

Screening Questionnaire - DFL46 MN Senate & House Candidates 2026

Questions for 2026 DFL46 MN House + Senate Candidates.

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The respondent's email (**ashleyforminnesota@gmail.com**) was recorded on submission of this form.

Email *

ashleyforminnesota@gmail.com

Candidate Full Name *

Ashley McDaniels

Which seat are you seeking? In which district? *

HD46B

Do you confirm that you live in the district that you are running to represent? You can verify your home district here: <https://pollfinder.sos.mn.gov/> *

Yes

No

How long have you lived in your district? *

1 year

Do you align with the [DFL party platform](#) and values? *

Yes

No

Other:

This question is asked in the interest of transparency and does not automatically disqualify a candidate. Have you ever faced a formal ethics or professional-conduct investigation or discipline by any governmental, judicial, or professional body? *

Yes

No

If yes, please describe:

.....

What is your campaign website url? *

Www.ashleymcdaniels46b.com

What are the top three issues that your campaign is focused on? *

My campaign is focused on three issues that directly impact working middle-class families in District 46B:

1. Housing Affordability for the Working Middle Class

I am focused on modernizing housing policy so that assistance programs and tax structures reflect today's real cost of living – not outdated thresholds. Too many working families earn “too much” to qualify for relief but still struggle with rising property taxes, rent, insurance, and basic expenses. I will introduce or support legislation that addresses middle-income eligibility gaps and stabilizes housing costs so families are not forced out of the communities they built their lives in.

2. Indexing Wage Growth to Inflation for All Workers

We often debate minimum wage increases, but middle-income earners are quietly losing purchasing power every year because raises do not keep pace with inflation. I will advocate for structural reforms that tie wage benchmarks, public sector contracts, and state-incentivized employment frameworks to inflation indicators. If costs rise, pay should rise proportionately – not years later.

3. Equal Access to Healthcare Without Religious Exemptions

Healthcare decisions should be guided by medical standards and patient rights – not denied through exemption-based loopholes. I will support legislation that strengthens separation between religious doctrine and public healthcare policy, ensuring that access to lawful medical care is consistent, transparent, and equitable across our state.

Together, these priorities focus on strengthening middle-class stability, retaining skilled workers, and ensuring Minnesota remains economically competitive and equitable.

.....

Why are you seeking this office, and what makes you the best candidate? *

I am seeking this office because District 46B is entering a new economic era, and our policy focus must evolve with it. Over the past decade, affordability pressures have expanded beyond crisis-level poverty into the working middle class. Families who are employed, educated, and contributing are increasingly finding that traditional policy approaches are not keeping pace with inflation and cost-of-living realities.

My campaign is centered specifically on modernizing economic policy for middle-income earners – particularly around eligibility thresholds, wage indexing, and healthcare access without exemption-based barriers. That focus is intentional.

What differentiates me is both perspective and approach.

First, I bring a systems-based, analytical mindset from my professional background in engineering. I evaluate whether policies are functioning as designed and, if not, how to recalibrate them structurally – through amendments, benchmarks, oversight, and measurable outcomes.

Second, I represent a generational shift in leadership. Many existing frameworks were built in a different economic environment. I am focused on ensuring state policy reflects today's cost burdens, not yesterday's assumptions.

Third, I am prepared to directly examine and amend existing legislation where needed to close eligibility gaps and tie wage growth more meaningfully to inflation indicators – rather than relying solely on incremental adjustments.

District 46B deserves leadership that is willing to reassess systems, close modern policy gaps, and proactively address middle-class stability in a changing economy. I am ready to bring that focus to the legislature.

What do you see as being the greatest challenge facing Minnesota in the next two years? *

I believe the greatest challenge facing Minnesota in the next two years is maintaining stability for working families while costs remain high and economic uncertainty continues.

I'm not an economist, but I pay close attention to what the data shows and what families are experiencing in real life. Housing costs, insurance premiums, childcare expenses, and healthcare bills have increased, and in many cases wages have not fully kept pace. Even when incomes rise, purchasing power often lags behind what families actually need to feel secure.

