from the federal Controlled Substances Act, and I would incentivize states to change outdated marijuana laws, create a fund to re-invest in communities of color most affected by failed drug laws, and provide for expungement of criminal records related to use or possession. This would be an important step in addressing some of the procedural causes of mass incarceration.

I am a longtime supporter of "ban the box" legislation, so that a criminal record does not sentence anyone to a lifetime of poverty and potential recidivism. And I believe we should be incentivizing transparency in local policing through legislation like the CAM TIP Act, which would support local police departments' purchase of body cameras. In isolation, none of these policies answers the need for criminal justice reform, and even together they will not erase centuries of history. But they do offer a first step toward meaningful reform.

3. What concerns do you have about the militarization of our police force? As this equipment is disproportionately deployed against people of color, what would you do, and what can the community do, to protect people of color from the effects of militarization? Name a specific issue in your community relating to the militarization of the police and how you have or would respond to it.

Across the country, there has been an increasing concern about militarization of local police forces, and this disproportionately impacts and potentially threatens people of color. An ACLU investigation of the deployment of SWAT teams found that black people constitute 39 percent (the largest share) of those affected by such deployments. The nationwide conversation about preventing the militarization of police in the context of the severe racial disparities that permeate our criminal justice systems nationwide is very important.

In Congress, my racial justice platform would include strengthening oversight of the transfer of military equipment to civilian police forces, as well as promoting evidence-based practices for de-escalation, support for the development of recommended best practices, protocols for the deployment of any SWAT-style teams and equipment to prevent disparate treatment, and training in addressing unconscious bias. I support H.R. 1556, the Stop Militarizing Law Enforcement Act, which would prevent the transfer of military equipment and weapons from the Department of Defense to federal and state law enforcement agencies. These are all important ways of protecting people of color from the potential dangers of police militarization.

4. Do you support programs focused on harm reduction, restorative justice, de-criminalization of drugs, reducing nuisance crimes and quality of life Policing, and/or jail diversion programs? Choose one or more of those programs (or comparable ones that you are aware of) and describe how you have or would support that program or programs.

I am a strong supporter of removing marijuana from the Controlled Substances Act . This step is important to stemming the tide of over-incarceration, especially of people of color. According to the ACLU's data, between 2011 and 2012, 62% of SWAT deployments were for drug searches. It is very clear that the war on drugs has devastated minority communities, and that we need to move toward prevention and intervention, and away from mass incarceration. The Marijuana Justice Act (H.R. 4815), would incentivize states to change outdated marijuana laws, create a fund to re-invest in communities of color most affected by failed drug laws, and provide for expungement of criminal records related to use or possession.

Our leaders have been touting "tough on crime" strategies for decades, but the evidence shows that despite the massive amounts of money we spend on corrections, "tough on crime" strategies simply do not work . The cost of corrections nationwide has skyrocketed from around \$7 billion in 1980 to over \$68 billion more recently. Long prison sentences and discrimination against people who have served their time make it extremely difficult for individuals to become self-sufficient. Moving away from incarceration and toward prevention and intervention will save taxpayer dollars, be more effective, and end the national tragedy that condemns prisoners for life, even after their prison terms have ended.

Private prisons, of course, benefit from mass incarceration. According to the ACLU, the number of prisoners in private prisons increased by 1600% between 1990 and 2009. These prisons hold 16% of federal prisoners. Spending taxpayer dollars on private prisons has diverted funding and energy away from more effective solutions, such as sentencing reform, prevention, and diversion. Private prisons have strained state budgets while several studies have documented increased threats to prisoner safety at private prisons.

5. Name an issue facing school-age children of color that you think needs to be better addressed and discuss how you would address it. Issues of particular interest to this organization include curriculum, busing and redistricting, before-and-after-school programs, and meal programs.

I think universal Pre-K would be a big step forward. Study after study shows that children across the economic spectrum who participate in Pre-K perform much better in school and are much more likely to succeed in school and beyond. Pre-K is should be available to everyone, not just the upper classes. I support the Strong Start for America's Children Act, a bill in Congress that would give four-year-old children whose families earn less than 200 percent of the federal poverty threshold access to pre-K. This would help ensure that every family has the chance to send their children to school with a strong foundation.

6. What are the top economic issues affecting Black and other marginalized peoples today? What economic policies would you prioritize in order to improve life for marginalized people in our community? Have you done any work in the past to address these or other economic issues affecting people of color?

I focus on raising wages because of the high percentage of families headed by single mothers, and because a disproportionate percentage of people earning the minimum wage are women of color.

In every county in the 9th district, the minimum wage is insufficient to support a single adult, let alone a family. The truth is that wealthy people continually prevail upon the government to change laws and regulations to advantage them. We need rules that are fairer for everyone, and we need to invest in working families, not just provide breaks to the ultra-wealthy.

I helped lead the fight in Congress for the Raise the Wage Act, legislation that gradually increases the minimum wage to \$15 per hour by 2024. It also ties the minimum wage to the median wage, so that the minimum wage will continue to be meaningful over time. We can also put more money in the pockets of hardworking people by taking steps to make more people eligible for overtime pay. When working people earn more, they pump that money back into our economy, by spending it on goods and services, which in turn helps create more good-paying jobs. Raising the minimum wage will also decrease reliance on public benefits. This frees up our taxpayer dollars to be spent on our schools and public services, rather than on subsidizing low-wage employers.

7. What role do you think local government needs to play in improving the physical and mental health of Black people and other people of color? What specific issues around the intersection of race and health do you believe need to be addressed? Tell us how your policies would affect these issues, and describe any past experience you have in this area.

Mass incarceration has had a devastating impact on communities of color. Between 1970 and 2005, the number of people incarcerated in the United States increased by 700%. That is unacceptable. The racial disparities in incarceration rates are staggering, and the statistics reflect persistent racial bias in our criminal justice system. More than half of those who are incarcerated are black or Latino, although these two groups make up less than a third of the overall population. I support the Safe, Accountable, Fair, and Effective (SAFE) Justice Act (H.R. 4261), which would improve our criminal justice system through federal sentencing reform, ensure better probation policies, reduce crime, and save taxpayer dollars.

I also support decriminalizing the possession of marijuana on the federal level, and specifically, removing marijuana from the Controlled Substances Act. This step is vital to stemming the tide of over-incarceration, especially of people of color. According to the ACLU's data, between 2011 and 2012, 62% of SWAT deployments were for drug searches. It is clear that the war on drugs has devastated minority communities, and that we need to move toward prevention and intervention, and away from mass incarceration. The Marijuana Justice Act (H.R. 4815), would incentivize states to change outdated marijuana laws, create a fund to re-invest in communities of color most affected by failed drug laws, and provide for expungement of criminal records related to use or possession.

It is also essential that we make economic opportunity available to people re-entering the job market after a period of incarceration. It is really only in the last

generation that an employer would consider the criminal record information of job applicants, but today, an estimated 87% of employers conduct criminal background checks. One study estimates the number of Americans with criminal records at 70-100 million. Almost all of them attempt to re-enter the workforce but find themselves shut out of good jobs that would allow them to escape poverty. To end this practice, I support federal legislation to “ban the box” which would ensure that an applicant’s job qualifications are considered before an employer asks questions about whether an employee has an arrest or conviction record, and that such inquiries occur later in the hiring process and are job-related.

We must address racial disparities in law enforcement practices. Across the country, there has been an increasing militarization of local police, and this disproportionately impacts and potentially threatens people of color. An ACLU investigation of the deployment of SWAT teams found that black people make up 39 percent (the largest share) of those affected by such deployments. The nationwide conversation about preventing the militarization of police in the context of the severe racial disparities that permeate our criminal justice systems nationwide is very important.

In Congress, my racial justice platform would include strengthening oversight of the transfer of military equipment to civilian police forces, as well as promoting evidence-based practices for de-escalation, support for the development of recommended best practices and protocols for the deployment of any SWAT- style teams and equipment to prevent disparate treatment and militarization, and training in addressing unconscious bias. I support H.R. 1556, the Stop Militarizing Law Enforcement Act, which would prevent the transfer of military equipment and weapons from the Department of Defense to federal and state law enforcement agencies.

According to publicly available data, roughly half of those killed by police in the recent past have been black or Latino. Addressing racial disparities in policing is critically important and urgent. I am a supporter of the CAM-TIP Act (H.R. 124) which would support local police departments' purchase of body cameras. The federal government must immediately start collecting information about police-involved shootings of civilians, and the federal government should also collect data on the deployment of SWAT teams in state and local policing. I believe that measures should be taken to ensure that investigations of police-involved shootings are undertaken by someone other than the police themselves to promote full and fair investigations, and that district attorneys should not be permitted to investigate police departments with whom they have had long standing, close professional relationships. I support community policing measures that address excessive use of force and foster trusting relationships between community members and police.

8. What challenges to Black and other people of color face as renters or homebuyers? How do current policies or norms preserve past policies of discrimination on the basis of race, and what can be done to change those policies or norms? Similarly, are there any instances of discrimination specific to our historical moment, and how would you work to change those?

The federal government’s housing policy is one of the greatest contributors to racial inequality in our country. As part of the New Deal, the Federal Housing

Administration helped an entire generation of Americans join the middle class, through the mass-production of subsidized housing in suburbs. It was the official policy of the United States government that these homes could not be sold to African Americans, and restrictive covenants forbade selling these homes to African Americans. The FHA explicitly practiced “redlining” in deciding which neighborhoods it would invest in. Increasing home values provided a significant source of wealth to mostly white families, and this was denied to most African American families, creating a wealth gap that persists to this day. This policy had the effect of segregating neighborhoods, and leaving African Americans in cities with declining investment and a declining tax base.

Today, people of color and poor and lower middle class people are facing a housing crisis. Eleven million of us pay over half our income for rent, and by 2025 that number could be at over fifteen million. At the same time, low-income housing has fallen by more than 60 percent since 2010. Housing is too expensive, and there’s not enough of it to go around. Long waiting lists for public housing leave people homeless or living in substandard conditions for years. The shortage of public housing has reached crisis levels.

The Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) gives states and localities the ability to make almost \$8 billion in tax credits for the acquisition, rehabilitation, and new construction of low-income rental housing. It is our most important tool in increasing the stock of affordable housing, is capped far below the level of need for millions of Americans.

We can do better. I support Representative Suzan DelBene’s Access to Affordable Housing Act, which would increase the LIHTC by fifty percent. That would result in as many as 400,000 more affordable housing units over the next ten years, easing the shortages that force families and communities to make impossible choices. I also support the bipartisan Affordable Housing Credit Improvement Act; that would increase the program’s ability to serve Americans who are most in need, and it would help to preserve existing affordable housing stock. And I know that we need to boost funding for the National Housing Trust Fund, so that we can provide desperately needed assistance to families.

It is heartening that under the spending bill passed in March of 2018, HUD received an increase of \$3.9 billion for FY 2018, for a total of nearly \$43 billion in funding (which was \$12 billion more than the President’s budget request). And while the reduction in the corporate tax rate had the indirect effect of diminishing the attractiveness of the housing tax credit to investors, the spending bill boosted allocations for the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit by 12.5% over the next four years, repairing that damage.

Our public housing has \$26 billion in unmet renovation needs, and our fellow Americans are suffering in winter when their worn-out heating systems fail. I would work to ensure that funding levels at HUD are substantially increased to provide adequate funding for the needed rehabilitation of public housing.

9. How does gentrification contribute to the lack of affordable housing in Monroe County? How will your policies impact the availability of Affordable

housing? What will you do to prevent homelessness and other crises caused by gentrification?

Gentrification generally poses a challenge to affordable housing, because without proper planning, gentrification will push out people who cannot afford rising property values and rents. Our investments in housing at the federal level should support mixed-income, diverse communities, not create gated communities for the privileged and leave everyone else fighting for crumbs. The investments in housing I described in question 8 are important parts of this vision for our future.

10. How do you define privilege? How has privilege impacted decisions you have made as an elected official, or if you are running for the first time, as an engaged community member? If you are elected, how will you use your privilege to assist Black and brown communities?

Privilege is any advantage one gets due to an accident of birth, or being a member of a favored group in our society. Some people are born on third base and think they hit a triple. And some people learn to recognize the advantages they were born with, and use that knowledge to support increased opportunity and equal treatment for those who have less. As a woman, I think I do have insights into how laws and attitudes have disadvantaged us, and why we are so severely underrepresented in elected office. As a white woman from a middle class background, I realize I have a very different set of life experiences from people in marginalized groups, and because of that, I won't know all the answers to the problems I want to address. I have to work hard to engage and listen and understand all people who deserve better treatment than they're currently getting. It also means making a concerted effort to hire employees who represent diverse backgrounds. The way I will use my privilege is to not be afraid of seeking power, and to use it to lift up and amplify the voices of the disadvantaged members of our community.

