

Elect Your Sheriff – Los Angeles  
SHERIFF CANDIDATE QUESTIONS (2018)

Please respond by April 13th.

*If you prefer not to answer a question, please write “No comment.”*

### **Criminal Justice**

- Will you commit to reducing custody arrests and instead using your discretion to issue a citation or to release individuals after booking?  
As sheriff, my ultimate goal is to promote peace within the communities we serve. Enforcing the law is a tool, and NOT the goal in of itself. Custodial arrests and the use of our limited jail space needs to be devoted to those who truly pose an immediate threat to the community, and we have exhausted other options. I will measure the value of my patrol personnel by their efforts in preventing our youth from winding up in the criminal justice system, not by how many they put into it.

### **Education Advocacy**

- At a time when students and parents across the country are worried about gun violence at school, the Trump administration’s response is to put more guns into our nation’s schools, either by arming teachers or by stationing armed security or police officers on campus. Recently, an incident in a California high school teacher, who is a reserve police officer, accidentally discharged his gun into the classroom’s ceiling. “Debris or fragmentation” from the ceiling, according to the local police chief, struck a 17-year-old student, who was taken to the hospital for treatment.
  - Research has consistently demonstrated that armed staff in schools sow distrust between students and school staff, undermine positive school climate, criminalize students, and further heighten tensions on campus. I would like to see the methodology in those research efforts, in particular how “armed staff” are categorized. There is too much variability in what constitutes “armed staff” and the activities they engage in to make a blanket statement for or against them.
  - Do you support arming teachers? (Yes/No/Explain) Most definitely not. Teachers should be focused on providing a positive learning environment in their classrooms, and their possession of a firearm undermines the very nature of their purpose in teaching.
  - Do you support placing more permanent armed security guards or police officers on school campuses? (Yes/No/Explain) I support the presence of school resource officers who are fully licensed peace officers and integrated into the school’s curriculum. I don’t support armed security guards in a school environment, nor uniformed police officers used solely for the purpose of “policing” the school grounds.
  - Do you support keeping schools “gun free”? (Yes/No/Explain) It’s somewhat of a useless label, because bestowing that on a school has absolutely nothing to do with actually enforcing it. There are

already plenty of laws on the books that prohibit the possession of firearms on school campuses, and the use of the “gun free” label only lends a sense of false security that is occasionally shattered by someone who may be looking for a soft target where the law abiding are unarmed.

## **Immigrant Rights**

- LA County has approximately 900k undocumented residents. As Sheriff, what steps would you take to protect undocumented residents and their families, and build trust with immigrant communities? First and foremost, I will respect the legislative process both locally by the Board of Supervisors, and in Sacramento by the Legislature. As sheriff, my position is part of the executive branch of government, and we are empaneled with enforcing the law, not writing it. I will not do anything to either scare undocumented residents or undermine the legislative process. I will communicate my opinions when warranted about pending legislation, but I will do so in a manner that does not disparage the process or cause fear in the community.

I will encourage undocumented residents to not fear local law enforcement, and I will personally deliver a message to ICE Director Homan that conveys my concerns about their tactics in the field, which include “collateral arrests,” racial profiling, and the use of raid jackets that say “POLICE – ICE” that may create the impression among the monolingual population that local police are involved in the deportation process.

I will ensure my personnel are not using citizenship status in any way in the field or in our custody facilities, and I will verify that our personnel are not participating in task forces that focus on immigration enforcement. As part of my engagement with all the communities served by the LASD, I will participate in town halls and any event where undocumented residents can ask questions in a non-threatening environment and I can gain a better perspective from their experiences.

- In 2017, California adopted SB 54, the California Values Act, to disentangle ICE from local law enforcement agencies and help ensure that residents can cooperate with the police without fear it will lead to their deportation. Do you support SB 54? As Sheriff, what steps would you take to ensure the Department’s compliance with the law? I am the only candidate for sheriff who not only supports it but has publicly pledged my support for the measure. As I told Kevin De Leon, the Values Act is only as good as the sheriffs who enforce it. As sheriff, one of my first actions will be to do a personal walk-through of the Inmate Reception Center and see for myself how the department interacts when required with ICE. I will verify compliance with SB 54 to the letter, and I will assist any efforts by the Board of Supervisors, the Legislature, and the Attorney General’s office in defending it.

## Jails

- The Sheriff has tremendous amount of power, including reducing sentences of those incarcerated in the jails. What steps do you plan on taking as Sheriff of LA County in reducing the population inside the LA County jails? That will depend on how successful we are as a community in reducing the amount of violence outside the jail system. The population of the jail is tied directly to the crime rate, and with a population of 10 million residents, there will always be a need to temporarily incapacitate those who pose a threat to the community. I support the efforts of the DA and the Board of Supervisors in reforming our cash bail system, and hopefully the algorithm currently being researched will lead us to the point where we can safely release individuals on their own recognizance during pretrial without regard to their financial status. With prison realignment, we have become a defacto extension of the prison system, which leads to less discretion on our part in terms of length of stay in custody. We need to work tirelessly to provide a robust rehabilitation system for inmates while they are in our custody with the goal of releasing them in better shape than when they were arrested. Reducing the recidivism rate in the long run will reduce the inmate population as well. I will engage all personnel within our jail system, both sworn and civilian, to assist in the rehabilitation effort with vocational training, Education Based Incarceration courses, and adopting best practices from other systems when possible.
- How do you plan on working and partnering with the LASD Civilian Oversight Commission? Specifically, what do you see their role is in holding LASD accountable and transparent in policies and practices? The Civilian Oversight Commission will play an important role in my administration, as I intend to use them as a sounding and review board for all policies, procedures, practices, and programs initiated by the LASD. I will also encourage them to engage in policy analysis and program evaluation for ongoing operations within the department that are of concern to them, and use their input to inform my decision making in terms of modifying, continuing, or eliminating those programs that do not advance the public's interest.