The challenge is not dramatic collapse – it's quiet erosion. When stability weakens for people who are employed, paying taxes, and contributing to their communities, that has long-term consequences for workforce retention, homeownership, and economic competitiveness.

Minnesota must navigate budget realities, workforce shortages in key industries, and national political uncertainty while ensuring that affordability pressures do not push families out of our state.

I believe our focus over the next two years should be on practical, data-informed adjustments that protect middle-class stability and ensure that economic growth translates into real security for the people who keep our communities functioning.

If elected, which committee assignment(s) will you seek? *

If elected, I would seek assignment to committees that directly impact economic stability and cost-of-living pressures for working and middle-income families. Specifically, I would prioritize Housing Finance and Policy and Taxes. Housing costs and property tax structures are central drivers of affordability in Minnesota, and meaningful reform requires legislative attention in those areas. I would also strongly consider Commerce Finance and Policy or Workforce and Labor committees, as they influence wage structures, insurance costs, and economic competitiveness – all of which directly affect household financial stability. My goal in committee assignments would be to focus where structural affordability decisions are made and where policy adjustments can have measurable impact on middle-class retention and long-term economic sustainability.

Do you understand and agree that your responses to this survey will be shared with the delegates ahead of the SD46 Convention? *

Yes

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The respondent's email (**larrykraft@gmail.com**) was recorded on submission of this form.

Email *

larrykraft@gmail.com

Candidate Full Name *

Larry Kraft

Which seat are you seeking? In which district? *

State Representative 46A

Do you confirm that you live in the district that you are running to represent? You can verify your home district here: <https://pollfinder.sos.mn.gov/> *

Yes

No

How long have you lived in your district? *

22+ years

Do you align with the [DFL party platform](#) and values? *

Yes

No

Other:

This question is asked in the interest of transparency and does not automatically disqualify a candidate. Have you ever faced a formal ethics or professional-conduct investigation or discipline by any governmental, judicial, or professional body? *

Yes

No

If yes, please describe:

.....

What is your campaign website url? *

<https://www.larrykraftslp.org>

.....

What are the top three issues that your campaign is focused on? *

Climate Change, Bold Policy Actions like Single Payer Universal Healthcare, Resistance to federal government violations of the constitution like we're seeing in Operation Metro Surge

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Why are you seeking this office, and what makes you the best candidate? *

Why: Among our state's highest priorities must be climate change. It has to be a lens through which we view all legislation – and the stakes are high; we have to get climate policy right.

But climate change is also an incredible opportunity – to create good jobs, reduce pollution and improve public health, and address social inequalities. And I look forward to working on these and many other issues to improve the lives of all people in our community.

Best candidate: As a State Representative and before that a City Council member, I work hard to listen, understand people's priorities, and create good policy. I love representing St. Louis Park and our values and leadership at the state level.

Previously, I spent 25 years working in the high-tech industry, solving problems, collaborating with a diverse workforce, and managing large budgets. Now, as an elected official, I'm a believer in asking lots of questions, gathering input from all stakeholders, and working to build consensus.

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What do you see as being the greatest challenge facing Minnesota in the next two years? *

Making progress on bold policy (climate change, single payer universal healthcare) while protecting our communities from unconstitutional actions of the federal government.

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If elected, which committee assignment(s) will you seek? *

I currently serve as the DFL Vice Chair of Energy. I'm also on Transportation and State Government. If I'm able to serve another term, Energy and Transportation are my top two priorities. But I'd also be interested in Health and Human Services and Taxes.

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The respondent's email (**cherylyouakim@hotmail.com**) was recorded on submission of this form.

Email *

cherylyouakim@hotmail.com

Candidate Full Name *

Cheryl Youakim

Which seat are you seeking? In which district? *

SD46B

Do you confirm that you live in the district that you are running to represent? You can verify your home district here: <https://pollfinder.sos.mn.gov/> *

Yes

No

How long have you lived in your district? *

29 Years

Do you align with the [DFL party platform](#) and values? *

Yes

No

Other:

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Yes

No

If yes, please describe:

.....