Shelli Yoder

1. Describe your platform by telling us what populations are most impacted by your platform policies, as well as your specific plan to reach out and work with the affected groups. If you do not explicitly cover marginalized populations in your initial response, tell us what influence you believe your policies will have on marginalized populations, especially Black and brown citizens. Finally, describe how your previous work in politics or elsewhere has impacted Black and other marginalized populations.

I am excited and honored to run for re-election to the Monroe County Council. I am running because I believe I provide courageous, progressive, and visionary leadership rooted in a commitment to social and racial justice. I will take my experience and passion for education, job training, access to health care, elimination of poverty, affordable housing, equality and inclusion, and community engagement to advance smart and environmentally sustainable growth, effective and responsive government, and support for all our neighbors with the greatest needs. To that end, I

have worked steadfastly to pass a fiscally responsible and responsive county budget each year. I voted to increase funding and support to CASA and our Youth Services expansion. I approved the Ivy Tech Community College expansion to address workforce development needs and increase life sciences training opportunities. I led the charge on the County Council to respond boldly to the opioid crisis with an emphasis on evidence-based and proven effective approaches to substance use disorder and addiction, specifically harm-reduction approaches like our syringe exchange program, one of the first programs in the State of Indiana. I also strongly support through steadfast funding our county's health clinic, Monroe County Futures Health Clinic, Volunteers in Medicine, as well as our local Planned Parenthood affiliate.

For the next four years, I will focus on:

- Continuing to address substance misuse and addiction using evidence-based and proven-effective approaches. I am forward-thinking and results driven when it comes to programs and solutions I support. I will focus on efforts that work to decriminalize substance misuse and addiction and will favor approaches that view these devastating realities as public health crises, as well as address how our drug-related criminal justice practices disproportionately target people of color and marginalized groups. I will continue working to bring community stakeholders together to enact a pre-booking diversion program for low-level drug crimes that emphasizes keeping people in the workforce and getting them connected to treatment and mental health services.
- Approaching county budgeting and management in a fiscally responsible and responsive manner, remaining ever nimble and committed to progressive solutions and approaches. As we look ahead at the serious impacts on managing county resources, the state law prohibiting a municipality from annexing property will expire on June 30, 2022. It will be imperative over the next four years to work to advocate for legislation that would protect the county and township shares of local income tax and hold harmless our public schools, county health clinic and services, and our public library from circuit breaker losses stemming from annexation. There are certainly areas that make sense for annexation - "islands" that are surrounded by the city, for example. But overall, all county stakeholders need to be included in the discussion and process: Ivy Tech, Indiana University, our public schools, rural transit, townships, library, and all of our residents, those who own property and those who may not. The impact is great and will need planning, not surprises.
- Advancing affordable housing initiatives within the county. Historically, these types of initiatives have been available to municipalities. But additional affordable housing tools are becoming available to communities, including county governments. I will work to ensure Monroe County is doing all we can to take advantage of programs and tools, like Opportunity Zone created by the tax "reform" bill. Programs such as this have the potential to increase access to affordable housing, a serious need that exists within Monroe County.

As a member of the County Council, I am committed to doing all we can to improve the freedom, health, and safety of black people, other people of color and

marginalized groups. I can and do advocate and support initiatives that create living wage jobs, improve access to holistic health services (mental health as well as physical health), provide greater access to substance misuse treatment, educational opportunities, public transit, and stable housing. On the Council, I will also request our Sheriff's Department, Community Corrections, Youth Services, and Prosecutor's office include in their annual report a racial breakdown of those served to note any racial disparities. As a co-founder and co-chair of the State of Indiana's only county-initiated opioid summit, I will increase outreach to our black communities and historically black churches to forge partnerships and ensure all voices are heard. Furthermore, I will continue supporting and working to improve access to our Rural Transit program, Volunteers in Medicine, and our community college opportunities with Ivy Tech.

As an educator, nonprofit professional, and elected official, I have been steadfastly committed to listening to, learning from, and empowering marginalized groups. Past experiences include: Criminal Justice Reform and Students Against the Death Penalty, grassroots organizer, Nashville, Tennessee, 2000-2002; Planned Parenthood, advocate, Tennessee and Indiana, 2001-present; 2004 Patient's Bill of Rights (Mental Health Advocacy), grassroots organizer, 2006-2009; Moms Demand Action, member and supporter, 2016 – present; 2017 Opioid Summit, co-founder and grassroots organizer, 2017 – present; Opioid Commission, founding member and organizer, 2017 – present; Head Start Policy Council, policy board member, 2013 – present; South Central Community Action Program, board member, 2013 – present. I am also a member and on staff at First United Church, a UCC affiliated denomination. Our church has a long history of involvement in the civil rights movement, starting in the 1950s and into present day. Our church is very white, and we acknowledge that of all the concerns facing our society, perhaps none is as critical as racism. We have regularly scheduled "Sacred Conversations on Race" and our Justice Fridays that occur monthly. Through each of these experiences, I have worked to improve the lives of marginalized communities, and I remain committed to that work.

2. To the best of your knowledge, describe why people of color are disproportionately targeted and arrested by the criminal justice system. What ideas do you have to make the justice system more equitable and impartial? What do you consider to be the top priorities for reforming our justice system?

Our community watched this summer as incidents of racial bias circulated in the news and on social media. One such incident was the ugly exchange between Vauhxx Rush Booker and a worker at Bloomington Transit Authority, who summoned the police when Mr. Booker's credit card transaction took a few extra minutes to process. One Facebook post included video footage documenting the encounter, which Mr. Booker characterized as an example of "systemic supremacy over Blacks, other people of color, and marginalized groups" that occurs routinely in our community. As I wrote in a letter to the editor submitted to the Herald Times (which they refused to publish pursuant to an election year policy), incidents such as this demand our community do a better job of confronting the bitter truth of the many ways white privilege, implicit bias, microaggressions, and overt prejudice continue to impact people of color in our

community. These realities adversely impact wages, education, housing, health, mental health – and has created a criminal justice system that unfairly targets people of color and marginalized communities.

This is why recently, in my current role as County Council President, I advocated for and supported the purchase of computer software and ongoing technology support for County Corrections that will help us gather and track accurate data, which is critically important for increasing evidence-based practices in our jail programming and ensuring people of color are not over represented in our jail population. Knowing social systems award preferences based on presumptions of white as the norm, another step would be to collectively review annual demographic data from the Police and Sheriff's Departments, Community Corrections, Youth Services, and the Prosecutor's office to assess possible patterns of racial discrimination.

An additional step toward a more equitable criminal justice system would be to require implicit bias training for all locally elected officials and employees, including police and other first responders. Such trainings can help non-minorities in local leadership and government service better appreciate the deep contours of systematic and historic racism in our society, as well as the skewed perspectives and unearned benefits that flow from one's privileged identity in terms of race, class, gender, sexual orientation, or religious affiliation.

Finally, a seat at the table matters, and thus, in all local matters but especially those regarding criminal justice and policing, we must ensure that we seek out and include differing and often silenced viewpoints, leadership and wisdom from our friends in Black Lives Matter, the NAACP, El Centro Comunal Latino, and other social service agencies. Together, we can and must do better in Bloomington and Monroe County to ensure people of all backgrounds, races, and ethnicities can live healthy, free, productive lives in our community.

3. What concerns do you have about the militarization of our police force? As this equipment is disproportionately deployed against people of color, what would you do, and what can the community do, to protect people of color from the effects of militarization? Name a specific issue in your community relating to the militarization of the police and how you have or would respond to it.

I remain unconvinced by those who claim purchasing military or military style equipment for local community policing and law enforcement is effective at reducing crime and keeping our communities safer. But what we do know without a doubt is this: historically such equipment has been disproportionately used against people of color. Furthermore, in a 2017 study, the increased militarization of a local law enforcement agency actually led to an increase in the fatalities among the local police officers. Such outcomes are horrific and unacceptable. The consideration of such purchases or the justification of the need to do so MUST be brought before the local community to allow for input and thoughtful examination BEFORE announcing the purchase. This approach demonstrates transparency and de-escalates feelings of fear and intimidation. I would also support an analysis that looks at the total expenditures (city and county) on law enforcement and corrections as a proportion of the combined total budget, as compared to expenditures on the resources and services such as health and mental

health, education, youth development, workforce development and public transportation.

4. Do you support programs focused on harm reduction, restorative justice, de-criminalization of drugs, reducing nuisance crimes and quality of life Policing, and/or jail diversion programs? Choose one or more of those programs (or comparable ones that you are aware of) and describe how you have or would support that program or programs.

My work on the county council to date illustrates my strong support for harm reduction and restorative justice programming. I have worked very recently to solidify a jail diversion program (e.g., Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion or LEAD) here in Monroe County. Additionally, the County has worked toward decriminalizing low drug-related crimes through my efforts on the Opioid Commission's legislative subcommittee. Through the opioid summit and commission, my colleagues and I have responded with action, funding, and bold leadership to the crisis in our community, and I am committed to continued innovation and support of these programs.

5. Name an issue facing school-aged children of color that you think needs to be better addressed and discuss how you would address it. Issues of particular interest to this organization include curriculum, busing and redistricting, before-and-after-school programs, and meal programs.

All of these issues listed above are critical and demand our attention. Considering nearly 20% (18.9%) of children in Monroe County are food insecure, our lunch program is of utmost importance. Without nutrition our entire well-being is compromised -- from education to earnings potential over the course of a lifetime. The 18.9% is not broken down by race, but I suspect the average is higher for school-aged children of color. I support non-shaming food services and breakfast/lunch programs being fully funded within our school district. The meals must be nutrient rich and full of whole foods like vegetables and fresh fruits. I will work to make sure our local schools are addressing and being PROACTIVE with these critical issues. I will also support school board candidates who take this vital and foundational necessity of food security to heart and make it part of his or her platform.

6. What are the top economic issues affecting Black and other marginalized peoples today? What economic policies would you prioritize in order to improve life for marginalized people in our community? Have you done any work in the past to address these or other economic issues affecting people of color?

We know the economic challenges facing black and other marginalized communities range from systemic, intergenerational poverty to lack of jobs and disproportionate unemployment, to lack of affordable housing. I am committed to what the NAACP has identified as priorities toward enhancing the economic capacity of African Americans and other underserved groups: financial economic education;

individual and community asset building initiatives; diversity and inclusion in hiring, career advancement and procurement.

To that end, in June 2018 I participated in the Vanderbilt University *Summer Institute on Public Theology and Racial Justice*, designed to foster ways we can better “impact our communities with the strong meta-narrative that emphasizes the inherent worth and dignity of every human being and advances the cause of racial minorities.” Over the course of a week in Nashville, Tennessee, I learned and worked alongside an impressive collective of “scholars, students, clergy, activists, community organizers, politicians, concerned citizens, artists, and strategists” to share best practices and to equip each other to engage the public in further dialogue surrounding racial justice in our local communities. This conference brought together those who have experienced hatred and bigotry as racial or ethnic minorities, as well as advocates for those who have experienced vitriolic rhetoric, hate crimes, disdain, othering, intolerance, and discrimination in the communities we serve. We engaged questions of race, social justice, and economic opportunity, and I am better equipped for and recommitted to my work on the Council to, alongside local businesses, agencies, and community groups, address and find robust, proactive solutions to the economic disparities facing people of color in Monroe County.

I also serve on our region’s Community Action Program (CAP), the South Central Community Action Program. I have served on this board, whose sole mission is to break the cycle of poverty among vulnerable and marginalized populations, for the past six years. During that time we created the program Thriving Connections, an innovative program committed to ending poverty and believing that all people need sufficient relationships, money, and meaning in their lives to thrive. I also serve on the Head Start Policy Council and am committed to early childhood education for marginalized children in this county. This past August 2018 I was asked to attend the weeklong National CAP Conference and took part in conversations, lectures, and breakout sessions about effective strategies in addressing poverty and economic disparities facing people of color.

7. What role do you think local government needs to play in improving the physical and mental health of Black people and other people of color? What specific issues around the intersection of race and health do you believe need to be addressed? Tell us how your policies would affect these issues, and describe any past experience you have in this area.

Protecting all black lives, regardless of gender, gender identity, ability, age, and income is critical. It is the role of an effective and responsive local government to ensure that the policies in place protect the marginalized and oppressed because when a county works for those who are most at risk of exclusion, including people of color, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, ability, age, and income, it works for everyone. I support policies that:

- Promote health (physical and mental), equity, and sustainability
- Support intersectoral collaboration
- Engage stakeholders

- Ensure structural and procedural policies and benefits within the county's hiring practices and employment that protect these lives

Of particular note, I have significant experience working in mental health as a nonprofit executive and grassroots organizer for mental health justice to ensure access to comprehensive health and mental health services. This is, once again, a critically important issue that impacts all other issues.

