



2016 Minnesota State House and Senate Candidate Questionnaire

ARRM

**Section #1: About Yourself**

Your Name: Ben Grimsley  
District you are running in: 4B

**Question #1:** Please provide a short background about yourself.

I am a 6th generation resident of Detroit Lakes,  
MN, a small business owner, Anchor Financial Services LLC,  
financial planner and county commissioner.

**Question #2:** What do you hope to accomplish by running for office? What will your main priorities be at the Capitol if you are elected?

Reform our welfare system to provide wage growth incentives.  
Address our workforce shortages and keep businesses  
competitive with neighboring states.

**Question #3:** What experience or connections, if any, do you have to the disability community?

My brother lives in a group home and has disabilities.  
I've also served on the Becker County DAC board  
for over 4.5 yrs.

## Section #2: Our Workforce Crisis

**Question #1:** Our industry is facing a workforce crisis. There are simply not enough people to provide the direct care needed for people with disabilities to lead independent lives. Given that the overwhelming majority of funding for disability services comes from the government, and low wages are a driving force behind high rates of staff turnover, what ideas would you offer for helping to create a livable wage for our direct support professionals and caregivers?

*Look at where current ~~person~~ resources are being allocated and see if a shift needs to occur.*

*Get more people working by reforming the welfare system.*

**Question #2:** As technology continues to become a bigger part of everyone's lives, there are numerous products that can be used by individuals with disabilities which offer them increased independence, including things as simple as apps on cell phones and tablets. Some technology can supplement staff while others can substitute for staff. Would you support the use of public dollars to increase the availability and use of technology?

*That is a broad question but if the details make sense I would support it.*

### Section #3: The Sustainability of our System

**Question #1:** Minnesota's Olmstead Plan includes a broad series of key activities our state must accomplish to ensure people with disabilities are living, learning, working and enjoying life in the most integrated setting appropriate for their needs. In 2015, a set of very ambitious goals and benchmarks were finalized and approved by the Minnesota courts to help ensure that the intent of the Olmstead Plan is realized. What is your role as a legislator to oversee and ensure that those goals are met?

*I think some of the goals are unrealistic and detrimental to some clients care. I would work with the industry to implement what works and get legislation on multiple levels to fix it.*

**Question #2:** Affordable housing is an issue for many people in Minnesota. A cornerstone of Minnesota's Olmstead Plan is the opportunity for individuals with disabilities to live as independently as they choose. As a legislator how would you strategically expand availability of affordable housing with accessibility features for Minnesotans with disabilities?

*I don't know as of right now.*

**Question #3:** Our industry has seen an influx of "unfunded mandates" - items that cost providers additional money without subsequent compensation, such as the increase in minimum wage, the Affordable Care Act, increased regulatory fees and the new Department of Labor Overtime Rule to name a few. When the government adds a new mandate what is its responsibility in supporting government funded businesses to pay for those mandates?

*They need to understand this has additional cost and will have to tax accordingly to continue to fund these services.*