

1. *How do you define “anti-racism”? Please try to use your own words and do not quote from a book or online resources. Additionally, how as an elected official would you apply anti-racism? How do you define “privilege”? How has privilege impacted decisions you have made as an elected official, or if you are running for the first time, as an engaged community member? Give specific examples in either your current policies as a seated official or in your candidate platform.*

When I first read about anti-racism, it affirmed my feeling that it simply wasn't good enough to not be racist. Entire communities could work to consciously eliminate bias and avoid racism, but the racist structures in society would remain unchanged. We must confront institutional and systemic racism and reimagine societal structures that are free of discrimination. And we cannot get complacent. This is a mindset and a process that we need to pursue vigilantly through our entire lives, in all areas of our lives. As an elected official, I would use my platform to elevate and center the voices of people from underrepresented groups and support decisions that move beyond incremental changes to actively dismantling systemic barriers.

I view privilege as an unearned advantage in society, accessed by characteristics or background. I am aware that I experience considerable privilege as a white, straight, cisgender man in America. But it isn't enough to be aware of my privilege. I must actively monitor it, to avoid allowing my privilege to blind me to systemic barriers for others, thereby perpetuating inequities in society. I must also use my privilege to make positive change when possible. As an engaged community member, I try to amplify the voices of those with less privilege, and to consider decisions through a lens of creating the most favorable outcomes for those who may not have the most influence or the loudest voices. For example, late in 2020, when many loud voices were publicly lobbying against a proposed city ordinance change to allow plexes by-right in certain residential zones, some on the Environmental Commission seemed to want to stay quiet on the polarizing subject. I advocated for the increased housing and density in-person and by email, pushed for the commission to officially support the ordinances, and co-wrote a guest column that was published in the H-T in support of the cause.

2. *How do you understand Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (DEI) measures and/or Affirmative Action? Be specific about your understanding of these concepts. Do you agree or disagree with their implementation in workplace environments (including political ones)? Given the conservative backlash against these initiatives do you believe these are crucial elements of the Democrat party and/or Liberal or Progressive ideals? Why or why not? Have you seen a benefit to these initiatives personally if so, when and where?*

I agree with the concepts and imperatives of diversity, equity, and inclusion and affirmative action and support their implementation in workplaces and institutions. I also see DEI measures as critical to being progressive and foundational to building an inclusive and healthy community where all of us can participate as equal members. I understand DEI to mean the ideas and processes by which we move from talk of equality to real action toward equity and more holistic ways of understanding and interacting with one another. For example, we have laws that promise equal opportunities to vote. But in practice, there are so many barriers that make it more difficult for some people to vote than others. We have language barriers, access barriers, transportation barriers, as well as inequitable laws which make it more difficult for people who are already underrepresented to vote. DEI measures can help us identify the barriers and injustices people face in realizing equality, and then help us identify how we can address these barriers and injustices. I understand affirmative action to be a step we can take to address historical and systemic barriers that have negatively affected different groups, to help us all move towards equality.

As a Democratic candidate, I believe we must push back against the backlash to these principles, concepts, and ideas. Such backlash is aimed at undoing the incremental gains we have made towards racial and gender equality and runs the risk of pushing us backwards into a more segregated, hierarchical, and unequal society. I believe that we need to do better to listen to community members when they tell us we are falling short. As a County Councilmember, I believe we should invest in locally-led training to make sure that we are as inclusive as we imagine ourselves to be. It is hard to say how much of a benefit I've seen from these initiatives during certain parts of my adult life. I spent my first eight years in the workforce working difficult jobs such as warehouse, factory, and production work. None of those facilities were particularly diverse, and since we seemed to be viewed as just laborers, there really wasn't any communication from human resources or management about equity or inclusion. For the most part, we were viewed primarily as if we were our production numbers. But in recent years at IU, I believe I have personally seen a benefit from DEI programs. The university does a nice job of emphasizing the importance of diverse perspectives and how environments where everyone's input is valued lead to stronger, more collaborative teams with better outcomes.

3. Since the 2020 surge of support for the BLM movement there has been an extensive backlash/whitelash against the Movement. We see it clearly in the media and politics locally and nationally. Are you as a candidate or a current elected official a supporter of the BLM Movement and its messaging and goals? Do you know what those goals are? If so please articulate them in your own words? Give specific examples of how you support the BLM movement in your policy work or in your candidate platform.