What is your campaign website url? *

<https://www.cherylyouakim.com/>

.....

What are the top three issues that your campaign is focused on? *

Defending Democracy, Affordability, Education Funding

.....

Why are you seeking this office, and what makes you the best candidate? *

I have proven experience that has gotten results for our communities and Minnesota. One example, as the Education Finance Chair in 2023-2024, I led the largest investment in our K-12 system since the first MN Miracle. I would be happy to share more. My time as an education advocate, city council member, Senate staffer, and State Representative has helped me build the capacity to tackle issues from many different angles. I am able to collaborate to get things done and work hard to bring voices that are under represented to the table. Many of you know me, we have been in the trenches together working to make our communities a better place to live. Whether it was as parent advocates years ago or fighting ICE over the last few months, you know that I do the work and that I show up. We still have work to do together to make our communities safe, healthy, and affordable. I would be honored to earn your endorsement to continue that work together.

.....

What do you see as being the greatest challenge facing Minnesota in the next two years? *

Defending democracy from protecting people's rights as our Federal government tries to shred the constitution to protecting our right to vote alongside Secretary of State Steve Simon. We also need to invest in many areas to make life more affordable including, housing, healthcare, childcare, and more. Our public safety programs have become poverty programs. We need to shore those up as well as invest in our middle class. We need to keep Minnesota a place where you can live who you live, worship how you chose, and have equal protection under the law no matter who you are, what you look like, or where you live.

.....

If elected, which committee assignment(s) will you seek? *

I am currently the Co-Chair of the House Education Committee as well as serving on the Tax Committee, and Ways & Means Committee. I would like to continue to serve on those in some capacity as well as get on the Capital Investment Committee.

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The respondent's email (ronlatzcampaign@gmail.com) was recorded on submission of this form.

Email *

ronlatzcampaign@gmail.com

Candidate Full Name *

Ron Latz

Which seat are you seeking? In which district? *

State Senator - SD46

Do you confirm that you live in the district that you are running to represent? You can verify your home district here: <https://pollfinder.sos.mn.gov/> *

Yes

No

How long have you lived in your district? *

I have lived in my home in St. Louis Park for over 30 years where I've raised my children along with my wife. My roots in Senate District 46 run even further back, however. I grew up in Golden Valley, formerly a part of SD46, and went to Hopkins Public Schools.

Do you align with the [DFL party platform](#) and values? *

Yes

No

Other:

This question is asked in the interest of transparency and does not automatically disqualify a candidate. Have you ever faced a formal ethics or professional-conduct investigation or discipline by any governmental, judicial, or professional body? *

Yes

No

If yes, please describe:

I was involved in a fee dispute in my work as an attorney, and the matter was resolved.

What is your campaign website url? *

www.ronlatz.org

What are the top three issues that your campaign is focused on? *

My top three areas of focus are safety, affordability, and justice. I believe these issues are deeply connected and have spent my career fighting for them.

I've been a leading author of landmark gun violence prevention legislation, including my bills establishing extreme risk protection orders and expanding background checks to keep guns out of dangerous situations to make communities safer. I've also prioritized the health and safety of Minnesotans by securing a statewide smoking ban and ensuring critical resources for our frontline healthcare workers. Additionally, I've advocated for investments in safe roads, bridges, and more to create secure infrastructure.

On affordability, I've fought for policies like paid sick leave, family leave, and a \$15 minimum wage. I'm also a key leader in the Southwest Light Rail project and advocate for affordable housing. I am dedicated to expanding access to attainable housing and transportation for everyone. I'm also committed to reducing emissions, growing clean energy solutions, and creating green jobs that make Minnesota more affordable and sustainable for everyone.

I've spent my entire career fighting for justice in Minnesota. I've authored landmark legislation on drug sentencing reform, advanced successful community re-entry initiatives for previously incarcerated individuals, and much more to strengthen public safety. I've also worked on reforms focused on police training and accountability to improve trust and outcomes in the justice system. In addition, I authored Minnesota's "Ban the Box" law, increased penalties for bias crimes, and have championed women's and LGBTQ+ rights. Through my work in strengthening consumer protections, enforcing corporate accountability, and standing up for victims I have helped advance reforms like the Child Victims Act, protections against fraud and predatory practices, and more.

