

# STATE REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT 7A

## QUESTION 1:

**Please provide a brief statement about who you are and why you are running for the office of State Representative.**

### **CANDIDATE JENNIFER SCHULTZ:**

I'm currently a state representative (one term), Professor of Economics at UMD, mother of two boys (Otis & Lewis), and a partner to an incredible husband (& criminologist) Rob Weidner. I'm running for re-election to continue working on economic and social justice, and health care reform. As a public servant, I am able to use my expertise in economics, health policy and higher education to create legislation to help Minnesotans.

### **CANDIDATE DYLAN RADDANT:**

My name is Dylan C. Raddant; and I am the GOP nominee for District 7A in Duluth, MN. I am running for office because I believe that the population deserves a more efficient Government that is held to the utmost accountability in St. Paul.

For Fiscal Responsibility, projects proposed by the Senate, including \$26 million to repair the Glensheen Mansion in Duluth, \$1.9 million for a parking lot in an arena in St. Paul, and \$6 million for an arts center in Hennepin County should be considered second priority compared to other pertinent projects such as Health Care and Education.

For Fairness, I believe that the sovereign is entitled to have all sides of Government compromise for the benefit of its' residents. The failure to pass a bonding bill from both Democrat and Republican alike shows a lack of consideration for citizens in Minnesota. If elected, not only will I interact with my 38,804 residents, but, I will interact with all political parties to come to a consensus that best benefits the community.

As for Freedom, one that I deviate from some members of my party from, I believe that no Government has the right to interfere in an individual's right to express themselves. In particular, no bathroom bill should exist, much less be adopted by any party of the Minnesota Legislature.

As the Prairie Home Conservative, I believe in Fiscal Responsibility, Fairness, and Freedom.

**QUESTION 2: CANDIDATE JENNIFER SCHULTZ:**

**What should state government do about the growing economic disparity between the poor, the middle class and the wealthy?**

The Legislature should pass bills to increase the minimum wage, provide paid leave for safe and sick time, subsidize child care, increase the state earned-income tax credit, provide tax deductions and refundable tax credits to reduce student debt, provide tax deductions for college savings accounts, increase investments in early childhood education, increase funding for public schools (including subsidizing the cost of driver education), subsidize child care, offer a public option on MNsure to provide affordable health insurance, offer a public retirement savings option, and increase tax rates on investment income.

**CANDIDATE DYLAN RADDANT:**

A reality that Minnesotans face is that the economic culture of Minnesota has declined— in particular the Minority community is most affected. A Minnesota family of color will have a median income that is one-half of their Caucasian counterparts. 30 percent of Minnesota African-American families, compared to five percent of their Caucasian counterparts, live below the poverty line. While a colored Minnesotan has a lower median income average compared nationally, a Caucasian Minnesota family will have a higher national median income average.

To fix the growing disparity, first, one needs to accommodate for the lower class (with an emphasis for Minorities) in order to obtain basic human rights. I would propose offer property tax incentives for Grocery chains (such as Aldi) to be established in lower-income parts of the state. Any temporary loss in property tax revenue would be covered by both the revenues from the Grocery store as well as providing a Community Service through ending a Food Desert. I would also propose offering free IDs to those whose income is below the Poverty Line. That way, one would not be prevented from obtaining employment (due to a requirement for IDs in numerous Job Applications), elections (which should have a Voter ID law in place), etc. As for Old Central High School, a bipartisan solution to providing a good use for the school would be to create an affordable housing unit for patrons of good moral character who work hard. These solutions will begin to close gaps in income through opportunity.

**QUESTION 3: CANDIDATE JENNIFER SCHULTZ:**

**What are the most important things that should be done to improve the region's economy?**

We need to invest in transportation and infrastructure improvements which include investments in public transportation. We also need to invest in broad band for greater Minnesota to increase opportunities in rural areas of the state. We also need to invest in clean energy, and protect our natural resources (water, land and air). Health care and higher education are the largest employers in the Duluth region so any investments in these industries will benefit the region.