I support the BLM movement. I understand the goals of the BLM movement to be to dismantle white supremacy and to support and value Black lives. To do so, we must understand, follow, and apply intersectional principles of justice to eliminate systemic barriers and injustice. We are all impacted by these principles, and we can work to eliminate discrimination through mobilization and solidarity work. I acknowledge that I am not an expert in this space and would look to community leaders for their knowledge, expertise, and guidance. We must bring people of color to the table and really listen to their perspectives on what issues the community faces and how to address those issues. And when diverse voices are not present, we need to consider issues through a lens that centers justice. For example, in 2020 the Environmental Commission unanimously passed an Environmental Justice statement, committing to ensure our community develops in a way that creates a positive and equitable impact and does not disproportionately expose vulnerable populations to environmental hazards.

4. To the best of your knowledge, describe why people of color are disproportionately targeted and arrested by the criminal justice system. What ideas do you have to make the justice system more equitable and impartial? What concerns do you have about the militarization of our police force?

I believe the biggest reason is that our criminal justice system was built to enforce racial discrimination and subordination. Of course, it also doesn't help that many of its actors make decisions that are informed by their personal biases. Furthermore, most of our foundational systems – such as housing, education, employment, banking/finance – historically have deliberately made life more difficult and unjust for people of color. This means that people of color are overly represented among our most financially burdened and vulnerable populations, thereby leading to more encounters with the justice system. Finally, some laws are designed in a way that deliberately burdens those with the least privilege.

One idea to make law enforcement more equitable would be to do away with discretion in policing. The most straightforward way to do that would be using camera enforcement for traffic violations. No more talking your way out of speeding tickets or running red lights. No more getting a free pass because of

who you know. This wouldn't always produce ideal outcomes, because sometimes law enforcement officers are sympathetic to the circumstances surrounding citizens' violations, and cameras aren't capable of expressing empathy. But another thing cameras can't do is kill innocent people at a traffic stop, so I feel this approach is worthy of consideration. I am deeply concerned about the militarization of our police in America. Policing already tends to create an "us versus them" mentality, and adding deadly equipment can yield deadly results. Having professionals focus on de-escalation and crisis assistance leads to safer results for all parties involved.

5. What does Restorative Justice look like to you? Given the amazing response from our community against the new jail, what programs focused on Restorative Justice do you support or would you support as an elected official to lower the number of community members who are incarcerated? How would these ideas be implemented? Give as many details as you can.

I think restorative justice is about humanizing the justice process. By viewing crime as a violation of relationships or community instead of just breaking a rule or law, we can emphasize accountability and rehabilitation over punishment and segregation. I strongly support restorative justice principles not just in the criminal justice system, but anywhere conflict resolution and behavioral improvement is needed. Schools would obviously benefit as well, and I'd even go so far as to say that parents should utilize restorative justice principles at home. Being sent to jail, the principal's office, or being grounded don't teach you right from wrong – they only teach you that you don't like being punished, and worse, they may lead to resentment or distrust of those dishing out the punishment. In our current system, the legal community are the ones deciding what happens after a crime. I think victims and the community are an integral part of the equation, and I support all parties working towards a creative, engaged, participatory process of justice.

6. Describe a society in which there are no prisons or jails. How does that justice system differ from ours? What other aspects of culture would be different in a society without the carceral state? How would this change or eliminate policing? Would you support this type of society?

We are so far from such a society that it can be difficult to imagine, but we shouldn't lose sight of this goal. It would require committing exponentially more resources into upstream solutions to issues of health, housing, and education, such that society would be designed around a strong social safety net and would foster a collectivist mentality among its citizens. There would be a culture of support and community problem-solving, rather than a culture that locks up the most vulnerable to keep hardship and untidiness out of sight to those with the most privilege. I truly believe a nation that properly supports its people would experience very little crime, because serious crime is often bred from desperation and systemic failures. In this hypothetical society, minor offenses could be dealt with at a community level, and usually without the involvement of any members of the criminal justice system. This would likely significantly reduce the need for policing in its current form, as community support officers, mediators, and social workers could handle almost all instances where intervention would be beneficial. I would absolutely support this type of society. However, to have any chance of making it a reality, massive changes would have to be made to our current system at the federal and state levels. Still, as an elected official, it is my goal to be a part of local solutions.