8. What challenges do Black and other people of color face as renters or homebuyers? How do current policies or norms preserve past policies of discrimination on the basis of race, and what can be done to change these policies or norms? Similarly, are there any instances of discrimination specific to our historical moment, and how would you work to change those?

People of color face disproportionate challenges when it comes to accessing fair, affordable housing. Organizations such as the Fair Housing Center of Central Indiana have researched and well-documented the types of discrimination people face based on race or color, national origin, and disability when trying to access housing in our communities. For example, a 2013 FHCCI report showed that 82% of their testing exhibited differential treatment favoring the white tester. In not a single test did the person of color receive more favorable treatment. In cases where multiple forms of discrimination occurred in the same test (race/color, ability, national origin), all types of discrimination were recorded. The test results found that:

- 82% involved difference in information regarding the availability of units
- 45% involved differences in treatment during the on-site appointment
- 27% involved differences in security deposit amounts
- 18% involved differences in rental amounts

Reports like this are alarming and give insight into the realities people of color and other marginalized groups face when accessing fair, affordable housing right here in our own communities; discrimination caused by lack of education, implicit bias, and the like. I remain committed to providing the resources necessary for County government and local agencies to take a hard look at and respond to discriminatory practices in fair housing laws. Our local government and community agencies must have the resources necessary to respond to the needs of our residents in order to ensure free, fair, affordable housing is accessible to all those in our community.

9. How does gentrification contribute to the lack of affordable housing in Monroe County? How will your policies impact the availability of Affordable housing? What will you do to prevent homelessness and other crises caused by gentrification?

As a local government, we should always support and strive for progress; to be as innovative and forward-thinking as possible while remaining fiscally responsible and responsive to the needs of our residents. Unfortunately, "progress" has sometimes come with side effects that disadvantage people based on income and race – especially when it comes to accessing economic opportunity and affordable housing. This is not the kind

of progress we should be striving for. As an elected official, I commit myself to making decisions only when all affected populations have a seat at the decision-making table. We must ensure that development in our community is available and accessible to all those who call Monroe County home. On the Council, I will find ways for the County to take advantage of initiatives and funding available to increase affordable housing – funds that were previously only available to municipalities but now are also available to counties.

10. How do you define privilege? How has privilege impacted decisions you have made as an elected official, or if you are running for the first time, as an engaged community member? If you are elected, how will you use your privilege to assist Black and brown communities?

I define privilege as being given unearned benefits due to belonging to a specific social group due to certain aspects of a person's identity: race, class, gender, sexual orientation, language, geographical location, ability, and religion, to name a few. Privilege does not negate hard work or hardship. Having privilege does not mean a person has not worked hard or has had an easy life. Being a white woman is hard. Being a black woman is harder. Being a Muslim, black woman is even harder still. Privilege is unearned, so it is easy to forget its power. That's why it is imperative that I seek guidance and wisdom from those who do not share the same privilege. As a county councilor, I have had an opportunity to shape the values of our county based on how we prioritize our budgets. I supported the expansion of our youth services. I voted to increase the funding of CASA. I voted to expand funding of our elections and Voter Registration program. I support critical social service agencies like Volunteers in Medicine, Planned Parenthood, and Mother Hubbard's Cupboard through our Sophia Travis Community Grants, and I will continue to do so.

Matt Pierce

1. Describe your platform by telling us what populations are most impacted by your platform policies, as well as your specific plan to reach out and work with the affected groups. If you do not explicitly cover marginalized populations in your initial response, tell us what influence you believe your policies will have on marginalized populations, especially Black and brown citizens. Finally, describe how your previous work in politics or elsewhere has impacted Black and other marginalized populations.

I view the job of state representative as supporting policies that will improve the quality of life for all residents of the community. Whenever an issue is being debated at the General Assembly, I always ask myself, "Whose voice is not being heard? Who can't afford a high-priced lobbyist to make their case for them?"

I regularly meet with citizens and organizations who are working on issues important to our community so I can hear their perspectives on what the General Assembly needs to be doing and their opinions of legislation being considered by the

legislature. Listening to the views of diverse groups is a fundamental duty of a legislator. As a life member of the NAACP, I listen carefully to the concerns of local NAACP chapter members.

Achieving criminal justice reform by eliminating mandatory minimum drug sentences likely has had the greatest impact on the minority populations of all of my efforts in the General Assembly.

2. To the best of your knowledge, describe why people of color are disproportionately targeted and arrested by the criminal justice system. What ideas do you have to make the justice system more equitable and impartial? What do you consider to be the top priorities for reforming our justice system?

Implicit bias is a problem across society, including law enforcement agencies. This can result in unfair, inaccurate perceptions that minorities are more likely to commit crimes or be dangerous when encountered by law enforcement officers.

I have been a key participant in Indiana's criminal justice reform movement, co-authoring the legislation that reversed ineffective "tough on crime" policies from the 1990s that disproportionately affected people of color and replacing them with "smart on crime" policies that address the underlying causes of crime—drug addiction and mental illness.

Mandatory minimum sentences for drug offenses were eliminated and judges given more discretion to consider the individual circumstances of defendants being sentenced for crimes. Instead of spending money to build new prisons, millions of dollars have been redirected to fund drug treatment and mental health programs as alternatives to incarceration. Specialized problem-solving courts such as drug courts are being expanded across the state. These courts administer programs that focus on treating addictions, finding gainful employment, and reintegrating individuals into their communities.

This process of redirecting the criminal justice system is on-going, and more needs to be done. One reason why I am running for reelection is to be a strong voice for continuing the reform movement and not backsliding into the failed policies of the past.

The criminal justice system can be made more fair by increasing funding for public defenders to reduce their caseloads so they can give more attention to each case. Those accused of crimes should not be forced to spend time in jail awaiting trial just because they cannot afford bail. I support eliminating the current bail system in Indiana and am pleased that Indiana Supreme Court rules are moving counties away from requiring bail to be released from jail while awaiting trial when the accused is not a danger to the community or own self.

Unfortunately, there has not been any progress on adopting a hate crimes bill. Indiana is one of a handful of states without a hate crimes law. I have supported past efforts to enact the law, and I will continue working for its passage in the future.

3. What concerns do you have about the militarization of our police force? As this equipment is disproportionately deployed against people of color, what would you do, and what can the community do, to protect people of color from

the effects of militarization? Name a specific issue in your community relating to the militarization of the police and how you have or would respond to it.

I do not support the federal program re-instated by President Trump that provides free military surplus equipment to local law enforcement. This program makes it easy for local police and sheriffs to collect large pieces of military equipment designed for fighting wars, not enforcing laws.

It is appropriate for communities to insist on specific, written policies for when equipment not used in the normal course of law enforcement may be deployed.

4. Do you support programs focused on harm reduction, restorative justice, de-criminalization of drugs, reducing nuisance crimes and quality of life Policing, and/or jail diversion programs? Choose one or more of those programs (or comparable ones that you are aware of) and describe how you have or would support that program or programs.

Rather than rely on the failed “war on drugs” approach to the problem of drug addiction, the current opioid crisis should be treated as a public health issue. Drug addiction treatment and related mental health services need to be widely available.

See my response to question 2 for specifics about my criminal justice reform efforts.

5. Name an issue facing school-age children of color that you think needs to be better addressed and discuss how you would address it. Issues of particular interest to this organization include curriculum, busing and redistricting, before-and-after-school programs, and meal programs.

Because a disproportionate number of minority students live in poverty, they cannot receive a quality education unless underlying socio-economic conditions are addressed. I support quality early childhood education being made available to all children in Indiana. I also support meal programs that ensure children are not hungry while they are trying to learn.

6. What are the top economic issues affecting Black and other marginalized peoples today? What economic policies would you prioritize in order to improve life for marginalized people in our community? Have you done any work in the past to address these or other economic issues affecting people of color?

I opposed policies promoting Indiana as a low-wage state, and I will continue supporting efforts to raise the minimum wage, make Indiana’s tax code less regressive, and improve worker benefits. For example, I voted against the transportation funding bill because it raised the gas tax and car registration fees that will disproportionately burden low-income families while at the same time the General Assembly was lowering taxes on corporations.

I have consistently fought efforts to exploit those living in poverty. For example, I voted against a bill that would have allowed payday lenders to charge interest rates of over 200 percent.

7. What role do you think local government needs to play in improving the physical and mental health of Black people and other people of color? What specific issues around the intersection of race and health do you believe need to be addressed? Tell us how your policies would affect these issues, and describe any past experience you have in this area.

While Indiana has poor health outcomes in the general population, in many cases health outcomes are worse for minority populations. One major cause of these disparities has been the lack of access to affordable health care. I voted to establish the Healthy Indiana Plan that expanded health coverage to citizens that needed health insurance but did not qualify for Medicaid. I also voted to expand Medicaid in Indiana under President Obama's Affordable Care Act. This made health insurance affordable for more Indiana citizens. I will oppose any efforts to repeal Indiana's expansion of the Medicaid program or undermine the Affordable Care Act.

I have also supported legislation to attack the problems of infant mortality, heart disease, and diabetes that particularly impact minority health. However, the legislature has done a poor job of funding public health programs. The legislature should strengthen its support of county health departments so they can increase outreach efforts to minorities and better focus on the health problems they face.

8. What challenges to Black and other people of color face as renters or homebuyers? How do current policies or norms preserve past policies of discrimination on the basis of race, and what can be done to change those policies or norms? Similarly, are there any instances of discrimination specific to our historical moment, and how would you work to change those?

Despite many laws against housing discrimination, there are too many documented cases of people of color being turned-away from rental housing for which they qualify to rent. Anti-discrimination laws need to be better enforced. People of color can face similar discrimination when attempting to buy a home. Subtle forms of discrimination have replaced overt restrictive covenants and redlining that existed in the past.

9. How does gentrification contribute to the lack of affordable housing in Monroe County? How will your policies impact the availability of Affordable housing? What will you do to prevent homelessness and other crises caused by gentrification?

Because the largest rate of return on an investment for housing developers is either expensive apartments marketed to students or luxury homes, there is little or no affordable housing available in our area. Even modest homes once affordable by first-time home buyers have skyrocketed in price.

I have supported state tax incentives for developers building affordable housing, and I will work with local officials to support their efforts to create projects with affordable housing.

10. How do you define privilege? How has privilege impacted decisions you have made as an elected official, or if you are running for the first time, as an

engaged community member? If you are elected, how will you use your privilege to assist Black and brown communities?

The word “privilege” can be used to describe a situation where advantages enjoyed by one sector of society are not enjoyed by others in society. Because most communities in America have divided themselves by characteristics such as race, income, and political party affiliation, it is easy to overlook the challenges faced by individuals who have faced discrimination or live in poverty. It is the responsibility of elected officials to work for all members of society and be aware of what is happening beyond their own social circles.

Lee Jones

1. Describe your platform by telling us what populations are most impacted by your platform policies, as well as your specific plan to reach out and work with the affected groups. If you do not explicitly cover marginalized populations in your initial response, tell us what influence you believe your policies will have on marginalized populations, especially Black and brown citizens. Finally, describe how your previous work in politics or elsewhere has impacted Black and other marginalized populations.

The most important part of my platform is restorative justice. I've been a member of the Community Corrections Board for the last 6.5 years. During that time it has become increasingly clear to me that Community Corrections and Probation are more and more in demand as the State no longer takes level 6 felons in the state prisons. This, along with the addiction epidemic, is creating a situation where our jail is severely overcrowded. It very necessary to keep as many non-violent offenders as possible out of the jail. I have advocated for, and strongly support, the Counties' pre-trial release program. I believe, with more time and experience, it could be expanded significantly.

When people are released from jail or have had a pre-trial release they are usually overseen by Community Corrections or Probation or both. Both of these county departments have many evidence based programs that are aimed at helping clients to adjust to their new circumstances and to reduce recidivism. These programs are scattered throughout county buildings. It would be much more efficient and cost effective if they could all be located in one space, which would also lead to improved outcomes.

The Commissioners are in charge of the County's space needs. If elected, I will work with the other Commissioners and department staff to seek out a way to gather all these programs together in one space. This will allow for a more wrap-around method of treatment, making things easier for both staff and clients.

Because people of color and marginalized communities are more frequently targeted for arrest, making the system work better for them is critical.

2. To the best of your knowledge, describe why people of color are disproportionately targeted and arrested by the criminal justice system. What ideas do you have to make the justice system more equitable and impartial? What do you consider to be the top priorities for reforming our justice system?

There are a number of things working together that cause the disproportionate targeting of people of color. People living in any marginalized community tend to more frequently be in need of things unavailable to them. This may cause more of a propensity for crime, and has certainly brought about the belief there is more crime, so those neighborhoods are likely to be targeted which leads to more arrests.