The work on these issues is not yet done, and I will continue to lead on advancements in these areas.

Why are you seeking this office, and what makes you the best candidate? *

I am seeking re-election because now more than ever we need proven, experienced leadership in order to keep moving Minnesota forward.

Our state is facing a real crisis. People are questioning whether our institutions are protecting them or failing them. Trust, the foundation of public safety and democracy, is being tested.

I've spent my career as a legislator and attorney working on public safety, accountability, and advancing justice. I've written and passed laws to reduce gun violence, reform our criminal justice system, and stand up for civil rights.

I know how state government works, and I know how to stand up for Minnesotans when it counts.

What do you see as being the greatest challenge facing Minnesota in the next two years? *

I believe the greatest challenge facing Minnesotans is and will be affordability. For working families, financial pressure is coming from all directions from housing to childcare. The average family's overall budget has become unsustainable. We must work to ease the burdens on budgets, especially in the area of affordable housing and childcare. To achieve this, we need to expand the availability of affordable housing in our communities and use partnership-based approaches to increase the effectiveness of our federal and state assistance programs. Communities can also be made more affordable through transportation projects like the Southwest Light Rail and creating more well paying jobs as we expand clean energy solutions. I've championed fair wages, paid sick leave, and family leave and will continue to fight to make sure every Minnesotan can thrive, not just get by.

If elected, which committee assignment(s) will you seek? *

I am currently the Chair of the Judiciary and Public Safety Committee and sit on the Commerce and Consumer Protection Committee. I would seek to maintain both of those roles.

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Yes

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The respondent's email (lynette@lynetteformn.com) was recorded on submission of this form.

Email *

lynette@lynetteformn.com

Candidate Full Name *

Lynette Lungay Dumalag

Which seat are you seeking? In which district? *

MN Senate, District 46

Do you confirm that you live in the district that you are running to represent? You can verify your home district here: <https://pollfinder.sos.mn.gov/> *

Yes

No

How long have you lived in your district? *

20 years

Do you align with the [DFL party platform](#) and values? *

Yes

No

Other:

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Yes

No

If yes, please describe:

On July 8, 2025, the city manager of St. Louis Park received a written complaint alleging that Councilmember Dumalag specific sections of the city charter provisions, Sections 2.09, 12.20, and 12.21. Upon receipt of the complaint, the city engaged an external consultant to investigate the complaint. Upon the completion of the investigation and presentation of findings on September 15, 2025, the Mayor and City Council voted to adopt the findings as presented by the consultant and found that Councilmember Dumalag did not violate any of the provisions in the St. Louis Park City Charter. For more information, you can reference the September 15, 2025 City Council Agenda Packet for the investigation report. You can reference the October 20, 2025 City Council Agenda packet for the September 15, 2025 meeting minutes.

What is your campaign website url? *

www.lynetteformn.com

What are the top three issues that your campaign is focused on? *

Affordability, safety, and equity.

Minnesotan's everyday costs are rising. As basic needs are getting more difficult to meet, our state should act to make sure we are taking care of our most vulnerable neighbors.

The federal attacks on our neighbors of color have been extremely harmful. Minnesotans care for our immigrant communities and we need to make sure neighbors have stabilized housing, food, and access to basic services.

Resources should go to those who are most in need. Minnesotans understand when something seems unfair, such as gaps in school funding and fraud.

Why are you seeking this office, and what makes you the best candidate? *

Our state is facing a different set of challenges than what we faced 20 years ago. The solutions to the issues we face today will not be solved by the same approaches we've used in the past.

What do you see as being the greatest challenge facing Minnesota in the next two years? *

Affordability. Our living expenses have increased such as housing, healthcare, food, and child care. The stabilization of these basic needs are important for an individual and a community to survive.

If elected, which committee assignment(s) will you seek? *

Housing and homelessness prevention; Rules and Administration - subcommittee on the federal impact on Minnesotans and Economic Stability Committee; Taxes

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Yes

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