I will provide them unlimited access to aggregate data in order for them to be effective in their oversight role. On the individual level, regarding individual complaints or incidents, those will be directed to the Inspector General, Max Huntsman. I will provide him unlimited access to any document within the organization, with the expectation of course that confidential personnel matters and those under litigation are not divulged publicly. He should also have the power of the subpoena in order to fulfill his duties as needed.

## LGBT, Gender + Reproductive Justice

- Transgender people are overrepresented in the Los Angeles County jails. Historically, most transgender women have been housed in the K6G "gay" unit at Men's Central Jail, while most transgender men have been housed at the CRDF "women's" jail. Auditors recently found LASD out of compliance with section 115.42(e) of the federal Prison Rape Elimination Act Standards, which requires the agency to give each transgender inmate's own views with respect to their own safety "serious consideration" when making facility and housing placement decisions. As Sheriff, would you move the Department toward

allowing transgender individuals to be housed based on their gender identity when such a placement feels safe and appropriate for them-- and if so, how? There are several variables at play in addressing this concern, and they include the limited bed space available in each facility, the ever-changing number of transgender inmates involved, and the unique challenges each population poses in terms of shielding them from harm in a custodial setting. Having worked at CRDF for over two years as the watch commander overseeing DMH housing, I had the duty to oversee the security for a male module located within the female facility, and the experience gave me a good perspective on the issue with transgender inmates. The accommodations can be made with the understanding it may require additional resources in terms of physical barriers, increased security personnel, and training.

- The ACLU opposes criminal penalties for the exchange of sex for money or other things of value, between consenting adults. Evidence abounds that criminalization of sex work is not an effective way to combat human trafficking, and in fact makes it more difficult and less safe for exploited sex workers to seek help. These problems disproportionately impact transgender women, others in the LGBTQ community, people of color, and women. Would you support a moratorium on prostitution prosecutions for consensual sex work, a formal policy of not pursuing prostitution charges against victims who report another crime that occurred while they were engaging in sex work, and/or other measures to enhance safety and security for people engaged in the sex trade? I will support a moratorium on those who work in the sex trade, as I understand it is not something those who engage in it did so freely as a career choice. Economic necessity, abusive relationships, lack of family support and positive role models, all play a role and we shouldn't create more adversity in their lives than they already have. I will definitely prosecute pimps as robustly as I can with all the resources I have available, as they are the prime suspects in human trafficking and all the associated crimes that go along with it. The prosecution of johns is something that should be handled at the discretion of local unit commanders based on community concerns.
- We know that 1.3 million children in the United States have mothers who are incarcerated, and 5 percent of women in jails nationwide are pregnant at admission. As the largest women's jail in the country, CRDF routinely houses (?) postpartum parents who need or want to breastfeed or pump breastmilk for delivery to their children. How will you ensure that parents are able to directly breastfeed or get their breastmilk to their children, and otherwise maintain family relationships while incarcerated in LA County? What alternatives to incarceration will you establish to this effect? What are your thoughts on construction plans for the new women's facility in Mira Loma? I would like to explore alternatives to incarceration for those whose security level and offense do not pose a threat to either the community or their infant. Barring that, there is no reason why we cannot set up a system to encourage and support breastfeeding through the first three months post partum, as the facility can be upgraded to support the endeavor, although it will take a serious amount of coordination with families on the outside to ensure a consistent pattern of feeding while complying with the security needs of the facility. I will look for non-profit organizations, philanthropists, and grant monies to assist in purchasing lactating equipment, refrigeration, storage and transportation containers, etc. I will lean on the Board of Supervisors to fund the necessary changes to the

physical plant to accommodate this very worthwhile cause. I do not support the relocation of the women's facility to Mira Loma, or to housing females in that facility period. It will become a financial boondoggle based on my experience with the female inmate population at CRDF, and they are constantly straining to cover the transportation and hospitalization of their population with many local hospitals with easy access. There are few choices in the high desert, it will increase drastically the need for more female deputies to provide security at hospitals, and it will separate the incarcerated from their families needlessly, causing more strain on already difficult relationships. This is a no-brainer.

### **Police Practices**

- The Racial and Identity Profiling Act requires that law enforcement agencies collect and report data on each stop its officers conduct, including the perceived race of the individual stopped, the reason for the stop, and any action taken. The law does not specify how agencies should use this information. Do you commit to analyzing this information regularly and taking action – whether it is Department-wide or officer specific – if the results suggest that there is biased policing activity occurring? As sheriff, I will be obligated to take action based on actionable knowledge, particularly in the area of racial profiling. The data we generate will be constantly analyzed and statistical disparities between detentions and the underlying community demographics will cause a more robust review of the information in order to determine whether there is a bias in play or some other variable. I will take affirmative action to stop any unlawful actions from my personnel, be it at the individual level or the aggregate. I will also ensure my personnel are properly trained to avoid bias in their decision making in the first place (complying with legislative mandates in this area), and to be aware of the context of their action at all times.