Because of the easy availability of guns the policing agencies feel targeted which often causes very unfortunate over-reactions. Many police have developed, or may even have been encouraged, to view the citizens they are supposed to be serving as enemies. This can also cause faulty snap judgements.

I don't think it can be denied that racism and inherent prejudice also are a significant factor. It seems the very people who are most anxious to label us a "post-racial" society are the ones who can't get past it.

It is my belief that reform should start with the root of the problem. Everything about our justice system leads to a punitive view of the people caught in the system. When we can learn to seek rehabilitation instead of punishment the outcomes will be significantly better and cheaper.

The criminalization of drugs is also straining the whole system. Many people consume drugs or alcohol without ever committing a crime. There is no reason why mere consumption should be a crime, and we have adequate laws if a crime is committed. When addicts try to turn their lives around it is not at all uncommon to have a relapse or two. This often leads to arrest and jail. Imprisoning people for a minor probation violation is unnecessarily straining the entire justice system, and also creates a cycle of arrest and imprisonment can be very difficult for people to break out of.

I am, and will continue to be, a strong advocate for making our justice system more equitable and less punitive.

3. What concerns do you have about the militarization of our police force? As this equipment is disproportionately deployed against people of color, what would you do, and what can the community do, to protect people of color from the effects of militarization? Name a specific issue in your community relating to the militarization of the police and how you have or would respond to it.

The spread of militaristic equipment in police forces is an indication the police see themselves fighting a war instead of serving the public. The problem isn't just with military style equipment. It is also seen in the mind set of at least some of the police officers. It is probably natural for veterans to look for jobs with police forces, but they have often been trained to have a "them against us" mentality. Possibly some extra training for police coming from the military could help with this.

I believe the purchase of the Bearcat has been the most significant instance of the militarization of the police in this community. I think the Chief of Police and the Mayor should have re-considered when they found out how it was perceived by people of color.

4. Do you support programs focused on harm reduction, restorative justice, de-criminalization of drugs, reducing nuisance crimes and quality of life Policing, and/or jail diversion programs? Choose one or more of those programs (or comparable ones that you are aware of) and describe how you have or would support that program or programs.

I have and still do support all of the things mentioned in the question. I mostly answered the rest of this question in my answers to question number 1 and 2.

5. Name an issue facing school-age children of color that you think needs to be better addressed and discuss how you would address it. Issues of particular interest to this organization include curriculum, busing and redistricting, before-and-after-school programs, and meal programs.

I would focus on meal programs and before-and-after-school programs because these will do the most to help keep school aged children healthy and safe. It is very well documented that hungry children can't learn as well as those that are well fed. It is important that there be a well-funded breakfast and lunch program for disadvantaged children.

As more and more families are finding it necessary for all adults to have a job to cover the most essential expenses, before and after school programming is becoming increasingly important for the safety of children. I will lobby the school board to provide these programs, and I will explore the possibility of helping fund meals with a contribution from the Commissioners cum cap fund.

6. What are the top economic issues affecting Black and other marginalized peoples today? What economic policies would you prioritize in order to improve life for marginalized people in our community? Have you done any work in the past to address these or other economic issues affecting people of color?

Because people of color experience a much higher level of unemployment, poverty is a serious issue. During the 2008 recession black these communities also experienced a higher level of foreclosure. Because in many cases their homes account for a more significant part of their assets, this brought about a higher rate of homelessness and unemployment than was experienced by the rest of society. The lack of affordable housing exasperates these problems.

I think the two most important issues that I have worked on locally is affordable housing and the disparate rate of incarceration. Having a criminal record is another employment issue. This is one of my greatest concerns, and is an area that I will be focusing on if elected. I have also been working with the Plan Commission to try to figure out how to develop and make available more affordable housing. I would like to look into the possibility of the County establishing an affordable housing fund.

7. What role do you think local government needs to play in improving the physical and mental health of Black people and other people of color? What specific issues around the intersection of race and health do you believe need to be addressed? Tell us how your policies would affect these issues, and describe any past experience you have in this area.

Many of the people who are jailed have mental health issues. Because people of color are jailed at a greater rate they are more likely to end up in jail because of a mental health issue. There was a time when our society understood that jailing isn't the best treatment for mental health. Unfortunately that understanding was lost when the federal political decision was made to close government supported mental health institutions in the midst of privatization. At this time local county government does provide some funds to support local mental health facilities. This is something the state and federal governments should be more actively supporting since it would relieve quite a bit of the overcrowding in jails and prisons around the country, and is a much more humane way of dealing with mental health problems. Punishment has never cured mental health issues!!

8. What challenges to Black and other people of color face as renters or homebuyers? How do current policies or norms preserve past policies of discrimination on the basis of race, and what can be done to change those policies or norms? Similarly, are there any instances of discrimination specific to our historical moment, and how would you work to change those?

I have not heard of racial issues being a problem with housing in this community, which certainly doesn't mean it doesn't exist. If County Government were to learn of landlords discriminating against people of color it would be my desire to legally pursue that to whatever extent we are able to.

I think the lack of affordable housing may be a much more serious problem than discrimination in this community. Because the price of houses is so high compared to salaries many young families can't afford to buy a house. These families end up renting which is driving up rental costs. I am a member of the County Plan Commission where we are finalizing a plan for the urbanizing area around Bloomington. There has been a great deal of public input throughout the process, where it has been made clear that affordable housing is very important to this community. As the plan has been formulated that desire has been kept at the forefront.

9. How does gentrification contribute to the lack of affordable housing in Monroe County? How will your policies impact the availability of Affordable housing? What will you do to prevent homelessness and other crises caused by gentrification?

As gentrification occurs property values are driven up which causes rents to increase. As rents increase the renters start looking for other places to live which drives up the cost of renting even more. As more and more people seek out cheaper housing the value of that housing increases. In the case of Monroe County this has become so prevalent property values have generally increased to a level where there is

very little housing available that is affordable for the people trying to find it. This problem is magnified by Bloomington becoming an employment center for the surrounding counties. This gives a large pool of labor which drives salaries down. The two together are making Bloomington and parts of the County more oriented toward the needs and desires of wealthier people.

No one has really figured out a way to prevent gentrification. I hope that the part of the new urbanizing plant that encourages new development to be compatible with current neighborhoods might at least slow down the rate of gentrification. Monroe County and the City of Bloomington have developed many resources to help alleviate the effect of gentrification such as establishing funds to build affordable housing and improving public transportation. A variety of homeless shelters can aid people who have been driven out of their homes due to increasing rents. Most of the shelters include a variety of programming to help the homeless move into a home and begin to improve their lives. The County's Sophia Travis Social Services fund and the City's Jack Hopkins fund helps subsidize these programs and keep them robust. The Commissioners also at times use their Cum Cap fund to help contend with crises. I will work to keep all these funds well-endowed and available to the most disadvantaged in our community. I will also closely examine Plan Commission decisions, (the majority of those come to the commissioners for final approval), in the hopes of being able to tell whether these decisions will promote gentrification.

10. How do you define privilege? How has privilege impacted decisions you have made as an elected official, or if you are running for the first time, as an engaged community member? If you are elected, how will you use your privilege to assist Black and brown communities?

A person or group of people are privileged when they have an advantage that others don't have. I have always been acutely aware of the fact that as a professor's daughter I was unusually privileged. When the County Council was asked to pass a food and beverage tax on everyone in the County to fund a renovated convention center I thought long and hard about whether it was something I could support. This tax targets prepared foods. It seemed to me that the least advantaged citizens of our community might be the most likely to depend on prepared foods for a whole variety of reasons. People supporting the new convention center seemed to sincerely believe it would bring more economic benefits than pain. While I don't dispute that possibility I do believe it would be very difficult for most people to see how the tax had benefited them. Because of that I voted against the tax, while having nothing against the convention center. In the end the tax did pass, 4 votes to 3, but I used the occasion to point out how disadvantaged some of our citizens are, and how much more significant this tax would seem to them than it was to the supporters of the convention center.

As I become aware of issues and needs within the black and brown communities I will assess whether there is any action I can take as a commissioner to alleviate the situation. If there is no possible direct action by the commissioners, I will determine if I can help as a private citizen. No matter what, I will use my ability to speak to the community to make the situation known and what can be done about it.

Christine TALLEY HASEMAN

FOR JUDGE

Dear Black Lives Matter,

Thank you for taking the time to put together the Candidate Questionnaire for the Midterm Elections 2018. I appreciate the work that you have put into increasing awareness of issues facing people of color in our community. I also appreciate your active involvement in the political process this campaign season, both through the panels that you presented and through the Candidate Questionnaires, so that voters can be informed when they go to the polls in November.

I know that you are aware that the Judicial Canons of Ethics limit what judicial candidates can say regarding issues that may come before the candidate as a judge on the bench. I appreciate your sensitivity to this issue when you have spoken with me as a judicial candidate. For purposes of this questionnaire, I believe that providing answers to questions 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 9 could put me in a position where I am in violation of the Judicial Canons of Ethics as my answers could result in my inability to hear a case that comes before me or could raise questions as to my independence or impartiality regarding those issues. Thank you for your understanding on this issue.

Please see the following pages for my responses to questions 1, 4, and 10.

Thank you,

1. Describe your platform by telling us what populations are most impacted by your platform policies, as well as your specific plan to reach out and work with the affected groups. If you do not explicitly cover marginalized populations in your initial response, tell us what influence you believe your policies will have on marginalized populations, especially Black and brown citizens. Finally, describe how your previous work in politics or elsewhere has impacted Black and other marginalized populations.

As a judicial candidate, my "platform" is both the United States Constitution and the Indiana Constitution, both of which equally impact every single person that appears in front of me. When I was sworn in as an attorney, both in Indiana and Kentucky, I took an oath to support and defend the Constitutions of the United States Government, the State of Indiana, and the Commonwealth of Kentucky. I take those oaths and that responsibility very seriously and will continue to do so when I take the bench in January. I work hard to ensure that each person who appears before me is treated with respect and is treated equally to everyone else in the courtroom, regardless of race, gender, sexual orientation, sexual identity, age, financial status, or other issues that might appear to marginalize or elevate members of our society.

In my private practice, I have served any person that came to me seeking help, if I was in a position that I was able to help them, without regard to their race, gender, sexual identity, sexual orientation, age, or other issues that marginalize our citizens. I am limited by attorney client privilege and confidentiality as to what I can say regarding some situations, but within those limitations, I can say that I have had the

opportunity to represent clients in child abuse and neglect cases whose rights and children's rights were being affected by legal proceedings and their rights were protected by the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA”).

ICWA is a federal law that was passed in 1978 due to a disturbingly high number of Indian children being removed from their homes and being placed in the homes of white people by both public and private agencies. The purpose of ICWA is “...to protect the best interest of Indian Children and to promote the stability and security of Indian tribes and families by the establishment of minimum Federal standards for the removal of Indian children and placement of such children in homes which will reflect the unique values of Indian culture...” (25 U.S. C. provides guidance to States regarding the handling of child abuse and neglect and adoption cases involving Native children and sets minimum standards for the handling of these cases. (See <https://www.bia.gov/bia/ois/dhs/icwa> for more information on ICWA.) ICWA has been an issue in more than one case that I have been involved in, however, in one particular case it became a primary issue. In order to ensure that my clients' rights were protected under ICWA, I engaged the services of a local expert on ICWA, who volunteered his time due to my clients' low income status, and ensured that I fully understood not only the Act, but the reasons that the Act became necessary to protect Indian children and their families. With the knowledge that I gained from working with this expert, I was able to better represent my clients' interests and work to keep this Indian family together.

Another way in which I have worked to assist marginalized populations is through my work as a child advocate for over twenty years, representing the best interests of children in child abuse and neglect cases, juvenile delinquency cases, guardianships, adoptions, and high conflict divorce and paternity cases. I have represented over 200 children to ensure that their best interests have been protected. In this work, I have had the opportunity to represent children that are members of marginalized populations, including children who were or whose parents were members of the LGBTQI+ community; children who suffered from mental illness or who had a parent who suffered from mental illness; and children who lived in extreme poverty. I work to ensure that the interests of these children are appropriately represented before the courts so that the children's needs are identified and met within our legal system.

In addition to my own work as a child advocate, I am a volunteer attorney for the Monroe County CASA program and I was a founding member of the Owen County CASA program Board of Directors. The CASA programs are another way of ensuring that children who are members of marginalized populations receive full and effective advocacy and representation within our legal system.

I am a member of the Board of Directors of the National Alliance for Mental Illness - Greater Bloomington Area (“NAMI”). NAMI is the nation's largest grassroots mental health organization dedicated to building better lives for the millions of Americans affected by mental illness. As a member of the local NAMI Board of Directors, I work with other NAMI members to “educate, advocate, listen and lead in the area of mental health. NAMI and our members work to improve the lives of members of our community that are suffering from mental illness, without regard to the race, gender, etc. of the person. It is important that all individuals suffering from

mental illness have access to treatment, and that treatment needs to come from appropriate mental health professionals, not from our criminal justice system.

