

Please provide your name:

Shelley Hughes

Q2

Which office and district are you running for?

Senate District M

Q3

What is your vision for Alaska when it comes to reducing sexual assault and domestic violence? What steps are you prepared to take to get there?

We got a good start via legislation this past session, particularly in changing the consent definition. We need to continue to focus on this blight on Alaska. Finding local, trusted leaders in communities is an important step - leaders who will speak against the travesty, will speak to youth, will set an example, will take a stand, will ensure victims have safe haven, and will support victims reporting incidents and in their quest for justice.

Q4

What responsibilities do you believe the Legislature and other elected officials hold in advancing efforts to intervene in and ultimately eliminate domestic violence and sexual assault in the state?

We must ensure our laws deter these crimes from taking place in the first place, but when they do, the laws must hold individuals responsible and provide parameters as much as possible to prevent repeat offenses against victims. We must ensure victims have the help and support they need to exit the DVSA cycle.

Q5

Victim/Survivor services in Alaska have been flat funded for many years and are facing a potential shortfall in future years due to decreasing federal funds. What are your thoughts on state funding to provide support services for victims of domestic and sexual violence?

Victims should always be prioritized.

Q6

Alaska Native women are disproportionately affected by domestic violence and sexual assault. What are your thoughts on supporting Alaska tribes' ability to strengthen local responses for survivors?

I support it wherever it is helping. Ownership and responsibility taken at the local level can be powerful. Piloting models by the tribes would definitely be worth it to see what works.

Q7

Children are a particularly vulnerable population and may be traumatized by living with an abusive person and witnessing violence perpetrated against a parent or caretaker. What remedies might you suggest to provide protection for these children?

This is tough because we want to protect children from an abusive environment but understand there is tremendous trauma to a child caused by separation, even from a parent who has serious problems. Ideally, I would like the family to participate for several months in an in-house treatment at a community campus where the child would be safe and the parent(s) would receive intensive therapy - and they would learn new and healthy family skills.

Q8

What is your opinion about an adult over the age of 30 having sex with someone that is only 16 or 17. Should it be a crime?

Yes.

Q9

Do you believe reproductive rights should be the choice of an individual? If you do not, do you believe there should be choice for victims of incest, sexual and/or domestic violence?

Never seen this asked by a DVSA group?! I am pro-life and am personally very familiar with cases where pregnant women were given the opportunity to receive loving, and intense and thorough supportive care after a horrific situation and chose to keep their babies - and were extremely happy afterward that they did, for many years to come. I think in these situations, women should have access to this kind of support system before they make any kind of decision to kill the baby.

Q10

The state of Alaska is experiencing a housing shortage statewide. This is impacting domestic and sexual violence survivors' ability to move forward with their lives. What would be your ideas to address this?

It's a catch 22. Government spending drives up inflation and the money that's been pouring out of D.C. (all through Covid) is a huge part of the problem. To move us toward a more stable economy, we need more fiscally conservative public servants in D.C. That's a tall order, I know. Here at home, assisting families to achieve home ownership using their PFDs is key.

Q11

Currently, the domestic violence response is largely a criminal justice response. Please share any ideas you have of other types of responses.

See my recommendation for families receiving treatment and support in a campus setting. Early intervention like THRIVE does in Mat-Su is also a good method.

Q12

Currently there is no dedicated funding for programs to provide services to engage individuals who have abused their families. What would be your ideas to address how to provide services to people who choose to cause harm to their partners? Do you feel this is the responsibility of the government?

Should be programs in the prison system where the perpetrators can receive training, counseling, etc.  
Should be intense and comprehensive.

### Q13

Are you familiar with local programs that provide domestic violence and sexual assault services to victims across Alaska? Have you recently visited your local domestic violence/sexual assault shelter or victim services program? What is your plan to support these programs?

Have in the past but not super recently. I plan to listen to the advocates running the shelters and the programs to better understand the needs and the solutions.