



2016 Minnesota State House and Senate Candidate Questionnaire

ARRM

**Section #1: About Yourself**

Your Name: Bill Weber  
District you are running in: 22

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

Lifelong resident - Rock County. Sixteen years as council member and  
Mayor of Luverne. Been involved in economic dev., hospital  
board, Rotary and various church boards. Married to Barb,  
have two adult children and three grandchildren. Been  
state senator for district 22 since 2013.

**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?

Elimination of mandates in many areas which greatly increase  
costs of services. Reform of health insurance problem  
present due to MN Sure. Ensure quality education for  
all.

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

Have visited numerous facilities and visited with  
many workers in past four years.

## 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?

Problem is two-fold. First, money does need to be provided for raises. Next unfunded mandates must be reviewed. Too often, the rules get in the way of bringing care to the resident.

**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?

Yes. We must always look at better ways to deliver service.

### 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?

Continued review by legislature, funding of budget to carry out goals and analysis of results

**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?

First, we should go to industry for ideas on what works best. Provide funding where needed.

**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?

Government must continually question need for mandate and not push costs onto others.