

MN State House District 63B

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1 of 6

- elected every 2 years
- works alongside Governor to create laws & establish state budget
- passes bills on public policy, sets levels for state spending, raises/lowers taxes, votes to uphold/override governor vetoes



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Emma Greenman (DFL)

Dennis Schuller (Legal Marijuana Now)

Frank Pafko (Republican)

What policies will advocate for to address the rise in microaggressions and hate crimes against our Asian community?

We must stand united against the racism, xenophobia, sexism, and homophobia that has been openly perpetuated and encouraged by Donald Trump and his enablers. The xenophobia and racist rhetoric and attacks traffic on a long and dark history of discrimination and racism targeting the Asian community. We must acknowledge this history and its impact. And we need to work to eliminate explicit and implicit bias that perpetuate the rise of these attacks.

Asian American Organizing Project (AAOP) did not receive a response from the Dennis Schuller campaign.

If you work with the Dennis Schuller campaign and would like to provide answers, please email info@aaopmn.org.

Asian American Organizing Project (AAOP) did not receive a response from the Frank Pafko campaign.

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As a member of the state house, I will support passage of the legislation introduced in 2020 by Representatives Frank Hornstein, Hodan Hassan and Kaohley Her to update Minnesota hate crimes statute, expanding and improving reporting of hate crimes and requiring updated training for law enforcement. I also support policies that require implicit bias training for policymakers, law enforcement, educators and community leaders to recognize and combat behavior rooted in implicit bias that impacts policy and communities.

To combat xenophobic and racist behavior, such as microaggressions, we also need to focus on education. I also support integrating ethnic studies and curriculum that centers the stories and histories of communities of color into our public schools.

And we need to respond to misinformation and disinformation that promotes harmful narratives about entire communities. I will work with colleagues inside the legislature, movement allies and partners like you to stand up against this type of behavior and reject false narratives being pushed out by social or news media.

To fight back against the current rise of discrimination and to eliminate it in the long term requires reimagining structures and systems to increasing the power of communities to make decisions over the policies that impact their lives. I believe in building and co-creating these structural reforms and policy responses in relationship with the people of my district and with community members like you.

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Many of our youth and young people have been left out of national conversations and financial help, even while continuing to work in essential jobs and balancing that work with their school and families. What are your plans to ensure that our youth and young people's voices are also incorporated within legislative decisions? How will you address concerns raised by our youth and young people in regards to Governor Walz's fall semester school plans?

I became a voting rights lawyer because I believe in the power of the people together to build a multi-racial, multi-generation gender inclusive democracy where everyone thrives. To build the Minnesota where everyone thrives with no exceptions, we need structures that increase the participation of everyone and specifically young people in our economy and our democracy.

Together, we can make long-term structural change—and it requires all of us, fueled and directed by the courage, tenacity and organizing work of young people from across the state. As State Representative, I will work to bring structural reforms and innovative community engagement structures that harness the power of young people and communities in our district and across Minnesota. I will seek out, listen to, and incorporate the voices of young people in the legislative and policy decisions that impact their lives. With regard to school this fall, I have been talking to a lot of students, as well as their parents and teachers about concerns about the school year. I'm hearing messages of fear, uncertainty and anxiety during this unprecedented time. It is essential that the state and districts make decisions based in science, that keep students, their families and teachers safe and listen to their needs. We also need to recognize the central role that schools play in the lives of kids and families, not just educating but also feeding and providing care. We need to balance the educational and social imperatives with the need to protect people and families from the virus.

What I am hearing, and believe, is that if conditions are not safe, we can not reasonably expect students, teachers, and staff to go back to school in person. With the drastic increase in cases with children returning to school across the country, we must be hyper vigilant and demand statewide action in the event of an outbreak. We also need to ensure that school districts, schools and teachers have what they need to successfully implement distance learning and to continue meeting the nutritional needs of students and families. . It must be done with a focus on equity and meeting the needs of every student in the districts.

Young people are a key part of that and we must ensure that their voices are heard in this conversation. I've attended socially distanced rallies and protests with teachers and students demanding a safe and equitable approach to returning to in person education and student voices have been central to these rallies and this conversation. On the campaign side, we are planning to continue these conversations and would love to continue the conversation with you. It's essential to listen, learn from and lift up the voices and the stories of those on the front lines - students and teachers who are the true experts about the day to day in schools across the state.

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How will you ensure that our youth and young people also receive financial support during this time?

It's important to meet people where they are at. We have to ensure we're providing the necessary financial support for students to have access to the resources and technology needed to continue their education. The state must carefully allocate funding from CARES, GEER, and ESSER for not only education resources, but to keep buildings safe with proper PPE and sanitation protocol.