I am a member of the NAACP and the Monroe County Black Democratic Caucus (MCBDC). I am honored to be a Supported candidate in this election by the Monroe County Black Democratic Caucus. Involvement with both the local chapter of the NAACP, under the direction of Jim Sims, and the MCBDC, under the direction of William Hosea, has been an incredibly positive experience for me and one that I enjoy very much. I have learned a great deal from the individuals in these two groups and am in awe of the work that they do. I am pleased to be included as a member and to be able to be a part of the work that they do on behalf of the Black community.

As an elected member of the Board of Judges, I will remain involved with the NAACP and the Monroe County Black Democratic Caucus to the extent that the Judicial Canons of Ethics allow me to do so. I work hard to be aware of my own implicit biases, including going to training sessions on identifying implicit bias, and I work hard to keep these implicit biases from affecting the rulings I make as a Judge. I will strive to help others recognize implicit biases in themselves and others. Nevertheless, in my opinion, identifying our own implicit biases and learning to work through them is a lifelong learning process. I look forward to continuing to learn about racial issues and bias from the incredible people in the NAACP and MCBDC, as well as the hard-working individuals with Black Lives Matters, and look forward to applying new information and new ideas that I learn from these groups in my capacity as a judicial officer.

4. Do you support programs focused on harm reduction, restorative justice, decriminalization of drugs, reducing nuisance crimes and quality of life Policing, and/or jail diversion programs? Choose one or more of those programs (or comparable ones that you are aware of) and describe how you have or would support that program or programs.

Yes, to the extent it will be possible to do so in my capacity as a judge, I support programs focused on harm reduction, restorative justice, reducing nuisance crimes, and jail diversion programs. As to de-criminalization of drugs, that is an issue that is determined by the legislature and not by trial court judges. My job as a trial court judge is to follow the law whether I personally agree with it or not, which includes following the laws passed by the legislature regarding criminalization or de-criminalization of drugs. As a judge, however, I would have the discretion at sentencing in many cases to include terms directed toward assistance and rehabilitation for individuals in cases where appropriate.

Dr. Carrie Lawrence is a member of my campaign committee and is committed to working on harm reduction policies and procedures. She has been an invaluable resource for me for many years when I have sought information regarding harm reduction programs and policies and procedures that accompany them. Dr. Lawrence has been generous with her knowledge, research and expertise regarding needle exchange programs and the importance of the use of naloxone and naloxone training. I was trained in the use of naloxone at a training sponsored by Dan Canon this spring. I appreciated the opportunity to learn about the use of naloxone and to hear from people whose lives had been saved by this medication. I look forward to this information

continuing to be shared with members of our community so that we can become a community that is ready and able to provide help to individuals who suffer an overdose and need life-saving assistance.

Ensuring that someone who has suffered an overdose receives life-saving treatment where possible hits close to home for me. When I was a deputy prosecuting attorney, a young man in his late teens overdosed and died. His friends were afraid to call for help for fear that they would get in trouble themselves and, as a result, possible life-saving treatment for the young man who died was delayed, as his friends left him alone rather than immediately calling for help. I still carry the rubber bracelet with the young man's name and the year of his death on it that his mother gave me at the time. She wanted her son's story to get out so that other people did not suffer the same consequences as her son. When I was a deputy prosecuting attorney in Lawrence County, I was the designated team member from the Prosecutor's Office for the Pathways to Recovery Program ("Pathways"). Pathways was a program that was designed by (now retired) Judge Michael Robbins to provide support and services to inmates in the jail to help them learn a different way of life and develop skills that they would need to be successful upon their release from jail. They were provided services in the jail and certain successes in the program provided time cuts for the individuals participating in the program. Upon their release from jail, they continued to participate in the program for a period of time in order to continue to receive the supports and assistance that they needed to transition to life outside of the jail. The Pathways team included the Judge, a member of the drug treatment program from the Probation Department, the Sheriff, a Public Defender, and myself, as the Prosecutor's Office representative. I truly appreciated the opportunity to be a member of the Pathways team, as participating in this program to help inmates become successful in their lives upon release from jail was a rewarding experience. I fully supported the approach of trying to help these individuals become successful rather than the approach of just locking them up and letting them sit there to do their time.

Wain Martin, one of the founders of the New Leaf New Life program, is also on my campaign committee, having agreed to serve as an Honorary Chairperson for my campaign. The New Leaf New Life program is dedicated to supporting transformative justice in Monroe County by providing assistance to individuals during incarceration and during their transition back into the community. Wain served as the leader of New Leaf New Life for over twelve years, just retiring this year. Wain also established the Transition Support Center (TSC), which provides services to inmates after they are released to help them transition to productive lives and to help them to avoid repeated incarceration. I have known Wain most of my life and have learned a great deal from him regarding treating people equally, regardless of their circumstances. Wain is an individual to whom I have looked up to for years and I have tried to adopt his approach to caring about and working with individuals who are members of marginalized populations. When I have served as a Judge in the past, as well as when I worked as a deputy prosecuting attorney, I looked at each individual before me and tried to get a sense of their whole situation in an effort to ensure that justice was served appropriately, including providing information for access to services and support networks that could help the individual become successful in his or her life and get out of the criminal justice system.

10. How do you define privilege? How has privilege impacted decisions you have made as an elected official, or if you are running for the first time, as an engaged community member? If you are elected, how will you use your privilege to assist Black and brown communities?

I define privilege as a combination of the rights, benefits and opportunities that I have been given in life simply because of the color of my skin and the circumstances and social status of the family into which I was born. I know that doors have been opened for me in life simply because of the color of my skin, doors that would not have been opened for someone with dark skin. (I have also experienced doors being closed to me in my career simply because of my gender.) I have the privilege of coming from a middle-class family with two parents who went to college, earned advanced college degrees, and had successful careers. I now have the privilege of having my own successful career and being married to a man who is successful in his chosen line of work in a job that provides excellent health insurance for our family. The opportunities that both my husband and I have been given mean that we have never had to worry about where we will live, whether we will be able to feed our children, or whether we will be able to get appropriate health care for our children. These are opportunities that people often take for granted but, through my work, I am well aware that many people do not have those same opportunities and they worry on a daily basis about how they will keep a roof over their heads, how they will feed their children, and whether they will be able to access adequate and appropriate health care for their children.

My involvement in the National Alliance for Mental Illness - Greater Bloomington Area (NAMI) came about as a result of my privilege. I have a family member who suffers from a serious mental illness. As a result of my privilege, I am able to seek appropriate medical and mental health care for this family member in ways that an individual of a different socioeconomic status or educational status may not be able to do. (I would add that even with the privileges that I have, access to appropriate mental health care is not always available and is a significant issue in our community that needs to be addressed.) With the resources that I have available to me, I have learned a great deal about mental illness and how it affects individuals suffering from the illness, as well as the overall impact on the family of the sufferer. I accepted the position on the NAMI Board in an effort to become part of the solution of helping individuals and/or family members of individuals with mental illness find answers that they may not otherwise be able to find because certain doors may be closed to them due to their own lack of resources or information.

As a member of the Board of Judges, I will do my best to ensure that the courtroom is fair and just to all people, regardless of ethnicity, economic status, social status, or privilege. As previously stated, to the extent allowed by the Judicial Canons of Ethics, I will continue to be involved with the NAACP and the Monroe County Black Democratic Caucus. I will continue my position as a member of the NAMI board in order to continue my work with individuals and family members of individuals that suffer from mental illness. Through my involvement in the community, I will work to strengthen the bonds between not just members of the Black and brown communities, but among members of our community as a whole.

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to your questionnaire.

Darcie Fawcett

Thank you for requesting information about my campaign for Monroe Circuit Court Judge and how it pertains to the mission of your organization. It is my pleasure to answer questions as permitted by Indiana law. As I relayed to you during the primary election period, the Indiana Code of Judicial Conduct prohibits judicial candidates from having specific policy-related platforms. For that reason, I cannot answer questions 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 9. Answers that I am able to provide are below and enumerated per the questionnaire.

1. Describe your platform by telling us what populations are most impacted by your platform policies, as well as your specific plan to reach out and work with the affected groups. If you do not explicitly cover marginalized populations in your initial response, tell us what influence you believe your policies will have on marginalized populations, especially Black and brown citizens. Finally, describe how your previous work in politics or elsewhere has impacted Black and other marginalized populations.

My platform emphasizes the unique qualities that make me the best choice for this judicial seat. First, I have the courtroom experience to run an efficient and effective courtroom. I have been a Deputy Prosecutor for nearly fifteen years and worked inside a courtroom on a nearly daily basis. I have an in depth understanding of the rules of evidence and trial procedure. It is essential that our judges have this knowledge because they are often called upon to make critical rulings in the heat of an adversarial setting. My career as a prosecutor has imbued me with deep respect for due process, the rule of law, and compassion for our citizens. Through my interactions with victims, families of victims, witnesses, and those accused of crimes, I have developed a sophisticated understanding of people and their motivations; I have also come to understand the needs of our community. My interactions with people from all walks of life in the courtroom have given me the wisdom and perspective to determine an appropriate course of action. It is through this lens of experience and understanding of the human condition that, as judge, I will consider every individual and every case that comes before me.

I am also dedicated to equality. While obtaining my Bachelor of Arts at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, I double majored in Psychology and Education and Minored in Women's Studies. As part of my teaching practicum I applied for and was chosen to be part of a Teach for Diversity Cohort that consisted of 12 elementary education majors who specifically wanted to teach in underserved communities. Following graduation, I obtained a teaching position at Kasetsart University in Bangkok Thailand. Upon returning to the states I taught for two years in Chicago Public Schools, followed by one year in Indianapolis Public School. Working with diverse populations has given me different perspective and insights that will enrich our judiciary. I will use these experiences to ensure that every person who enters a court of law to be treated fairly and with respect.

Finally, my platform is based on my public engagement and how that will translate into serving our community. I have, or am currently serving our community in the following capacities: President of the Prospect Hill Neighborhood Association, President of the Fairview Parent Teacher Organization, Member of the Monroe County Human Rights Commission, Vice President of the Board of Parks Commissioners, Member of the Bloomington Northside Exchange Club, Member of the Bloomington Urban Enterprise, Association, Member of the Hospital Site Reutilization Steering Committee, and Member of the Advisory Committee for the Bloomington Unified Development Organization.

In recognition of this public service, I have received several community honors. In 2013, I was one of 40 applicants selected from over 175 applicants from across the state for the Indiana Democratic Emerging Leader Program. In 2014, the IU Student Media honored me with the Trevor R. Brown Award, which is given to a community member who believes in student journalism, serves as an advocate of the First Amendment, and who contributes to the valuable experience of the student journalists and the long-term success of student media at IU.

Judges deal with a wide spectrum of individuals in their courtroom ranging from civil litigants who have suffered financial and physical injuries and those who have been accused of crimes including murder, battery, theft, and drug possession. Therefore, my decisions will affect all populations, including those that have been traditionally marginalized.

Communities of color continue to be marginalized in a variety of ways including lack of counsel in the courtroom and disproportionate charging and sentencing. As a judge, it is my duty to ensure everyone receives fair and impartial justice. I will use my varied experiences to make the informed decision possible.

4. Do you support programs focused on harm reduction, restorative justice, de-criminalization of drugs, reducing nuisance crimes and quality of life Policing, and/or jail diversion programs? Choose one or more of those programs (or comparable ones that you are aware of) and describe how you have or would support that program or programs.

While I must refrain from answering this question in detail, I can say that I do support the various problem-solving courts that Monroe County currently has in place.

10. How do you define privilege? How has privilege impacted decisions you have made as an elected official, or if you are running for the first time, as an engaged community member? If you are elected, how will you use your privilege to assist Black and brown communities?

I define privilege as the ability to live, work, and prosper in the United States without barriers related to one's inherent characteristics such as race, gender identity, or socioeconomic status. Surely, as a white female growing up in the Midwest, I have been the product of my privilege. However, just like implicit bias, I believe that the first step in addressing the issues of privilege is recognizing one's own. Once that happens, it is

easier to understand others' lives and circumstances and deal with individual situations with empathy and fairness.

Eric Schmitz

Thank you for the invitation to address your questions. I want to start off by talking about the name of your organization and what it means to me. We have all heard the response that “All Lives Matter.” I see that as a reaction, sometimes deliberate, that misses the point, and assumes that “BLM” really implies that “ONLY Black Lives Matter,” and other lives, not so much. I know that it implies no such thing. “BLM” is a statement that addresses the fact that, all too often, Black lives are treated as mattering less than others, or mattering not at all. It calls attention to a systemic racial bias in society that continues to manifest itself nearly six decades after the Civil Rights Act was passed, and very often in violent ways. A more explanatory slogan might be “Black lives matter as much as any others,” but such elaboration really should not be necessary. It would make for a lengthy and unwieldy slogan and name for a movement, and would still not satisfy those whose real purpose is simply to dismiss the notion altogether.

