

Spokane Candidate Questionnaire

The member organizations of Smart Justice Spokane and Spokane Community Against Racism (SCAR) Platform for Change coalitions asked candidates running for Sheriff, County Commissioner, Prosecutor, Judge, Washington State Representative, and Washington State Senator to respond to 20 questions about racial justice, policing, housing, incarceration, services, and community.

See them all at spokanecandidates.org



Smart Justice Spokane is a broad coalition of over 30 organizations working together to end mass incarceration and eliminate racial disparities in our local criminal justice system. We organize and mobilize together for effective, restorative solutions that are driven by the experiences and needs of those impacted by the criminal justice system. The recovery and integration of those caught up in the criminal justice process is essential for a strong, healthy, and just community.



Spokane Community Against Racism (SCAR) Platform for Change is a coalition advancing a vision of systemic change for the Spokane community that embraces a holistic vision of public safety. This vision reexamines what is considered crime, accounts for its root causes, and recognizes that shared prosperity and community care are at the heart of a healthy society.

Ted Cummings

State Representative Pos 1 Legislative District 4

1. What racial equity problems exist in Spokane and how will you use this position to fix them?

Racism is far too prevalent in Spokane and eastern Washington; I will speak and act in opposition of hate and bigotry.

2. You have an opportunity to re-envision law enforcement and the criminal legal system in Spokane County - what should it look like?

I support a law enforcement system that does not look like a military operation and look for a policing that respects all members of the community.

3. How can the community hold you accountable day-to-day in-between elections?

My conscience holds me accountable every day, I welcome and consider the opinions from others. I appreciate the vital and necessary work SCAR is doing and fully support your efforts. To me this election is about countering the fascist Republican party that seeks to install a theocracy or authoritarian style government. If we do not work together to elect Democrats, we may lose the personal freedoms that we revere. I hope that we can look past our individual constituency goals and come together to defeat a republican party that endangers all Americans and the entire world population. Goals of environmental, and social justice will disappear if we do not hold onto the House and Senate, that to me is the only thing that should matter right now.

Policing

1. What is your role in ending racial disparities in law enforcement stops and arrests, and in advancing meaningful oversight and investigation of law enforcement?

All good people have a responsibility to ensure liberty and justice for all, I strive to be a good person. I am committed to confronting racism and bigotry and support all reforms we can make in pursuit of those goals.

2. What is your assessment and position regarding the militarized culture of law enforcement, lack of appropriate norms and requirements for de-escalation, and continued use and purchase of military equipment by law enforcement?

I oppose militarized law enforcement.

3. What are your thoughts about police presence in our schools and how juveniles are impacted by the legal system?

I lament a common police presence in schools.

4. With the fall of Roe v. Wade and the resulting projected increase of nearly 400% in people coming to Spokane County for abortion care, what will you do to protect pregnant people's right to abortion care without being criminalized, especially if they are traveling to Spokane County for that purpose? How will you protect medical personnel and clinics in the same context?

I support legislation protecting the right of people to choose the personal care they desire. I support legislation protecting the people who provide those services. I will continue to speak in support of constitutional rights for all.

Incarceration

1. What is your position on Spokane County building a new jail?

I support a facility that keeps both staff and inmate safe, I oppose the warehousing of people for non-violent offenses and seek to see as few people as possible incarcerated.

2. Which of the recommendations of the Spokane County Justice Task Force to reduce the jail population, as outlined in the below documents, do you support or oppose and why?

I support all strategies to reduce jail population and to reduce the struggle people face through education and support.

3. What experience do you have with the criminal justice system and what have you done to engage the voices of the justice- involved or formerly incarcerated in your work?

None, and nothing at this time.

4. Our courts continue to lack trauma-informed training and responses, culturally appropriate responses, and interpreter services and training around the immigrant community. People describe being shamed, ignored, and frustrated by our current system. How can you, in your role, help change this (including funding, training, increased staffing etc.)?