Many students rely on the resources provided by their schools such as free and reduced lunch. And families rely on nutrition and other supports for their kids to supplement our fraying social safety net that leaves far too many families behind. The pandemic has made matters worse and the state, local and federal jurisdictions must do more to support all families, regardless of geography or immigration status. We must also ensure that young people are getting these same resources if they are distanced learning at home in order to sustain their health and wellbeing.

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There are many small business owners, many of which are Asian-owned and have seen a decrease in business since COVID-19 due to xenophobia. What are your plans to ensure that our small businesses owners, especially our Asian-owned ones, continue to be safe during a pandemic while ensuring the longevity of their business?

This pandemic has taken a toll on small business owners in unprecedented ways. The complete failure of a coordinated federal response coupled with the continued spread of COVID-19 cases have hurt Minnesotans and small businesses across the state. The only long term solution is to get the virus under control so that businesses and their customers are able to safely and comfortably resume operations. In the meantime, we need to continue to provide financial support through this turbulent period and make sure it's focused on the small and medium sized businesses who need it.

We must also continue to fight for federal support to small businesses that are designed and implemented in a way that is accessible to small and minority-owned businesses. We should fight to expand emergency grants, loans and debt relief to support the sustainability of our small businesses. We also need to fight for the funding to support the cities and local governments whose services and support can be a lifeline to small businesses and the owners and families that run them. And we must work together to fight the xenophobic rhetoric coming from the White House.

We need to stand united in the message that it is going to take each and every one of us to do our part to keep each other safe. That includes enforcing the state-wide mask mandate and ensuring we're taking all necessary precautions to limit the spread of the virus and not putting staff and essential workers in harm's way. We need bold leadership to incite collective action to protect individuals and their livelihoods.

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George Floyd's murder has pushed the world into more deep conversations around race and policing. One of the components of anti-racist work is in education, and in specifically ethnic studies. Ethnic studies provides students the opportunity to learn and reflect on their racial identity through a historical lens. Do you support mandated ethnic studies as a high school graduation requirement?

Yes. I believe it's essential that we tell the stories of everyone in our community and that is not currently happening in our curriculum. We need to teach and learn the histories of all of our neighbors and ethnic studies curriculum is a way to ensure we are centering the history and stories of people of color. A single, dominant narrative is harmful and leaves out integral components of our history that we must learn from to make progress moving forward. We need to equip generations of students with narratives that celebrate the heritage and history of communities of color and disrupt narratives of white supremacy.

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COVID-19 has shifted many polling places for this past Primary Election. Many organizations and individuals are advocating for absentee voting by mail as well. Absentee voting by mail can be confusing to many and even more so when you can't read or write English well. Many of our Asian community members may not have assistance or language skills to complete an absentee ballot by mail. How do you hope to shift access to the polls for all?

As a voting rights lawyer, I've fought across the country to protect and expand the right to vote for everyone and to ensure we are eliminating barriers to participation including for non-English speakers and young folks. That requires providing access that meets people where they are at. In a pandemic, it means protecting the ability of people to vote safely in person while encouraging the folks who can vote from home to ensure there aren't crowds on election day. We need to ensure that voter education and outreach is translated and distributed across various mediums to ensure a broad and effective reach to every community.

I've fought hard to both provide more accessible absentee ballot options, as well as protect in person voting for those who need it. While polling places were moved out of high risk areas (like senior homes etc.), Minnesota law does not allow jurisdictions to reduce or consolidate polling places and I will continue to fight to ensure that is enforced. Another critical piece is ensuring that people and communities know that they can have a family member, neighbor or friend assist them in requesting an absentee ballot and in filling out their ballot if they need the help. And you can also have someone you trust return your ballot for you.

Voter education is critical this year -- and we all need to work together to ensure voters have accurate information of how they can vote. That's why we are running a voter education effort to ensure everyone is receiving the information they need to safely and effectively vote amidst the pandemic. We are working with other candidates, the DFL party and people in our district to ensure that we are reaching voters - of every generation, in every language and geography - to ensure they know the rules, are aware of any changes and have the support they need to feel comfortable casting their ballot. We are encouraging folks to vote early - in person or by mail - and to organize their friends, family and neighbors to do the same. We are working with the DFL to ensure we're doing voter education and engagement in a way that reaches every community in our district and that everyone has the resources they need in order to feel empowered to cast their vote.

Given the threats to the U.S. Post Office, we must advocate that Minnesota require every jurisdiction to install and equitably distribute ballot drop boxes so that everyone, regardless of where they live, can drop their absentee ballots off without putting their health in jeopardy.