**CANDIDATE DYLAN RADDANT:**

One way to improve the economy is to lower the sales tax rate. One issue facing the issue is a higher-than-average tax rate in Duluth compared to other cities in Minnesota. More so is the fact that higher taxes, overall, not only alienates higher income residents, but, attracts lower-income residents who rely on public services more, thus increasing deficits in budget. In sales tax, for example, Duluth's rate is 8.375 percent. Compare this tax rate to 7.775 percent in Minneapolis. It is higher tax rates, according to the *Center of the American Experiment's* report, that causes higher-income residents, individuals who donate their money to Minnesota charitable causes, to flee to the Western United States. By lowering the sales tax rate, one can expect the residents to make up the difference in decreased sales tax revenue through either spending more on goods-and-service or investing, which may generate a high rate of return. At the same time, the higher class residents who come back to Minnesota will then generate even more revenue for the city.

Another way to improve the economy is to emphasize bringing in technology jobs over manufacturing and industrial ones. Eventually, Duluth will run out of certain resources; and mining in the Iron Range will one day cease due to resources used up. Thus, it is pertinent for Duluth to offer incentives to either create startups, or, have technological companies move here; and as State Representative, I would endeavor myself toward said goal.

**QUESTION 4: CANDIDATE JENNIFER SCHULTZ:**

**What do you believe state government should do to limit the impact of global climate change?**

The state legislature, governor and state agencies need to work on policies that protect our water, air and land. We need to reduce our consumption of fossil fuels, including the burning of coal. We also need to provide goals to our utility companies to invest in clean energy and provide incentives to consumers to reduce energy consumption. Investing in community solar and wind energy are now cost-effective solutions. Other initiatives include reducing greenhouse gas emissions (80% reduction by 2050), reducing reliance on fossil fuels, increasing energy efficiency requirements, retire/repower coal plants, zero energy building codes, wastewater treatment energy efficiency standards, use of electric vehicles using renewable energy, transit and multimodal travel, use of thermal renewable energy, and use of cover crops.

**CANDIDATE DYLAN RADDANT:**

To limit the impact of global warming, the state Government has to work together, both Republican and Democrat alike, to come up with a bipartisan solution. While both parties may argue as to the amount of responsibility Humanity has for climate-change, all alike will agree that future profits could trickle-down and help fund projects that benefit the community at-large.

I would propose that students in State Universities should be given scholarships for providing ways to make Minnesota more energy efficient through class projects. Citizens who purchase energy-efficient products from a local retail store should also be exempt from sales tax for that particular item.

My biggest priority would be to endorse the burgeoning electric car movement further through incentives and innovations. For a 2015 Model S (with a 85-kwh battery), a driver has 89 miles per gallon to work with compared to 37 miles per gallon for a 2016 Ford Fiesta. The costs for fully charging the 2015 Tesla Model S, \$3.20 according to estimates from a Minneapolis charging station, outweigh the cost of filling up the 2016 Ford Fiesta. Duluth should allocate transportation funds towards charging stations, making the profits up through selling the units for charging to customers. Furthermore, car-owners who pass an emissions standard test be given a check for the amount of carbon emission saved to fuel back into the economy.

In short, team-building and economic encouragement will encourage a bipartisan economization of the eco system.

**QUESTION 5: CANDIDATE JENNIFER SCHULTZ:**

**What should the state government's top three priorities be in setting a sound energy policy?**

The state should take an inventory of all greenhouse gas emissions, make public buildings more efficient, set high targets for utility companies to reach efficiency goals for providing clean energy (including setting rules for utility companies to pay market rates to consumer/community solar gardens) and provide incentives to convert to clean energy consumption for commercial and residential users.

**CANDIDATE DYLAN RADDANT:**

The first priority is emphasizing the development of Solar energy. So far, Duluth is making progress by participating in Minnesota's Solar Challenge, a program designed to develop solar energy in the city. To improve on the solar policy, Duluth should relax zoning and permitting to allow one to implement solar panels wherever one legally can. Furthermore, significant vacant land in Duluth should be use as a solar base to help power up Duluth's electricity in a more cost-efficient manner.

The second priority is to encourage Duluth residents to encourage the deregulation of the energy business on a smaller scale to benefit the local community. Residents should be offered rebates to start their own energy unit to either keep and use or sell at a profit to local residents. Doing so in a deregulated economy can cause natural competition, forcing companies to lower their energy prices which in turn would be passed onto the customer.

The third priority is to encourage local residents to invest into local solar companies. Although one may marvel at the thought of solar panels overlooking Canal Park or a Mom-and-Pop company successfully competing with Minnesota Power, without investment, said projects are fruitless. Residents should be able to invest into local Energy startups and get a potential return of investment – no matter how little the cost. The homegrown idea would be an amalgamation of Kickstarter and the Stock Market.

