



2018 Minnesota State House Questionnaire

ARRM

Section #1: About Yourself

Your Name: John Persell
District you are running in: 5A

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

I am an Environmental Policy Analyst for the Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe (Tribe). I served in the Minnesota House of Representatives from 2009 through 2016. As a disabled Veteran I will support programs and funding for all Minnesotans who have disabilities and the people who help ensure a safe living and working environment for disabled persons.

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 and what committees do you hope to serve on?

Question #3: What experience or connections, if any, do you have to people with disabilities?

Section #2: Our Workforce Crisis

Question #1: Services to people with disabilities are facing a workforce crisis. Among home and community-based service providers alone, there are approximately 10,000 open positions for Direct Support Professionals (DSPs), with a turnover rate of nearly 60%. Moreover, population demographics show the number of people needing care over the next decade will outstrip those able to provide care by a 5-to-1 margin. What will you do as a legislator to address this significant challenge we are facing in providing services to people with disabilities?

Question #2: Historical government control of service reimbursement rates has already led to chronic low-wages for a highly trained workforce; and a 7 percent rate cut to waiver rates, which began to take effect in July, will take an additional \$140 million away from efforts to keep wages competitive and maintain training standards. How would you ensure that people with disabilities have the legislated financial supports to access services that increase their ability to live as independently as possible in the community for which they live.