7. Given the American legacy of slavery, tyranny, and discrimination against Black people, Indigenous people, and other people of color; do you believe that White Supremacy exists within US society today? If so, please give as many examples as you think are necessary to elucidate that belief, and if NOT please tell us why. Name a specific issue/s in our community relating to White Supremacy

and how you have or would respond to it.

Of course white supremacy exists within American society today. I think a racial classism is deeply embedded in our culture, and it is most evident in the form of structural racism. It is obvious in finance, where banking, lending, and valuation policies lead to people of color assuming larger debts, accruing less wealth, and having less access to good housing. It is obvious in housing, where discriminatory mapping has led to people of color often having to live in areas with fewer services, higher urban heat, and more climate-related health hazards. It is perhaps most obvious in healthcare, where access to care is based on one's ability to afford it, rather than on the needs of the individuals. This leads to issues of access, but even when people of color can afford care, there are significant health outcome disparities, perhaps most visible in data pertaining to mortality rates for infants and mothers.

Since these structural systems cause unequal outcomes, discriminatory beliefs get reinforced, and resources don't end up being used to address these issues. I'm still learning about all the ways that a County Councilmember can impact which priorities get funded and how, but I am committed to the idea of listening to and amplifying the voices of people of color when it comes to these decisions. I pledge to use the privilege that comes with my role to speak out when I see injustices take place, and to be the ally these situations require.

8. *Given that 44 Million people are food-insecure in the US and given that the rate for Monroe County is 12.2% (over 17,000 residents), what plans or ideas do you have for food justice in our community? Do you support community based food programs that bring locally grown nutrient dense food to those in need? If so please detail those programs here.*

I understand food justice to be the idea that access to healthy food is a basic human right, just like clean water or basic shelter. Fortunately, most of Monroe County isn't a food desert, but that doesn't change the fact that our residents have unequal access to healthy food. Not all residents can afford to purchase or grow nutrient-dense food regularly. Furthermore, America's agricultural systems are a logistical mess and an environmental disaster. Community-based food programs are an ideal way to improve quality of life and support sustainability and resilience goals. Farmer's markets, local grocers, co-ops, and neighborhood gardens all provide fresh food while simultaneously strengthening communities. I support listening to the people who run these programs to identify opportunities to improve their ability to make healthy food available to the masses. It is also important to ensure public transit can reach these places, so they can be reached by people who do not drive. Additionally, I believe that native fruit- and nut-bearing trees should be planted in public spaces that are not otherwise providing a human or ecological benefit – not as street trees, but in fields or lots where they could provide a public benefit without inconveniencing pedestrians or motorists. I am excited to hear more proposals about ways that we can fight food insecurity in our county.

9. *Bloomington/Monroe County finds itself in an affordable housing crisis. How will you ensure more affordable housing? Do you support density housing with priority given to people of color, people making under \$30,000 a year, families with dependents, and disabled people? What is your definition of "affordable" housing? Specifically, please discuss non-student housing.*

Affordable housing usually refers to units available to income-eligible families through vouchers, or to units built specifically to be rented to families or individuals at or below a specific percentage of the area median income. Within this system, it can be set up so only residents earning below a particular threshold would be able to occupy these units. This type of affordable housing is important, and we

need more of it. This can be accomplished through ordinances requiring a minimum number of affordable units per large-scale development or perhaps through incentives.

Generally, when I talk about the need for affordable housing, I'm speaking to affordability issues more broadly. Many factors – perhaps most notably the severe shortage of housing stock in our county – are contributing to the reality that an overwhelming number of residents are paying way too large a percentage of their income on housing. It isn't sustainable. For example, how can individuals on a fixed income afford to keep up with rising rents and/or property taxes?

I support increasing density, particularly in areas that can support it and are near city limits. These areas are not rural – people already live, work, and play in these neighborhoods. Developing densely often allows us to house more people in buildings with smaller footprints, which provides numerous benefits (from lowering utility costs to reducing stormwater issues). If a community has enough of a housing supply to meet demand, other equity issues become easier to address as well. I hope to work with the Commissioners, and hopefully city officials, to build our way out of this affordable housing crisis.