**QUESTION 6: CANDIDATE JENNIFER SCHUTLZ:**

**What should be done to ensure that every citizen has the ability to vote and have their vote counted without undue barriers?**

We need to make it easier to vote. I chief authored a bill for automatic voter registration when applying for or renewing a driver's license. I oppose all legislation that creates barriers to voting, such as voter ID laws. Early voting and voting by mail can be made much simpler than our current system. Minnesota should also restore voting rights of convicted felons.

**CANDIDATE DYLAN RADDANT:**

There needs to be a bi-partisan plan that allows all law-abiding citizens the ability to vote in a free-and-fair election. My opponent, Jennifer Schultz, argued that "I think voter ID laws are discriminatory. It hurts the elderly, hurts young adults, hurts the disabled, and hurts people of color." While I do not believe that Voter ID laws are inherently discriminatory by nature, I do believe that certain factors in the city prevent some from being able to vote. 23.3 percent of persons in my district live below the poverty line.

One proposal I have, if elected, is to offer ID's, normally costing \$17.95, to be offered to Minnesota residents at a reduced or free rate. That way, residents can afford to vote, as well as participate in civic engagement. Another proposal is to offer free bus service to Election centers during Primary and Election season. For those that are handicapped, there should be handicap-accessible buses and election centers to help one vote, as well as a list of accommodations to help out said person. Furthermore, I would encourage a diversity forum akin to the League of Women Voters for the minority community to exist in Duluth to create a non-partisan approach to enlighten voters on the democratic process. One final idea is to make Election Day a holiday. Doing so would give workers the opportunity to vote without having to commute between jobs and miss the opportunity to vote due to time constraints.

## QUESTION 7: **CANDIDATE JENNIFER SCHULTZ:**

**Please explain why you do or do not think it is important to reduce the role of money in American elections.**

It is vital to pass legislation for campaign finance reform. Citizen's United has changed campaigns making compromise in divided government difficult. A significant amount of money was spent in state races to gain control of legislative redistricting. In many states redistricting has led to more polarization of elected officials. I chief authored a bill to reform legislative redistricting by taking it out of the hands of the Legislature. We now have fewer moderates running for office. We also have more anonymous PAC money being used in negative advertising. The DFL has proposed the DISCLOSE Act to force PACs to disclose donors and spending on campaigns. I fully support the DISCLOSE Act and other measures to reduce the amount of money spent on campaigns. I also support the return of the political contribution refund program, which was eliminated in 2015.

## **CANDIDATE DYLAN RADDANT:**

This question can be divided two-fold: first, arguing against reducing the role of money in elections, and secondly, providing current events for my argument. ‘

First, limiting campaign contributions, according to *McCutcheon v. Federal Election Commission* (2014), infringes on the First Amendment by limiting ones voice through dollars. Chief Justice Roberts noted in his decision that, “if the First Amendment protects flag burning, funeral protests, and Nazi parades — despite the profound offense such spectacle causes — it surely protects political campaign speech despite popular opposition.”

Secondly, it is the message, not money, that has influenced recent elections. Bernie Sanders, who, nearly won the Democratic Nomination despite donors donating an average of \$29.14 per person, and Donald Trump, who is competing now fiscally with Democratic Opponent Hillary Clinton, have succeeded because they have both portrayed a populist message that appeals to a key demographic ignored by traditional elections

Second, my campaign – one that has run on less than \$500 so far – is one that has been successful due to my policies and not by fiscal resources. Members of the LGBT and minority communities have joined my campaign not because of Campaign Ads or because I am affiliated with a Union, but rather of my attempts to de-regulate the transitioning process and looking to create affordable housing in the Old Central High School site.

In conclusion, Government should not interfere in a person's right to use their money to encourage people to vote. Government should only encourage people to vote in a free-and-fair campaign.

**QUESTION 8: CANDIDATE JENNIFER SCHULTZ:**

**How can state government, in collaboration with other levels of government, provide an equitable, quality public education for all children pre-K through grade 12?**

We can invest in public schools, particularly those schools that need more resources to address achievement and opportunity gaps. We can also invest in educating teachers and support staff, and increasing the diversity of the workforce. Salaries for public teachers have not kept up with comparable professions in our state. This hurts our ability to attract high-quality students to the profession. We also should be investing in early education where there are high rates of return.

