



## MULTNOMAH COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY 2020 CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE

**Candidate: Ethan Knight**

1. To build trust between law enforcement and immigrant communities and thereby increase community safety, we must protect access to justice and our courts for everyone. The current Multnomah County District Attorney said that undocumented immigrants could be safe reporting crime or showing up in court because the DA's office would not communicate with federal immigration enforcement, yet records [show](#) that the current DA's office did in fact share information about people with Immigration and Customs Enforcement. Will you commit to "immigration-safe" policies, including adopting, publishing and enforcing a non-cooperation and non-reporting policy with federal immigration authorities in Multnomah County in your first 100 days?

**Please answer "Yes" or "No" and provide an explanation.**

**No. While I support safe and open access to justice and the courthouse, a blanket "non-cooperation" policy in connection with immigration authorities regardless of the facts, or if there is a new presidential administration, is short-sighted and problematic.**

2. Additionally, the district attorney must be mindful of collateral consequences that result from their charging decisions, including avoiding harmful immigration consequences for people who otherwise meet their criminal justice obligations to Oregon's community. Will you commit to adopting a written policy that encourages prosecutors to always consider immigration-related consequences of prosecutorial decisions at all stages of a case (charging, considering civil compromises, plea negotiation practices, sentencing recommendations and post-conviction practices); protect from public disclosure a person's immigration status; and to reach immigration-safe dispositions where possible?

**Please answer "Yes" or "No" and provide an explanation.**

**Yes. A critical consideration in the criminal justice system are the collateral consequences of any conviction. Given the current ICE approach to deportation of those with a criminal conviction, I think it is critical that local prosecutors are thoughtful and use discretion when considering charging and other decisions in the cases with a non-citizen defendant. Relatedly, I would take steps to ensure that other defendants who face collateral consequences outside the criminal justice system (but unrelated to immigration) are also treated fairly and thoughtfully so that a criminal conviction does not completely disrupt a person's life or livelihood.**

3. The District Attorney has a critical role to play in ensuring police officers are held accountable. To avoid conflicts of interest between police and prosecutors, do you agree to create and use independent reviews of police misconduct, including police shootings?

**Please answer "Yes" or "No" and provide an explanation.**

**No. The investigation of officers' use of force is subject to the collective bargaining agreement for police officers. Any changes to the current approach for investigating officer-involved shootings must be codified in that agreement. I do support improving how we investigate officer-involved shootings and increasing public confidence that the use of force was justified and the last resort. But that will only be achieved through productive negotiations with the labor representatives of that union, not by unilaterally adopting a new system. For the question of police misconduct, I do support external review and would look to how we can enhance the ability of the Police Review Board, the Citizen Review Committee and the Independent Police Review to review such matters. However, if a true conflict exists I would support an outside investigative referral, similar to the process used in the federal system.**

4. Mandatory minimum sentences have driven high incarceration rates and racial disparities in Oregon's criminal justice system for decades. Do you commit to advocating for the repeal of mandatory minimum laws, including Measure 11?

**Please answer "Yes" (and your specific goal) or "No" and provide an explanation.**

**No. I do support limiting the application of mandatory sentences – I believe there should be clear consequences for certain crimes including murder and sex abuse. For the other less serious crimes, I think it is important that we ensure we reduce the disparities in sentencing across jurisdictions like those that created popular support for Measure 11 before it was approved by the voters. Therefore I would support the continued use of the statutorily authorized non-measure 11 alternatives for some Measure 11 offenses.**

5. Money bail is often set at levels that are far too high for many people or their families to afford to pay. Will you commit to supporting local and statewide policies that eliminate requests for cash bail as a sole condition of release and ensure that nobody languishes in jail because they cannot afford to pay for their freedom?

**Please answer "Yes" or "No" and provide an explanation.**

**Yes. I am proud to operate in the federal system where there currently is no cash bail in Oregon. I do think it is vital that we replace cash bail in an intentional way that protects the public and ensures a defendant's appearance at trial. This is what has made the District of Columbia's system a success, providing a risk assessment and a case management system to help defendants at high risk of failure to appear (such as those with addiction issues) get support services. This of course will require resources that must be secured for each county as the replacement of cash bail must occur through the revision of state statute.**