

20 Questions for Delaware General Assembly Candidates

CANDIDATE NAME: REP. PAUL BAUMBACH (D)

CANDIDATE DISTRICT: STATE REP. DISTRICT 23

The Coalition for Smart Justice is committed to cutting the number of prisoners in Delaware in half and eliminating racial disparities in the criminal justice system. Elected officials are essential to achieving those goals. We have launched a campaign to communicate with voters about candidates' positions on issues related to criminal justice reform. This questionnaire is the focus of that effort. If you choose not to respond, we will indicate that in our public communications.

Scale Questions

1. Delaware sends too many people to prison with sentences that are too long.

Strongly Agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly Disagree

2. Communities of color are over-policed and underserved.

Strongly Agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly Disagree

I lack Delaware data on this, and I know that community policing is desired by residents in communities of color in Wilmington.

3. Prison time is an effective deterrent to crime. Longer sentences mean less crime.

Strongly Agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly Disagree

4. It is important to invest more state resources into diversion programs such as drug treatment and community supervision so that fewer people go to prison.

Strongly Agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly Disagree

Our communities are stronger when we can keep families together, with resources necessary within the community to address issues such as addiction.

5. It is important to invest more state resources into services that will assist people coming out of prison to find a job and be successful as they re-enter the community.

Strongly Agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly Disagree

We have made steps during my tenure, such as Banning the Box, however we can do much more.

6. When an especially egregious crime happens in Delaware, it is important to pass a law to make sentences harsher.

Strongly Agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly Disagree

Emotionally-driven policy is often regrettable policy.

7. The state should retain the power to seize people's assets under current civil asset forfeiture laws even though no crime has been proven.

Strongly Agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly Disagree

Civil asset forfeiture is an abomination of the US criminal justice system. I have co-prime sponsored a bill to end this awful policy.

8. People of color are treated more harshly by the police and prosecutors than white people.

Strongly Agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly Disagree

9. Probation sentences are too long and there are too many obstacles to meeting the terms of probation.

Strongly Agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly Disagree

10. Delaware should reinstate the death penalty for murder.

Strongly Agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly Disagree

11. Delaware should reinstate the death penalty only for murder of a police officer, prison guard or other first responder.

Strongly Agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly Disagree

I understand proponents of this, and appreciate the dedication of those who serve as police officers in being under fire to protect the peace, however every life is precious and such a narrow law serves to value one life more than another.

12. The state should establish a civilian oversight board that would review incidences such as serious police brutality or when a police officer kills someone while on duty.

Strongly Agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly Disagree

13. Bail reform is important so that a person's ability to access money does not determine who stays in prison awaiting trial and who goes home.

Strongly Agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly Disagree

14. Juveniles should not be tried as adults no matter what crime they are accused of.

Strongly Agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly Disagree

15. People with a felony record should be able to have that record expunged by a judge, even for serious crimes, after a period of 5-10 years has elapsed with no further criminal activity.

Strongly Agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly Disagree

I can envision there being a list of exceptions to such a policy.

Open-Ended Questions

16. African Americans are 22 percent of Delaware's population and 51 percent of our prison population. What should the General Assembly do to reduce the racial disparities at various stages of our criminal process?

Elimination of the cash bail system will help, as will criminal record expungement (enabling those who have served their time to better live crime-free lives rather than re-offending).

17. The average length of stay in prison in Delaware is 50 percent longer than the national average. Will you pledge to advocate for the elimination of all mandatory minimum sentences? Please give a yes or no answer and any explanation you think is necessary. If there are mandatory minimums you support, please identify them specifically.

Yes. I have advocated for this and pledge to continue to do so. There are no mandatory minimum sentences that I know of which I support.

18. Do you support legislation and appropriation of funds requiring the collection, analysis and publication of statistical data in order to track prosecutorial decisions, evaluate the effectiveness policies and assess racial bias in the criminal justice system? Please give a yes or no answer and any explanation you think is necessary.

Yes. I believe that this data and its analysis will enable policy makers to make our criminal justice system more 'color-blind', and fair.

19. Other than gun control legislation. how can Delaware fight our gun violence problem? Are there specific proposals that you would offer as a member of the General Assembly to reduce gun violence in the state?

We can boost educational efforts, suicide-risk awareness, more counselors in our schools, using the Sandy Hook Promise program I have advocated be used in our schools to help students and staff identify and report risks, and spreading information on the protection orders we have implemented, to remove firearms from people who are temporarily at a greater risk of using firearms to harm themselves or others.

20. Do you support diversion for people accused of some violent crimes such as offensive touching and assault in the third degree?

I don't know. I haven't encountered this policy area before. I would want to learn more of the alternatives before committing for/against.