



ARRM

Section #1: About Yourself

Your Name: Dennis Barsness
District you are running in: Representative 5B

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

I am a lifelong resident of Itasca County, A father of two,
a Pastor, PCA, and ~~Entrepreneur~~ Entrepreneur. A green
Party candidate and local Human rights and Community Activist.

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?

Encourage more individual involvement and reduce
corporate influence in elections. To protect the people
of Minnesota ~~to~~ over corporate profits.

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

My Calling as a Pastor and my work as a PCA.

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?

working to ensure the clients are able to receive care will ensure hours of work for the caregiver. low wages combined with limited working hours detours job seekers from this field.

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?

No. Most often the disable need physical help along with mental (emotional) stimulation. Technology does not provide this, and it takes away necessary human interaction

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?

It is my intention to ensure the needs of the disabled be met.

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?

Providing the ability for at home care is a necessity. PCA's and the like need to be provided enough work hours to make this happen.

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 agencies need to appropriate funding to its appropriate places rather than frivolous, wasteful spending.