I support providing funding to provide the services needed to protect and respect human beings.

5. The Washington State Supreme Court issued a letter acknowledging that our court system is racist and asked every member of the legal community to work on this. What are your thoughts on this statement and what are you doing about it?

I had not seen this; I support the statement and I oppose systemic racism and will continue to speak out against ignorance and hate.

Services and community

1. What experience do you have with persons experiencing mental illness and how will you use your position to ensure there is an effective rollout of the recently authorized 988 crisis response system?

I have no experience with mental illness but have friends that deal with it, I understand how difficult and devastating this illness can be. I support the 988 crisis response system.

2. With the goal of addressing the root causes of substance use disorder, what is your position on legislation to partially redirect state cannabis revenues to local prevention, outreach, and recovery support services and end arrests and prosecutions of people for possessing drugs for their personal use?

I support the legislation.

3. Domestic violence continues to be a great concern in our community, with too few shelter beds. How do you plan to address this issue?

I will continue to advocate for job growth with living wages and benefits because I believe that is the solution to crime and violence.

4. How would you address the early learning gap in our community?

I support increased funding for education and family support.

Housing

1. Why do you think people become homeless in Spokane County and what will you do to address that? For example, what do you see as the County's responsibility to provide shelter and transitional housing as well as partnering with the City of Spokane?

Our lack of affordable housing is a failure of planning and leadership. I support using every source of funding, state and federal along with zoning changes to build housing.

2. What is your vision for dealing with the lack of housing in our community? What funding (such as using ARPA for rental assistance), tenant rights and protections, affordable housing and infill are needed to keep people housed?

We need to build more housing and use state and federal programs to keep people in their homes.

3. People who once had stable housing are often put at risk due to inadequate aging- and disability-related personal care and supports. How do public and private funded in-home services fit into your plan to address our housing crisis?

I support such services and all efforts to allow people to remain in their homes.

Spokane Community Against Racism Platform for Change Coalition Partners:

Spokane Community Against Racism (SCAR)

Asian Pacific Islander Coalition (APIC) -
Spokane Chapter

Eastern Washington Progressives

Faith Leaders and Leaders of Conscience

FUSE Washington

Greater Spokane Progress

Hispanic Business/Professional Association

Latinos en Spokane

MAC Movement

Muslims for Community Action And Support

Peace and Justice Action League of Spokane
(PJALS)

Planned Parenthood Advocates of Greater
Washington and North Idaho

Progressives of Spokane County

RAIZ of Planned Parenthood

Red Skirt Society

SHAWL Society

Smart Justice Spokane

Spectrum Center Spokane

Spokane Alliance

Spokane Ministers' Fellowship

Tenants Union of Washington State

Smart Justice Spokane Coalition Partners:

ACLU of Washington

All Saints Lutheran Church

Carl Maxey Center

Chihak & Associates – Disability Attorneys

Disability Rights Washington

Community Building Foundation

Community-Minded Enterprises

Freedom Project East

Fuse Washington

Fulcrum Institute Dispute Resolution Clinic

Greater Spokane Progress

I Did The Time / Revive Center for Returning
Citizens

KYRS Thin Air Community Radio

League of Women Voters Spokane Area

Martin Luther King Jr. Family Outreach Center

NAMI Spokane – National Alliance on Mental
Illness

Neighborhood Alliance of Spokane

Northwest Fair Housing Alliance

Peace and Justice Action League of Spokane

River Warrior Society

SEIU Healthcare 775 NW

Smith-Barbieri Progressive Fund

Spokane Branch Unit 1137 NAACP

Spokane Community Against Racism

Spokane Low Income Housing Consortium

Spokane Tribe of Indians

Unitarian Universalist Church of Spokane

University Legal Assistance, Gonzaga Law
School

Washington Community Action Network

Washington Education Association, Eastern
Washington

Washington State Council of City & County
Employees – Local 270 AFSCME