Yes, all lives do matter. But we still live in a society where the lives of Black, Hispanic, LGBTQ, and other marginalized groups are all too often treated as if they don't matter. They most certainly do matter.

1. Describe your platform by telling us what populations are most impacted by your platform policies, as well as your specific plan to reach out and work with the affected groups. If you do not explicitly cover marginalized populations in your initial response, tell us what influence you believe your policies will have on marginalized populations, especially Black and brown citizens. Finally, describe how your previous work in politics or elsewhere has impacted Black and other marginalized populations.

It would be easy to just say that, because the office of County Recorder has no influence on public policy, nor on community fiscal matters, there is nothing relevant that a Recorder can do. But that would be a sidestep, and it would not explain anything about why these things matter to me, personally. Also, there are things I can tell you about past policies of property ownership that are undoubtedly relevant. We'll get to those.

I am a progressive. I do not mean this in a “left vs right” sense, I mean it in terms of forward vs backward. Our nation, and most of our communities, have come a long way in terms of human and civil rights, but we have a lot of work left to do. The “easy” things may have come first, although I don't think those who lived through those efforts would have called their struggles “easy.” But the more subtle and systemic forms of inequality are still with us, and often manifest themselves in ways that are not quite so subtle.

As your County Recorder, there may be little I can do, in my day-to-day work, to affect the solutions to your concerns, which I see as OUR concerns. And yet I have a

voice, and simply by virtue of being an elected official, my voice may be amplified to some extent. And while I myself have experience with being associated with marginalized groups, those associations have always been ones of choice, and I have always had the option of not letting them be known publicly. One's religious affiliation, for example, or lack thereof, cannot be determined on sight. That is a privilege, and I am well aware of the fact that most people have never enjoyed such privilege. I do what I can, when I see the opportunity, to help those who do not have that privilege. And I will not cease from that effort.

2. To the best of your knowledge, describe why people of color are disproportionately targeted and arrested by the criminal justice system. What ideas do you have to make the justice system more equitable and impartial? What do you consider to be the top priorities for reforming our justice system?

I can only point to a long-standing systemic racism in American society that goes back to the beginning of the history of the United States. I cannot make apologetics for the forebears of our nation, but the ideas and ideals of the Enlightenment that were fundamental to this nation's founding were not fully developed then, or even now. We have a lot further to travel. There are days that I despair for the future, but I remember the words of Martin Luther King, Jr.: "The arc of the moral universe is long, but it bends toward justice." Still, I also bear in mind that this statement is not a prophetic anodyne, and that it requires concerted effort on all of our parts. We can't just sit back and trust that this will happen, eventually, some day. We have work to do.

What can I, we, do about our justice system? We, the people of Monroe County, elect our local Judges. We have elected several women, and more than one person of color, to our benches. I was an active supporter of one of those judges who serves us now, and would be overjoyed to support more.

3. What concerns do you have about the militarization of our police force? As this equipment is disproportionately deployed against people of color, what would you do, and what can the community do, to protect people of color from the effects of militarization? Name a specific issue in your community relating to the militarization of the police and how you have or would respond to it.

The first thing that comes to my mind here – to everyone's mind – is the Bloomington Bearcat. Bear with me here. (And please forgive the unintentional pun.) From what I understand, this vehicle is armored, but not armed. Our police forces face some rough situations, and there may be times when the presence of such equipment could aid in the abatement of outright violence, or at least the protection of law enforcement officers. However...

I have a layman's understanding of the psychology of symbolism. An armored car is a symbol, and that symbol must be used responsibly and as rarely as possible. An armed robbery, or a hostage situation, would be an appropriate use of such display of force. A public demonstration that involves incitements to violence, the same. But peaceful public action? No, leave it out. Even the presence of militarized law enforcement at an otherwise peaceful demonstration can have catastrophic effects.

Our City must be VERY careful about how this machine is employed.

4. Do you support programs focused on harm reduction, restorative justice, de-criminalization of drugs, reducing nuisance crimes and quality of life Policing, and/or jail diversion programs? Choose one or more of those programs (or comparable ones that you are aware of) and describe how you have or would support that program or programs.

Yes. All of them.

Prison for non-violent offenders creates more violent offenders. Our justice system, and the legislatures that set the statutes that govern it, should be considering options to deal with non-violent offenders that do not demand incarceration.

Furthermore, I am adamantly opposed to the existence of any for-profit prisons. There are things that are appropriate for the private sector to take care of, and other things that are completely inappropriate to be handled by private businesses. No person or corporation should be in the position of making a profit on the practice of locking people up. The very notion of such a practice should be abhorrent to anyone who truly values a free society.

5. Name an issue facing school-age children of color that you think needs to be better addressed and discuss how you would address it. Issues of particular interest to this organization include curriculum, busing and redistricting, before-and-after-school programs, and meal programs.

I feel that I am fairly well-read, yet even I did not fully understand until recently just how deeply the establishment of the United States was funded on the backs of slaves. The colonists were able to afford to pay for the revolution and the building of this nation because the South was rich. And the South was rich because they had slaves. I'm not very familiar with the details of the typical curriculum now, but I do believe we need to make improvements that better cover our nation's real history – how we were able to grow and prosper because of what we did to Black slaves, how we treated the Native Americans, the influence of Latin Americans, and the massive amount of territory that we seized from Natives, Mexico, and everyone else who was there first. We need more people of color serving as faculty and on school boards, making decisions on what is included in our history books, and teaching the history of Black people and other minorities, rather than having to wait for Black History Month. These things need to be taught all the time, not for only one month out of each year. And this is going to require white people listening more sincerely and attentively to Black people.

6. What are the top economic issues affecting Black and other marginalized peoples today? What economic policies would you prioritize in order to improve life for marginalized people in our community? Have you done any work in the past to address these or other economic issues affecting people of color?

Here is where I do need to state that a County Recorder has little if any influence on economic issues, in general or in regard to any given group of people. Thus,

I cannot point to anything that I have done or could do as Recorder. To give one answer to the first part of the question, though, I understand that Black and other marginalized people have a higher rate of incarceration, due to systemic racial bias. The fact of having been incarcerated has a cascading effect, making it more difficult for people to attain employment and earn a sufficient living. This can lead to recidivism, continuing a vicious cycle.

7. What role do you think local government needs to play in improving the physical and mental health of Black people and other people of color? What specific issues around the intersection of race and health do you believe need to be addressed? Tell us how your policies would affect these issues, and describe any past experience you have in this area.

I am a strong supporter of publicly-funded services that provide health care, both physical and mental, to our disadvantaged residents. This includes mental health facilities as well as addiction treatment centers, and extends to national issues such as universal healthcare, for which I favor a Medicare-for-All approach. Again, the policies of the Recorder's office have minimal influence on these issues. However, I have been personally involved in local organizations that promote progressive solutions to these problems.

8

I confess a lack of sufficient awareness, which is something I would remedy. Speaking as a landlord myself, we are strictly non-discriminatory in terms of who we rent to. We also offer several very affordable units in and around Bloomington, which I like to believe helps, in its small way, to alleviate some of the economic strain experienced by marginalized people. Homelessness is another symptom of economic disadvantage that goes hand-in-hand with unemployment and higher likelihood of ending up in trouble with the law.

There is one thing that I can relate that regards property records, and that is the now defunct and unlawful practice of writing racial discrimination into the covenants and restrictions of subdivisions. Many of our older subdivision plats include language that bars minorities from owning property or living in those neighborhoods. This language is absolutely unenforceable now, and has been for quite some time. I have considered the question of restricting access to, or redacting publicly available copies of, these documents. I have come to the conclusion that we gain nothing by trying to hide the past. These things did happen, and while the practice is now, thankfully, a thing of the past, the racial bias that motivated it is still present in society. It would be a mistake to ignore this.

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When affordable homes and apartments are replaced by high-dollar rental units and owner-occupied homes, that affordable housing is not generally replaced. Part of what makes a home affordable is walking proximity to stores, schools, public transportation, services, and other benefits of living in more densely populated areas.

Once again, there is very little that a County Recorder can do about gentrification. I cannot lawfully refuse to record and maintain deeds, mortgages, and such that relate to projects that I think are bad ideas. As a landlord, I have never been about gentrification. My wife and I have bought a couple of small complexes and increased their value and desirability by attending to some long-deferred maintenance, while keeping rent prices very affordable. I have been told that we are “under-market” on our rents, the implication being that we should raise them significantly. I take it as a positive that we are able to keep rents low while still making a reasonable living, keeping the property safe and well-maintained, and treating our tenants with the respect and attention that is due any customer of any business.

10. How do you define privilege? How has privilege impacted decisions you have made as an elected official, or if you are running for the first time, as an engaged community member? If you are elected, how will you use your privilege to assist Black and brown communities?

Privilege means that I am less likely to get harassed, or suspected of being a criminal, if I get pulled over for a traffic violation. Privilege means that I don't worry about whether I will be passed over for a job because of the color of my skin. Privilege means that when I'm campaigning door-to-door, I'm more likely to get someone to answer, and less likely to be assumed to be up to no good. Privilege means I'm less likely to have the police called on me when walking in an unfamiliar neighborhood. Privilege means I am more likely to survive an encounter with law enforcement in general.

I am a middle-aged, straight, white man, and I try to always be aware that, through no merit or even intention on my own part, I am privileged in our society. I do not make any effort to increase that privilege, I would not consciously abuse it, and I believe that with such privilege comes a responsibility to avoid gaining special benefit because of it.

I am also privileged, as an elected official, to have somewhat more of a voice in our community than most people have, even if the nature of my office has little influence on issues of racial bias and socio-economic policy. I do not tolerate racist or prejudiced language or behavior in my office, not that this has ever been a problem. I know that my staff feel the same way, and have known them, as well as my regular customers, to speak up about inappropriate comments on the very few and rare instances when this has occurred.

Penny Githens

1. Describe your platform by telling us what populations are most impacted by your platform policies, as well as your specific plan to reach out and work with the affected groups. If you do not explicitly cover marginalized populations in your initial response, tell us what influence you believe your policies will have on marginalized populations, especially Black and brown citizens. Finally, describe how your previous work in politics or elsewhere has impacted Black and other marginalized populations.

There are three main components to my platform: Supporting public education, ensuring that working Hoosiers earn a living wage, and fighting the opioid epidemic.

Public education is the bedrock of our society and shows the greatest promise for helping everyone to achieve equality, especially economic equality. When I think of marginalized populations, it isn't just people of color, it's also those with disabilities, immigrants, the homeless, members of the LGBTQ community, the elderly, etc. With the push in Indiana for charter schools and vouchers, we are re-segregating our schools, something that disproportionately impacts students of color and those with disabilities. In some instances, like at Bloomington's Lighthouse Christian Academy, it also impacts members of the LGBTQ community. I will push for improving public education for all.

Part of my platform includes offering universal pre-K programming to all 4 year-olds. The single greatest predictor of school success is the socio-economic status of a child's family. Students from poor families enter kindergarten with, on average, a vocabulary of approximately 500 words; their middle-class peers start school with an average vocabulary of 1,500 words. Vocabulary is a key component of reading, and one of the best ways to expand the vocabulary of less-advantaged students is through quality pre-K programming. There are also statistics indicating that individuals of color are less likely to graduate from high school and more likely to be incarcerated. Research indicates that students who attend quality pre-K programs are more likely to graduate from high school, are less likely to be incarcerated, and have higher earnings. Quality pre-K programs are one way to disrupt the school-to-prison pipeline.

Students of color are also more likely to be identified as special education students. Part of this is due to implicit bias, but it is also affected by the bias built into some of the assessment tools. I have an adult son with autism, and I have been a volunteer special education advocate for 20 years. I also have a master's degree in educational psychology. This means I bring a different understanding and perspective to the legislature – I understand marginalization from a different perspective. We also need to bring more people of color, more members of the LGBTQ community, and more men into teaching and school administration by offering them college scholarships and student loan repayment programs.

On August 26, 2018, the Monroe County Women's Commission put on a program about the intersectionality between race and gender that exists in the gender pay gap. I was part of the planning committee for this event and have been concerned about this issue for several years. We need to strengthen unions in Indiana and raise the minimum wage, something which would help marginalized individuals, especially women of color.

Finally, I should add that when my son was diagnosed with autism, we learned that our health insurance wouldn't cover treatment for this condition; it was written as an exclusion in our health insurance policy. I led the successful effort within Indiana to have health insurance mandated for those with autism. This has impacted thousands of individuals and families across the state. Indiana was one of the first states to enact such legislation and was the very first to offer this insurance to state employees. It took 3 years of hard work to get this done, but I didn't give up. As I said earlier, individuals with disabilities are a marginalized group in our society.