10. *Given the current city and specifically Mayoral approach of displacing and demolishing homeless encampments what will you do to help with short term living solutions for our homeless/unhoused community members. Do you support public sleeping measures? What will the county do to add protections for these vulnerable community members? Be specific and give examples from your policies or campaign platform.*

Admittedly, I am still learning about public sleeping measures. But one thing that I do know is that people experiencing homelessness often don't have much control over where they sleep. Whether someone is living out of their car or living in a tent, they deserve to be treated with empathy and dignity. I believe hostile infrastructure, such as an armrest in the middle of a bench, is cruel. I also believe that public bathrooms should be available in more places.

Homelessness can happen for so many reasons. Someone might get kicked out of their parents' or grandparents' house. One might exhaust their network of people willing to let them couch-surf. Or they may even be homeless as the result of leaving an abusive relationship. No matter what, it is important to remember that homelessness is overwhelmingly the product of a lack of affordable housing. Working with landlords and community partners to support rapid re-housing programs is an evidence-based strategy that deserves community support for most occurrences of homelessness. When people have a home, they can better address challenges such as unemployment, substance use, or mental health issues. We need to connect people with housing partners and support services within our community to improve their chances of staying housed.

11. *Given the recent anti-LGBTQ bills across the country and in Indiana & given that BIPOC LGBTQ folks will be doubly impacted, how will you as a County official make sure LGBTQ Youth and in particular Trans and Non-Binary Youth have access to life saving gender care services in our community? How will you support our LGBTQ Elders? How will you address the intersectionality of Race and LGBTQ needs in our community? How will you protect LGBTQ children from hate crimes and discrimination in our county?*

There are simple measures we can take to ensure that any space we hold for community members, whether it's Council meetings or elsewhere, is one that respects and welcomes LGBTQ and BIPOC members and their voices. Visible signs of support, from literal signs and stickers that signal LGBTQ safety are not enough, but they show that we as elected officials do support LGBTQ individuals and do

not accept the harm that has been inflicted upon them by recent legislation. In addition, we can show respect for LGBTQ individuals by using the language and pronouns that they say they prefer. Trans people are who they say they are. It should go without saying that there should be conduct standards in place for County Council meetings, and those standards must prohibit hateful rhetoric.

The intersectionality of race, sexuality, and gender identity demands an understanding of each person's unique experiences. County officials must work together to come up with the creative methods we need to support BIPOC LGBT residents against the onslaught of laws preventing care, services, and support. We can chip away at the injustices by providing support for affordable housing, healthcare, and emergency services for all, but should also tailor programs to serve those who need them most. By addressing these issues from an intersectional perspective, we can support each person and the community around them.

Indiana does not currently have a hate crimes law that adequately covers gender-based discrimination. We can work with the Human Rights Commission and advocate for local efforts to address gender-based discrimination and hate. We can also work with school and community groups to educate and raise awareness of such discrimination, which should further strengthen our community. The County Council may not have much explicit authority on these important issues, but elected officials do have a platform and a microphone. We need to use our privilege, our voice, and our profile to speak out against injustices and in support of vulnerable people in our community, and we must work to provide space for BIPOC LGBTQ individuals to share their lived experiences in order to listen and amplify their voices moving forward.

12. Given the sweeping restriction of Reproductive Rights in Indiana and across the country how will you as a County Official help those seeking abortions, birth control and or protection from prosecution for seeking those services? How can we in Monroe county protect those rights for our residents? Be specific, address your platform, policies and any extra knowledge you possess about this issue.

As a county official, you get to help shape public opinion and create change from the ground up by speaking publicly about the issues. Unfortunately, this doesn't feel satisfactory regarding reproductive rights, because the restrictions imposed by the state are wildly out of touch with public opinion. Reproductive health decisions are deeply personal and unique to everyone's individual circumstances. The State has no business inserting itself in these decisions.

The County provides free and sliding fee contraception and services through Futures Family Planning Clinic, and I believe it is more important now than it has ever been that we find ways to increase this funding. We also need to improve access to resources and educational material surrounding reproductive rights for our residents. The Futures Family Planning Clinic page, located on the Health Department page, is not easy to find on the County government website if you aren't sure where to look. The government website should make changes to its information architecture in order to better serve the needs of its users, especially those seeking information about reproductive resources and care.

