

WASPC PUBLIC SAFETY QUESTIONS- WA Governor Candidates, Sept. 2024

-Questions listed with possible follow up questions

PUBLIC SAFETY IN OUR STATE: We believe public safety is a core function of government and essential to the rule of law and safe, thriving communities.

-Do you think public safety is where it should be in our state, has it been used as a political football and if so, what is your plan to change that?

-There has been discussion of a) additional staffing through state funding, and also b) making sure officers feel supported in making difficult decisions. Do you support both?

-If your plan includes additional staffing how will that be funded, particularly if there are budget deficits, as some are projecting?

-Will you commit to intervening when you see LE being used as a political football?

JUVENILE CRIME: Juvenile crime has been on the rise. There is a lack of meaningful consequences and no real plan to reduce juvenile crime while allowing for appropriate rehabilitation.

-What will you do as Governor to better respond to the issue of juvenile crime, especially violent crime?

JUVENILE ACCESS TO ATTORNEY: A 2021 law (RCW 13.40.740) - referred to as the Juvenile Access to Attorney statute – has caused confusion about when juveniles can be questioned by law enforcement. WASPC has asked the Legislature to amend this statute for the two consecutive years but has not been able to get the bills heard in any legislative committee.

-What are your thoughts about this issue and how it may be creating problems for law enforcement as they're trying to be more responsive to the increasing levels of juvenile crimes?

-What specific actions would you take as Governor to provide clarity on this issue?

DCYF INTAKE FREEZE: The Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) unexpectedly announced a "pause" on admissions into the two state juvenile detention centers that house the most violent youthful offenders, citing overcrowding and lack of sufficient staffing.

-Do you agree that the "JR to 25" statute (placing adults in juvenile facilities in some cases) contributed to this situation and, if so, what specific actions would you take as Governor to address it?

-As Governor, how will you lead DCYF through this unprecedented crisis?

LEGISLATIVE RELATIONS: In the last couple of years, the Legislature's goals with public safety policy have been focused on reducing law enforcement effectiveness and *diminishing* support for law enforcement as a core function of government and the rule of law.

-As elected Governor, how do you plan to influence the Legislature to act on well-informed and balanced public safety policy?

JAILS: We all agree that jails have become, and should be, more than just a place for people who are incarcerated. In contrast, jails have evolved into places for public health treatment, for

chemical addiction treatment, and equipping people with basic life skills such as obtaining housing, food, medical/mental health treatment and childcare. However, most jails in WA were built in the early 1980's; they are poorly designed, equipped, staffed and trained to operate as vital community partners in the 21st century. As Governor, how do you plan to partner with jails to help people get better and reduce their likelihood of recidivism?

FEDERAL PARTNERS: There has been national, often partisan, criticism of federal law enforcement (FBI, Border Patrol, ICE). As Governor how will you respond to these attacks on our federal law enforcement partners?

COLLABORATION: Many of our Sheriffs and Chiefs as well as our community members have expressed frustration with public safety policies that appear to have been more extreme, driven by more extreme voices. A healthy collaborative government includes bringing many different opinions, perspectives and experts into a conversation.

-As Governor how will you encourage collaboration in policy development?

-How will you extend this to your cabinet agency operations?

STATE OVERSIGHT: Washington State has prosecuted law enforcement officers. The Legislature has repeatedly proposed "law enforcement accountability" functions be added to the role of the Attorney General. If a patrol officer from anywhere around our state were in the room today and shared their concerns with you of the ever-increasing push for oversight which is viewed by some as being political rather than based on facts, what would you say to them?