2. To the best of your knowledge, describe why people of color are disproportionately targeted and arrested by the criminal justice system. What ideas do you have to make the justice system more equitable and impartial? What do you consider to be the top priorities for reforming our justice system?

One of the ways to reform our justice system is to decriminalize marijuana and to address drug addiction as a health problem. This is one of my top priorities for helping to reform our criminal justice system. I also strongly believe we should abolish the private prison system as we are forced to ensure that a certain number of beds are filled within such prisons. Rather than incarcerate those with mental health issues and drug addictions, we need to be looking at treatment programs.

Beyond that, racial profiling has been allowed to proliferate for far too long in our country. Some of it is due to fear, some of it is due to ignorance, and some of it is due to the desire to keep economic prosperity in the hands of individuals of European descent. I am hopeful that the use of body cameras will help to bring about a shift in what has been happening with law enforcement, but I know it will not happen overnight. We need to collect data and use that data to call people out. In some cases, law enforcement officials need to either be prosecuted or removed from their jobs. From speaking with a member of the Bloomington Commission on Hispanic and Latino Affairs I know this happens locally – Hispanics report being repeatedly pulled over as they drive between Bloomington and Indianapolis, something that needs to be investigated and stopped.

Our justice system is also unfair to those at the lower end of the economic scale. Rich individuals hire expensive lawyers and are more likely to receive probation than poor people. Rich people are also more likely to have the resources which allow them to go into drug and alcohol diversion programs after being arrested for related offenses. Rich people are also more likely to be able to post bail after an arrest, meaning they are less likely to lose their jobs, allowing them to pay for legal representation of their choice. Public defender lawyers are good, caring people, but their caseloads put them at a disadvantage vis-à-vis private defense lawyers. Change in this area is clearly needed.

Something no one wants to talk about is black-on-black crime. If we can increase the income level of those who are impoverished, work with Black churches and other organizations, and provide treatment rather than incarceration for drug addiction, I think we can start to chip away at this problem. I'm not naïve, I know it will not happen overnight, but I am willing to work to try to make this happen.

3. What concerns do you have about the militarization of our police force? As this equipment is disproportionately deployed against people of color, what would you do, and what can the community do, to protect people of color from the effects of militarization? Name a specific issue in your community relating to the militarization of the police and how you have or would respond to it.

I know some individuals in Bloomington are concerned about the Bloomington Police Department's (BPD) purchase of a BearCat, a vehicle designed to protect police officers. (I'm responding to the question, which asks about "our police force.") I do not think it is the purchase of such a vehicle that is really at issue, but how such vehicles have been used in other locations and concerns about how such a vehicle might be used in the future.

Bloomington's purchase of a BearCat was not handled properly. There should have been a public discussion of the purchase of a crisis intervention response vehicle before it happened. We should have had a discussion as to whether or not the BPD needs a crisis intervention vehicle and if so, what characteristics such a vehicle should possess. The Bloomington City Council should have laid out the exact guidelines for the use of such a vehicle prior to the purchase. Not only is this true for Bloomington, but should be true for all jurisdictions around the state. And it shouldn't be just about the use of a given vehicle, it should be about the use of force in general. After all, do we want the Governor to be able to call out the National Guard at any time or do we want guidelines that the Governor must follow? I am proud of the public dissent which Americans are allowed to voice, and I pledge to work to maintain that right for everyone.

4. Do you support programs focused on harm reduction, restorative justice, de-criminalization of drugs, reducing nuisance crimes and quality of life Policing, and/or jail diversion programs? Choose one or more of those programs (or comparable ones that you are aware of) and describe how you have or would support that program or programs.

I support harm reduction, restorative justice, and de-criminalization of drugs. I also support jail diversion programs like the drug and alcohol diversion programs overseen by Judge Mary Ellen Diekoff. (Since you have not specified which crimes are "nuisance crimes," I cannot respond to that portion of the question.) I have observed both Judge Diekoff's drug and alcohol diversion court and Judge Ken Todd's mental health court, and I believe such courts provide some of the best restorative justice available. These courts require change by the individual, help to keep people employed, help to keep families together and children out of foster care, and help restore dignity to the individual involved. I would like to see all counties in Indiana offer the types of diversion programs offered in Monroe County. (I look forward to positive results from the new Veterans Court being introduced in Monroe County.)

Other re-entry programs are also occurring in the Monroe County jail which I would like to see implemented throughout the state, both in jails and in the state prisons. We need to ensure that when individuals are released from our jails and prisons that they immediately have transportation and housing. With these two things in place it is much more likely that they can re-connect with their families and begin the process of finding employment. Earlier this year I attended a program sponsored by the Indiana Institute for Working Families, where I heard about a program for employment of released prisoners. Guess what the biggest barrier was to employment? Transportation. We need to work on expanding public transportation, help those about to be released achieve access to transportation options like Uber and Lyft, and offer

employers tax incentives for providing transportation – like vans – to recently released prisoners that they hire.

5. Name an issue facing school-age children of color that you think needs to be better addressed and discuss how you would address it. Issues of particular interest to this organization include curriculum, busing and redistricting, before-and-after-school programs, and meal programs.

As I go out to functions in my district, I take out a jar labeled “Coins for Kids.” I collect change from folks to donate to the lunch funds of local schools. Rather than spend money to collect and process data on family income, I would like to abolish the free- and reduced-price meals for students and provide meals at no charge to all students in public schools. I would also like to totally eliminate school book fees in Indiana. Yes, it may cost a little more, but we would eliminate the cost of collecting and processing data at both the local and state level. This would also eliminate the lunch-shaming which occurs at far too many districts across Indiana.

One of the reasons I oppose the privatization of schools is that we are re-segregating our schools along class, racial and disability lines. In my opinion, this benefits no one. A recent study at the University of Virginia indicates that low-income students do not benefit from private – and too often in Indiana this means voucher supported – schooling (<https://news.virginia.edu/content/new-study-finds-low-income-students-do-not-benefit-private-schooling>). In Indiana, forty percent of households headed by women are in poverty, and if Black and Latino women earn far less than white males and they are the single head-of-household, such households are more likely to exist in poverty. If you are in poverty you are less likely to have reliable transportation – required if a child is attending a private or charter school – there is food instability, and if a parent is working at multiple minimum-wage jobs there is less time for him/her to participate in advancing a child’s education. Poverty is real, poverty can be devastating, and in the richest nation on earth the impact of poverty that we see all around us should not be tolerated.

Those currently in the state legislature, including my opponent, provide funding for charter schools that is – except in districts like MCCSC where a referendum for school funding was passed – equivalent to public education funding. At the same time, the legislature allows for a special “borrowing” program to charter schools for buildings. I think we should put charter and voucher schools on the same footing as public schools by requiring such schools to provide transportation (private schools should provide transportation for voucher recipients) and free- and reduced-price meals. This currently isn’t being done, giving charter and private schools much freer latitude in how they spend their money. Currently there is also no requirement that charter schools and private schools which receive vouchers provide before- and after-school programming. We need to demand that such programs be available. If we do not, families in poverty cannot participate in such programs and we’re not just supporting the status quo, we’re making it worse. We also need to examine school data to ensure that racial, ethnic, and religious make-up at charter schools and private schools which accept vouchers reflect the racial, ethnic, and religious make-up of the surrounding

community. The same applies to the percentage and make-up of students with disabilities.

6. What are the top economic issues affecting Black and other marginalized peoples today? What economic policies would you prioritize in order to improve life for marginalized people in our community? Have you done any work in the past to address these or other economic issues affecting people of color?

As I mentioned above, I was part of the group which planned “Intersectional Pay Equity: Steps to Pay Equity for Women,” which was held in Bloomington on August 26, 2018. Achieving pay-equity is of vital importance for marginalized groups. In addition to increasing income, we need to address wealth, home ownership, access to health insurance, and overall assets within marginalized communities.

We need to push Congress to pass a Farm Bill which expands, rather than contracts, SNAP programming. Approximately 20% of households in Indiana face some form of food insecurity. When this happens to children – who are not in a position to improve the household income – it can impact brain development and school learning. Those who are not reading at grade level in the 3rd grade have a much more difficult time in school, meaning the early years are critical.

There’s a new nurse partnership program in Monroe County in which nurses work with low-income pregnant women both during pregnancy and with parenting until the child reaches age 2. I have not seen any data on the profiles of the mothers involved in this program or outcome data for the children, but if this program is successful I think the state should fund it throughout the state.

Another item which impacts the poor is lack of access to high-speed internet. With the advent of telemedicine, having high speed internet can impact the quality of one’s health. Homes with school-age children also need access to affordable high-speed internet to allow students to do homework, conduct research, and interact with teachers. In 1933 only 11% of farms had electricity, putting the U.S. way behind farmers in Europe. (Electricity is not only used for lighting, heating, and cooking, but to cool milk from dairy cows, pump water for animals, pump water for human consumption, etc.) In 1934 a federal program was created to bring electricity to our rural areas, and in 1935 such efforts began. By 1952 almost 90% of U.S. farms had electricity. If we can provide electricity to the entire U.S., I believe we can provide affordable high-speed internet to marginalized families and to our rural areas.

Over 18 years ago I approached people at the Monroe County YMCA about starting an adapted martial arts program for individuals with disabilities. Sitting on the sidelines watching others work with such individuals – which has included minorities with disabilities – was too much for me, so I started learning Tae Kwon Do. I have been with the program since its inception and continue to volunteer with it on a regular basis. I’ve even been quoted in the NY Times about the importance of physical activity for those with autism (<https://www.nytimes.com/2006/08/03/fashion/03Fitness.html>). I know the value of inclusion and have worked to make this possible.

7. What role do you think local government needs to play in improving the physical and mental health of Black people and other people of color? What specific issues around the intersection of race and health do you believe need to be addressed? Tell us how your policies would affect these issues, and describe any past experience you have in this area.

Please see my comment above about the importance of physical activity. It not only helps regulate emotions, but if done in combination with a healthy diet can help lower the incidence rate of diabetes and hypertension, conditions which affect Blacks more than their White counterparts. Creating parks that are accessible to where people live, and providing expanded public transportation to allow individuals to access whatever type of activity they choose, is important.

This past January I attended a showing of the documentary film “Death by Delivery” (<https://fusion.tv/video/390130/death-by-delivery/>). It is a disturbing film about the high rate of maternal mortality and complications experienced by Black women in the U.S. After the movie Dr. Clark Brittain, a local gynecologist, talked about the “weatherization” that women of color experience throughout their lives. This weatherization is due to the stress they feel on a daily basis just because they are women of color. (It is also experienced by Black males.) Such stress may be one of the reasons hypertension is more common among Blacks, and with hypertension comes an increased risk of complications with pregnancy. This weatherization doesn’t just happen to those who identify themselves as Black. My nephew’s wife, who is from Guatemala, has described to me ways in which she has been made to feel unwelcome in restaurants, stores, etc, to the point where she leaves rather than endure the stares and silence that surround her. We clearly need to bring healthcare professionals into the discussion as to ways we can reduce hypertension, diabetes, and maternal mortality rates among people of color. And as a society we need to exam how and why “weatherization” occurs and how we can stop it.

8. What challenges to Black and other people of color face as renters or homebuyers? How do current policies or norms preserve past policies of discrimination on the basis of race, and what can be done to change those policies or norms? Similarly, are there any instances of discrimination specific to our historical moment, and how would you work to change those?

When the housing bubble burst in the Fall of 2008, we learned of the predatory lending practices that lenders had been employing. This crisis disproportionately hit communities of color because of the general lack of accumulated wealth which was not available as a cushion to tide them over during a financial crunch. We need to ensure that such predatory lending practices are never allowed to be repeated. This past winter, when the state legislature was in session, one of the bills they considered was to allow pay-day lenders to charge as much as 222% APR on loans. Such loans are often the last resort for working individuals who live pay check to pay check and suddenly have a financial crisis. Such a crisis could be something relatively small, such as needing a new tire for one’s car or missing two days of work due to an illness. Luckily this bill did not pass. The Democrats in the state legislature presented an alternate

bill, which would have lowered the current 72% maximum rate that pay day lenders can charge to 35%. Unfortunately, this bill also did not pass. Getting into a spiral of paying such charges can lead to an inability to pay one's rent or mortgage, forcing one out of their apartment or home. We need to address pay-day lending practices within Indiana if we are to help people of color and other marginalized people stay in their apartments and homes.

The City of Bloomington has programs through their Housing and Neighborhood Development (HAND) office to assist residents with affordable housing, housing counseling, and home repair grants and loans (<https://bloomington.in.gov/departments/hand>). I would like to see HAND publicize their services more broadly.

