



2016 Minnesota State House and Senate Candidate Questionnaire

ARRM

Section #1: About Yourself

Your Name: Gene Pelowski

District you are running in: 28A

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

I have served in the Minnesota House of Representatives since 1987. Supported legislation for the

Disability Community for 30 years.

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?

Working with our local Home and Community Options I have sponsored and supported legislation that has improved

the quality of services and independence of the clients served.

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

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the quality of services and independence of the clients served.

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?

I was the only area legislator that actually voted for the 5% wage increase that was signed into law by Governor Dayton.

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?

I have supported this technology and will continue to 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?

To support our local providers of services and their clients to the best of our ability.

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 have supported affordable housing legislation and will continue to support it.

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?

Mandate reduction has been and continues to be an issue I support.
