

**Alonzo Knox**  
**LA House - District 93**  
**Survey Response**

**Election Day - February 18, 2023**

**Restorative Justice, Not Vengeance**

**Sentencing Reform**

The media currently amplifies voices calling for longer sentences, and an end to criminal justice reform. Some politicians have called for an end to systemic changes made over the past five years. Some of these commenters talk about the crime being because persons are released from prison, while others attribute the problem to young people who have never been to prison. Others place the blame on factors such as housing, economy, health care and trauma.

**Question #1**

Do you AGREE or DISAGREE with the stance of overhauling Louisiana's sentencing laws towards ending excessive punishments, banning the entry of children into adult prisons and establishing restorative justice practices as an alternative to incarceration?

**AGREE**

**Question #2**

Do you AGREE or DISAGREE with ending all Life Without Parole sentences, including retroactive applications, and giving everyone a chance to be reviewed by the parole board?

**AGREE**

**Question #3**

Do you AGREE or DISAGREE that children should not be given Life Without Parole in any circumstance?

**AGREE**

**Question #4**

Do you AGREE or DISAGREE that people under 25, whose minds are not fully developed, should be given lighter punishments than those who are fully developed?

**AGREE**

**Question #5**

Do you AGREE or DISAGREE that nonviolent offenses should not be used to trigger the Multi-bill (“habitual offender”) sentence enhancements?

**AGREE**

**Ending the War on Drugs | Cannabis Legalization****Question #6**

Cannabis Legalization: As more states move towards recreationally legalizing the use of cannabis, do you AGREE or DISAGREE with Louisiana fully legalizing, regulating and taxing cannabis for adult recreational use?

**AGREE**

**Ending the War on Drugs | Decriminalization of drug possession****Question #7**

Decriminalization of drug possession: Every year, more than 1.5 million Americans are arrested for drug possession. As states evolve their stances on the decriminalization of drug use and possession across the country, do you AGREE or DISAGREE with the full decriminalization of drug use in the state of Louisiana?

**AGREE**

### **Question #8**

Expungement of cannabis possession charges: As public opinion and laws begin to shift and evolve around the possession and use of cannabis, many people in Louisiana remain incarcerated for acts that entrepreneurs and business owners around the country today are now legally engaged in and are making substantial profits from.

Do you AGREE or DISAGREE with the immediate expungement of marijuana possession and paraphernalia related charges for ALL impacted Louisianans, including people who are currently incarcerated?

**AGREE**

### **Decriminalization of Sex Work**

#### **Question #9**

Do you AGREE or DISAGREE with decriminalizing adult, voluntary, and consensual sex?

**AGREE**

### **Detention of undocumented immigrants**

No human being is illegal and deporting often working migrants and refugees who contribute to our economy is inherently immoral.

#### **Question #10**

Louisiana has detained up to 10,000 people arrested outside of the state and moved into jails run by sheriffs and private companies. Do you AGREE or DISAGREE with Louisiana serving the United States as a migrant detention center?

**DISAGREE**

### **A Humane Approach to Justice**

#### **Bail Reform**

Bail bonds are used as a way to ensure people show up for future court dates, or risk losing the bond money they posted for bail. Bonds are also used in lieu of costly pretrial detention, and allow people to maintain their jobs, homes, and families. Roughly half of people detained in jails are ineligible for bail due to a probation or parole “hold” or accusation of domestic violence.

**Question #11**

Do you AGREE or DISAGREE that Magistrate Judges should have the option of releasing people on their “own recognizance” or a “promise to appear?”

**AGREE**

**Question #12**

Do you AGREE or DISAGREE that judges should be given discretion to release people who are accused of probation or parole violations?

**AGREE**

**Medical Treatment during Incarceration**

In 2021, the federal court ruled (*Lewis v. Cain*) that the health care system at Angola is in violation of the constitution and the Americans with Disabilities Act. In 2022, the mental health care system at David Wade penitentiary was also declared unconstitutional.

**Question #13**

Do you AGREE or DISAGREE that the Department of Corrections medical staff and budgets need a massive increase to be constitutionally compliant with the bare minimums of the 8<sup>th</sup> Amendment?

**AGREE**

**Question #14**

Do you AGREE or DISAGREE that an oversight commission is needed to ensure proper health care is delivered up to professional standards of care?

**AGREE**

**Question #15**

Do you AGREE or DISAGREE that incarcerated people should be given annual mental health assessments?