One of the local programs which has been helping people of color – and in one instance a man with severe disabilities – is Habitat for Humanity. The first Women Build Habitat home that I was involved with was for a single Hispanic father. If you click on the “Our Families” tab at the local Habitat website (<https://monroecountyhabitat.org>), you will see many families of color. The Thriving Connections program offered through the South Central Community Action Program is another vehicle for individuals and families to move out of poverty (<http://www.insccap.org/pages/thrivingconnections>). Achieving stable housing is the goal of both Habitat for Humanity and for Thriving Connections.

With all of this, increasing the minimum wage and achieving pay equity for women would help marginalized people find and keep stable housing. Ensuring living-wage jobs for all Hoosiers is one of my campaign priorities. I will also fight to create Paid Family Leave in Indiana, something that could be created through a worker-funded insurance program. Having Paid Family Leave can tide one over when there's the birth of a child, when an elderly parent needs help, or when one is faced with an extended absence from work due to medical reasons.

9. How does gentrification contribute to the lack of affordable housing in Monroe County? How will your policies impact the availability of Affordable housing? What will you do to prevent homelessness and other crises caused by gentrification?

While there is some gentrification going on in Bloomington, the demand for housing caused by increasing enrollments at Indiana University has more of an impact on the cost of housing than gentrification. I think the City of Bloomington should be working with representatives of Indiana University to ensure that increases in student enrollment are accompanied by increased on-campus housing.

I applaud efforts by the groups in Bloomington who are responsible for the creation of Crawford House and Crawford House II. It is clear that such housing was badly needed to help those who are chronically homeless. This Housing First initiative, accompanied by on-site social workers, has led to fewer ER visits among the residents, fewer arrests, and fewer incarceration days (https://www.heraldtimesonline.com/news/local/housing-first/article_ec387cc4-ea7b-543c-b9e2-64799e7d73ef.html).

Some homeless people work, but do not earn enough to get into an apartment. Increasing incomes so that area individuals make a living wage is one step toward easing this problem. The Indiana Institute for Working Families indicates that Monroe County has the second highest cost of living of any county in the state. At the same time, we have the highest percentage of people living at or below the federal poverty level. This is unacceptable, and increasing the minimum wage would help lift some of these families and individuals out of poverty.

It is estimated that up to 90% of homeless individuals in our area suffer from mental illness and/or drug addiction. Expanding our drug addiction treatment programs, and making them affordable to all, is one step that should be taken. This is especially true in Indiana at a time when employers indicate that there are thousands of jobs going unfilled, jobs that could be filled if people were able to overcome their addictions. And we should be providing alternative treatment programs and housing for those with mental illness. Decades ago those with severe mental illness were housed in what we referred to as “mental hospitals.” Those with severe mental illness were essentially locked away and given medications to make them compliant. I do not think people with mental illness should be treated this way, but I do think we could be offering them more than we currently do. As we have seen with the residents of Crawford House, with the proper supports and medication, at least some of these individuals could be working and in stable housing. Treating both those with drug addiction and mental illness will require Indiana to attract more psychiatrists, more psychiatric nurses, and more social workers, something my opponent is ignoring. I propose offering scholarships and student loan forgiveness for psychiatrists, psychiatric nurses and social workers to help attract them to, and keep them in, Indiana.

10. How do you define privilege? How has privilege impacted decisions you have made as an elected official, or if you are running for the first time, as an engaged community member? If you are elected, how will you use your privilege to assist Black and brown communities?

“Privilege” to me means that a given individual has advantages that not everyone enjoys. I know that being white and educated gives me privilege.

During World War II my father was injured and suffered a permanent (minor) disability. This disability allowed my siblings and me to attend state-sponsored universities at a very reduced rate. Upon graduation, knowing that my life in the United States was better than what many others around the world experienced, I became a Peace Corps Volunteer, teaching math and science for two years in Kenya. Upon completion of my commitment, a friend and I slowly wound our way home by traveling through parts of the Middle East and Turkey, experiencing different cultures, nationalities, and religions. This was after spending a semester during my junior year in college volunteering at an American Indiana organization in Phoenix and doing my student teaching at Gary Roosevelt High School.

As I have mentioned several times, I have a son with autism, and I view those with disabilities to be one category of marginalized individuals in our society. To help my son and others like him that I spent many hours volunteering in the schools and

was a stay-at-home mom for 15 years. During that time, I was active in the local and state autism groups and served on their boards. Even when I returned to work, I worked part-time for 5 years so that I could continue to support Nathan and others in various ways.

I am proud of being endorsed by groups like 314 Action (<http://www.314action.org>) because of my STEM background and commitment to employ data when making public policy decisions; Indiana NOW because of my commitment to the advancement of women; and, the Indiana Stonewall Democrats (<http://www.stonewalldemocrats.us/indiana/>) because of my commitment to advance and protect those in the LGBTQ community. I am also proud of my membership in the Monroe County Black Caucus, the Indiana 9th District Latino Caucus, and the Indiana 9th District Disability Caucus.

I think discrimination of any kind is abhorrent. When I am elected I will work to create a hate crimes law in Indiana, something which my opponent has publicly said we don't need. I will also work to add "gender identity, sexual orientation," to Indiana's Civil Rights law to add further protection to those in the LGBTQ community. And I will work to erase all vestiges of the Religious Freedom Restoration Act that was enacted in Indiana several years ago. We need to ensure that everyone is welcome in Indiana, that everyone is treated equally under the law, and that everyone has the opportunity for "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness." I share Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s vision of a day when "people will not be judged by the color of their skin, but by the content of their character."

Catherine Stafford

1. Describe your platform by telling us what populations are most impacted by your platform policies, as well as your specific plan to reach out and work with the affected groups. If you do not explicitly cover marginalized populations in your initial response, tell us what influence you believe your policies will have on marginalized populations, especially Black and brown citizens. Finally, describe how your previous work in politics or elsewhere has impacted Black and other marginalized populations.

Response: As a judicial candidate, I do not and cannot have a specific policy-related platform. I believe that a good judge is one who knows the law, listens to both sides carefully, weighs the evidence, and then and only then makes a prompt and well-reasoned decision. If elected, I plan to work hard to make courts more transparent, more responsive, and more efficient.

I've been an attorney for almost 21 years, practicing in many areas and focusing for the past ten years on family law. One of my favorite things about being a lawyer is being able to help those in need. I started volunteering in law school and I keep up that commitment today.

The populations impacted by the courts include all of us—as each of us could be embroiled in a family law dispute, a small claims matter, a medical malpractice case, an eviction, or a business dispute at any time. Without a doubt, however, the populations most impacted are those who are marginalized most frequently in American society: people of color, the LGBTQIA+ community,

low-income individuals—in other words, those without historic power and without access to attorneys.

If elected, I plan to work with our local nonprofit and legal community to further assistance for pro se litigants (those without attorneys). The percentage of pro se litigants is increasing, and courts can improve the services offered to them, for example, by organizing classes for pro se litigants in small claims and family law, encouraging and supporting the efforts of walk-in clinics such as Counsel in the Court, and working with state courts to provide do-it-yourself forms for many common simple legal needs. However, it is important that this assistance to pro se litigants not take place in the courtroom, where doing so would require a judge to step out of a neutral role.

As a candidate, I'm working on plans to create a "Pro Se Court." Although Monroe County has a legal services office (Indiana Legal Services, Inc.), a district pro bono office (District 10 Pro Bono Project), and even a nonprofit focusing on reduced fee cases (Justice Unlocked), there is still too limited availability of free or reduced cost services. The most common types of cases where litigants are pro se are family cases, such as divorce, paternity, custody, and support; and small claims cases, such as evictions and debt collection. The Pro Se Court would work with the assistance of community partners to provide volunteer assistance.

Access to justice is incredibly important--I started my career as a legal services attorney and I know how much need exists for this type of court. It's my hope that Monroe County can not only establish and expand a court geared at low income pro se litigants, but also be a leader in modeling this for Indiana.

I've been active in social justice my whole life. I went door-to-door with my mom when I was a preschooler, as she protested redlining in our diverse Indianapolis neighborhood, as she was trying to keep it diverse. I have been active with United Way, League of Women Voters, the Democratic Party, and many nonprofit organizations.

Most of my social justice work for the last twenty-five years has been as a law student and as a lawyer, providing pro bono (free) legal services to causes that I believe strongly in, such as going to Miami for spring break from law

school in 1995, not for the beaches, but to help complete asylum applications for Haitian refugees fleeing the turmoil after the coup that deposed President Aristide. I volunteered as a law student at Legal Aid Society of Minneapolis, where one of my early cases involved going to the housing project tower in downtown Minneapolis to gather information about our client, who was being evicted due to 'housekeeping violations.' It turned out that the management wanted to evict our client, a low-income man of color, as he had been stabbed in the apartment and hallway of the building by an ex-girlfriend. He was HIV positive and the management felt the presence of his blood in the hallway after the stabbing was a housekeeping violation. We were able to stop his eviction. I also volunteered in my third year for advocates from the Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota, who were collateral descendants of Chief Crazy Horse, working to identify and remonstrate against bars throughout our country who had appropriated his name against his family's wishes—Chief Crazy Horse had been against alcohol. Unfortunately, as you can see from the presence of a Crazy Horse bar here in Bloomington, much work remains.

After three years of volunteering consistently during law school, I was fortunate to receive the Minnesota Justice Foundation award, given to the top law student volunteer in the state, in 1996,

which was presented to me by Sister Helen Prejean, noted death-penalty foe and author of “Dead Man Walking.”

Since law school, I have continued to work at nonprofits, providing legal assistance to low income individuals as an attorney at Indiana Legal Services, Inc. (Bloomington, IN office,) and to volunteer my services while starting and building my own law firm, Stafford Law Office, LLC. I have been a consistent volunteer attorney for, first, the Volunteer Lawyers Network in Minneapolis immediately after law school, then for the District 10 Pro Bono Project here in Bloomington. Through District 10, which coordinates private attorneys to provide counsel to low-income individuals, I typically have at least two open ongoing cases at all times, plus I typically volunteer once a month at the legal walk-in clinic at the Justice Building, called Counsel in the Court. I have also volunteered at the Shalom Center’s legal clinic, during the years that it was offered. In the spring of 2017, I volunteered many evenings at El Centro’s “Know Your Rights” clinics, providing family law assistance to families at risk of deportation, helping draft legal documents to provide for placement of their children if the adults were detained (frequently, the adults did not have legal status but the children were US citizens). I am a CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocate) volunteer attorney and I serve on the Monroe County CASA Board of Directors. CASAs are appointed by the court to represent the best interests of children who are caught up in abuse and neglect cases.

As a judicial candidate, I have pledged to work hard to build awareness of my own implicit biases and of explicit biases in our legal system. If elected, I would ensure regular preparation of studies and reports (prepared in conjunction and collaboration with those from the black community, such as the Commission on the Status of Black Males, the NAACP, the Monroe County Black Democratic Caucus, and Black Lives Matter) in the nature of the State of the Black Community Report that was given in February of 2018 at City Hall. I would want to regularly track not only the impact of our criminal justice system on our communities of color, but also would seek information on civil matters, such as small claims, evictions, divorce, custody, adoption, and CHINS (Child in Need of Services) cases to track whether we have disparate results for black people and others and if so to take steps to remediate those disparate results.

4. Do you support programs focused on harm reduction, restorative justice, decriminalization of drugs, reducing nuisance crimes and quality of life Policing, and/or jail diversion programs? Choose one or more of those programs (or comparable ones that you are aware of) and describe how you have or would support that program or programs.

Response. Yes, wherever possible, I support harm reduction, restorative justice, reduction of nuisance crimes, and jail diversion. I cannot comment on decriminalization of drugs as that decision belongs to the legislature, not to the individual judges. I volunteered for the first Opioid Summit in Monroe County, as a member of the steering committee, where I learned about harm reduction, medical assisted treatment, and where I committed to being trained on how to use Naloxone. I did get trained in Naloxone use later in the fall of 2017 and keep Naloxone in my office and all my staff know this. I have many clients who have struggled with Substance Use Disorder and the consequences, such as losing custody of their children to the other parent or to the Department of Child Services. I would encourage all court staff to be trained in harm reduction and Naloxone.

10. How do you define privilege? How has privilege impacted decisions you have made as an elected official, or if you are running for the first time, as an engaged community member? If you are elected, how will you use your privilege to assist Black and brown communities?

Response: To me, privilege means the advantages I have simply by circumstance of birth. For example, I grew up as a privileged person, not only by color, but also by education, opportunity, and income. I continue to

hold privilege due to my position as a white person, lawyer, and small- business owner.

If elected judge, I will use my privilege to do my best to ensure a fair and transparent courtroom, to do education about the court system in our local schools, and to reach out to groups in black and brown communities to build bridges. I will continue my current work of acting as a mentor to law students, including students of color, helping guide them on paths to reaching their goals.

Thank you for your work and for the opportunity to provide responses,