Another important way Monroe County can protect its residents is by not prosecuting people who seek abortions. Our Prosecutor Erika Oliphant is pro-choice, and she has resisted calls to commit to refusing to prosecute abortions cases in an attempt to discourage the General Assembly from pursuing a non-compliant prosecutor bill. I view this as a pragmatic method of protecting our residents, because while she won't say it publicly, this shields her from harmful legislation that could allow the Governor to remove her from office while enabling her to use her discretion and likely never bring forward an abortion case. I believe this keeps our residents safe from prosecution for reproductive

services, but I plan to monitor the situation and communicate regularly with the prosecutor's office to ensure no changes occur that would result in harm to our residents.

13. *Given there is often a disconnect between City and County, how do you plan to work with the City of Bloomington elected officials to engage them in the work the County is doing on various social and economic issues? Especially issues related to the Black community given that the majority of long term Black residents of Bloomington live in the county. Additionally how will you support a Black Community center IF one is started? Please be specific citing examples from your policies and or platform.*

I think anyone who has paid attention for much of the last decade is sick and tired of the lack of cooperation between the city and the county. I sure am. Between a new Mayoral administration and a new City Council last year to the possibility of many changes within County government this year, there sits in front of us a tremendous opportunity to change the dialogue about City and County conflict – an opportunity for the County, City, and even Indiana University to have constructive conversations about how to make our region better. Efforts to improve public health, efforts to mitigate and adapt to climate change, and so many other undertakings can be taken on when we work as members of the same team. For too long, projects such as the justice center and the convention center have been stalled. I'm excited to be a part of solving the problems – both big and small – that face our County.

There's an aphorism that a rising tide lifts all boats. In our community, I believe housing supply is that tide. I think an increase in housing stock would help all residents in the county, but it would have the greatest impact on people of color living in the county. I have heard that the conditions of some rental units in the county, especially mobile homes, are abhorrent. The addition of thousands more housing units, many of which must be affordable, should lift people out of the worst current housing situations.

I would support the creation of a Black community center if there is interest from county residents. We must support and amplify the needs of people of color, and there is a general need for targeted, sustained support for our Black community.

But for all my optimism about the future, I will not ignore discrimination in the present and past. The current Commissioners have had several public instances of inappropriate conduct towards our Sheriff and our Clerk, both elected officials of color. Sometimes in the form of a hurtful comment, numerous eye rolls, or regular interruptions. I think it is shameful. This should go without saying, but I'll say it anyway: elected officials of color need to be treated equally and with respect.

14. *Currently there are multiple health department county licenses farm, food and home-based vendors MUST get from the Health Department in order to operate in Monroe County. Specifically, at the multiple markets here. The licenses and permits put an extreme financial and systemic barrier up for BIPOC farmers and food vendors. Do you believe these permits are necessary, do you know what they are, do you agree that they are systemic barriers? How can we incorporate safety measures in the Health Dept while also cutting costs and barriers for BIPOC farmers & food vendors?*

I believe health department permits are necessary because they exist to protect the public from harm. However, I don't think that licensing and permitting procedures should be so arduous that they become a barrier to people who wish to follow their passion and help their communities access healthy food. While I believe the intention behind the licenses is to ensure food safety, it seems that the processes are so complicated that they risk disempowering farm owner-operators and food vendors, especially those from marginalized groups. We should be supporting BIPOC farmers and food vendors rather than

putting up discouraging barriers for entry.

I think it's clear that everyone would benefit from a streamlined licensing process. Health permit requirements are undoubtedly complicated, but I would like to see the process adjusted such that virtually all farmers and food vendors would only be required to fill out two forms – one for the Indiana State Department of Health and one for the Monroe County government. Depending on exactly what is being applied for, educational materials about food handling, storage, and inspection expectations should be provided. I would also like to see financial assistance made available, and a mechanism that allows any licensing fees to be paid at the end of the licensing period rather than upfront. We need to ease the burdens on these farmers and vendors, because barriers don't just harm the individuals attempting to sell the food – they also harm the communities that would benefit from their efforts. Reducing these barriers would be an investment in our local BIPOC farmers and food vendors.