**CANDIDATE DYLAN RADDANT:**

There is an immediate need for Minnesota to improve their graduation rates – especially for Minorities. Only 49 percent of Native Americans in 2012-13 who went to Minnesota’s secondary schools graduated the second lowest rate in the nation. As for African-American and Hispanic, less than 60 percent walked across their aisle.

I hypothesize that the achievement gap in the minority community is due to an imbalance of punishment based on race. A colored individual is more likely to be punished more severe than their white counterparts. This is especially prevalent in early-childhood, a time for development in students who, once suspended, would be deprived of learning of behavioral sciences.

There needs to be an equal protection and enforcement of school rules. Punishment must be doled out on a case-by-case basis based on numerous factors involved – Color not being one of them. In helping advance the project set forth by Dr. Bernadeia Johnson, Superintendent of Minneapolis Public Schools, I propose that there should be no out-of-school suspensions for students at grades five and below. If a student is not at school, a student cannot learn; and once a student is suspended, one would be more likely to drop out of school; and nationwide, while black students make up 18 percent of the racial mix of preschoolers, they are part of the 48 percent of colored preschoolers with more than one suspension.

Equity in Education Equals Excellence in Education.

**QUESTION 9: CANDIDATE JENNIFER SCHULTZ:**

**How can state government, in collaboration with other levels of government; help address racial and cultural divides in public safety?**

The state should convene a task force to investigate the recruitment and training of public safety officers along with an evaluation of effective community policing models. Police and other public safety officers need to invest in activities that work toward building trust with communities of color.

**CANDIDATE DYLAN RADDANT:**

The key to addressing a cultural divide is through perspective. In a car chase, for example, while the police cruiser may believe that they are pursuing a fleeing suspect, the runaway driver believes that they are being persecuted by the police. To ensure that all interactions with public safety are fair in the same vein that trials are supposed to be, public safety should be reformed. There needs to be a budget for body cameras to insure that public safety officials are not infringing on citizen's rights – as well as ensuring that citizens are not disruptive and feeling entitled against officers.

There needs to be an equal protection and enforcement of the law. Punishment must be doled out on a case-by-case basis based on numerous factors involved – Color not being one of them. The biggest fear for any social worker is to see a minority child descend from an education environment into expulsion into a correctional facility; and when a minority is disproportionately likely to enter prison compared to their Caucasian counterpart, change needs to be addressed. I propose a more diverse criminal justice system of all races. A trial of an African-American may seem more fair when a jury of six whites, three African-Americans, and three Hispanics reaches a verdict; or when an Appellate court of a Hispanic defendant is led by a Hmong judge.

**QUESTION 10: CANDIDATE JENNIFER SCHULTZ:**

**In your opinion, what are the most important challenges facing our region and how do you propose to address these challenges?**

In our region the most important challenges are moving families out of poverty and addressing opportunity and achievement gaps. To move families out of poverty state funding is needed for affordable housing, education, job training, financial counseling and public subsidies that help families move toward independence. I believe that by addressing poverty we can resolve many barriers to success. To do this the state and local units of government need to work together to fund social workers, public health staff, mental health case managers, teachers, counselors, youth development programs, shelters, and many other services designed to help families succeed.

**CANDIDATE DYLAN RADDANT:**

One challenge involves approving PolyMet's NorthMet project past the permit stage. Because the company has agreed to numerous regulations, PolyMet, due to the economic impact it provides, should be given a permit for their NorthMet project. According to a study from the University of Minnesota-Duluth's Labovitz School of Business and Economics, the development of the NorthMet project would create \$15 million in yearly municipal tax revenues and \$45 million in federal tax revenues. Furthermore, St. Louis County, the county that hosts PolyMet's NorthMet project, would have a total economic impact of \$515 million, annually. If elected, I would prioritize the regulatory process so that PolyMet would have their NorthMet project approved expeditiously.

Another challenge involves the need for healthcare reform in the State of Minnesota. There have been numerous facts (over \$300 million has been spent towards the development of the MNSure website that has suffered from numerous glitches) and figures (up to \$271 million, according to a recent audit, that has been wasted on directing people to health programs inappropriately based on income) that are used to prove a growing issue in Minnesota Healthcare. What is overlooked by some, however, is Minnesota's Mental Health system lacks adequate care. In my district, patients who attend St. Luke's or Essentia, for example, may lack hospital beds. The wait time to receive treatment is longer than it should be. There also lacks individualized therapy based on the nature of a patient's illness. If elected, surplus revenues would develop new Mental Health programs.