**AGREE**

**Question #16**

Would you support a pandemic response team from the Louisiana Department of Health and CDC to take control during a viral outbreak?

**YES**

**Question #17**

Do you AGREE or DISAGREE that all deaths in custody should be promptly reported to a public central registry?

**AGREE**

**Non-Unanimous Juries**

Three years after 64% of Louisiana residents voted to end non-unanimous jury convictions, and six months after the U.S. Supreme Court found them unconstitutional, nearly 1,500 people convicted by non-unanimous juries remain incarcerated in our state's prisons; many of them until they die.

**Question #18**

Do you AGREE or DISAGREE with retroactively giving new trials to incarcerated people in Louisiana who were convicted by a non-unanimous jury prior to 2018 and the passage of 'Amendment 2'?

**AGREE**

**Question #19**

Do you believe this issue should be addressed by the:

- People, through another constitutional amendment on the 2023 ballot
- Legislature, through a state law
- Both the people and the legislature

**People, through another constitutional amendment on the 2023 ballot**

### **Alternatives to incarceration**

When individuals who have mental illnesses, substance use disorders, and/or are homeless are incarcerated, studies show their conditions are exacerbated. Oftentimes these individuals are released worse off than when they were initially incarcerated.

#### **Question #20**

Do you AGREE or DISAGREE that we need specific programs tailored towards alternatives to incarceration, restorative justice, and reducing the incarcerated population across Louisiana?

**AGREE**

### **Housing Discrimination**

Louisiana reports over 1.5 million people have criminal records. People who are working and capable of paying rent are routinely denied in their applications to rent an apartment. They are also asked to pay \$25-\$50 for background checks, without being told what is the landlord's criteria for discrimination.

#### **Question #21**

Do you AGREE or DISAGREE that a landlord should not accept a background check fee without transparency as to who will be admitted or denied?

**AGREE**

#### **Question #22**

Do you AGREE or DISAGREE that landlords should follow HUD's 2016 Guidance on the use of background checks, adopted by Louisiana Housing Corporation in 2022, which essentially requires limited lookback periods and ends blanket denials?

**AGREE**

### **Government and Elections**

People in Louisiana who are on probation do not lose their voting rights upon conviction, and people on parole have them suspended only until they are off parole or during the first 5 years of their parole (whichever happens first). However, there is still considerable confusion amongst voters, local Registrars, OMV workers, and probation/parole officers, as to who is disenfranchised and what they need to do to restore their right to vote.

**Question #23**

Do you AGREE or DISAGREE that restoration after suspension should be automatic, without any additional requirements for people who are eligible to vote?

**AGREE**

**Question #24**

Do you AGREE or DISAGREE that the Secretary of State and parish registrars should be required to have public-facing materials (such as their websites) that are easy for everyone to understand?

**AGREE**

**Question #25**

Voters in pretrial detention have little, if any, access to candidate information. Additionally, the absentee ballot process is difficult to navigate, requiring someone to send an official form requesting a ballot from the registrar where they are registered, and then mailing the ballot back to the registrar in time. They also need certification from the sheriff that they are detained, yet there is no official form. Finally, newly registered people are prohibited from casting their first vote absentee.

Do you AGREE or DISAGREE that jails should be converted into polling stations or, in the alternative, detained voters should be shuttled to the nearest site on election day?

**AGREE**

**Question #26**

In the 2022 election for Public Utilities Commissioner, it was revealed that prohibitions of “gifts” to elected officials (due to clear conflicts of interest) can be bypassed simply by making campaign donations instead.

Do you AGREE or DISAGREE that political candidates should not take any contributions from entities over which they regulate, or who have a financial conflict of interest?

**AGREE**

**Question #27**

Would you accept campaign contributions from:  
Bail Bond Industry (Y/N)

**NO**

**Question #28**

Would you accept campaign contributions from:  
Sheriffs and their associations (Y/N)

**YES**

**Question #29**

Would you accept campaign contributions from:  
Prison construction contractors and their lobbyists (Y/N)

**NO**

**Question #30**

**\*\*Candidate Spotlight\*\***

Throughout the election cycle, we will be featuring candidates on our social media accounts and sharing the candidate spotlights with our members.

In 50 words or less, tell our community why they should trust you with their vote.

**I have provided scholarships to underprivileged youth with UNCF and Children's Scholarship Fund. I worked with members of V.O.T.E at New Orleans Police and Justice Foundation on expungements. Worked at VA to house homeless Veterans who were hard to house due to mental health, substance use issues, and criminal background.**