

2026 Minnesota Secretary of State questionnaire

Candidate name: Chip Tangen

Campaign manager name: Chip Tangen

Campaign manager cell: 651.226.6842

Campaign manager email: 651.226.6842

Campaign mailing address (for contributions): PO Box 186, Rosemount, MN 55068

1. Please describe your most recent school visit and/or conversation with educators. What were your observations and what did you learn?

My son is a middle school social studies teacher and we occasionally discuss teaching topics related to elections. Most recently, he shared with me an actual literacy test that was employed in the South in the early 1960s. I was astounded by how awful it was and hope it has the same impact on students. It's important to teach this "recent" history, and we should celebrate our progress.

2. How do you plan to expand voter access in Minnesota?

Frankly, Minnesota has done exceptionally well expanding voter access, and our nation-leading voter turnout performance attests to this. But conspicuously missing from discussions on this topic are plans to expand "ballot" access. Quite simply, Minnesota voters are regularly denied the opportunity to vote for candidates other than Democrats and Republicans because of our ballot access laws and policies. Minor party and independent candidates must collect signatures, over a two-week period, to earn placement on the ballot: 2,000 for a statewide candidate; 1,000 for a congressional candidate; and 500 for a state house/senate candidate. Other states are much more progressive on ballot access. I support legislation HF 3534/SF3816, the Minor Party Ballot Access Act, which would put Minnesota on par with many other states. Gallup polling recently found 45% of Americans are political independents, and yet voters in our state rarely have the opportunity to vote for such candidates. (This is especially true with respect to state house/senate races.) Too many Minnesotans choose not to vote because they don't want to settle for the "lesser of two evils." If we make our state more progressive on ballot access, our performance on the voter turnout metric will reach new heights.

3. What do you see as the biggest risk to our freedom to vote and how do you plan to protect it?

I am not worried about our freedom to vote (other than what I articulated above relative to ballot access laws), but rather our collective confidence in elections. This issue is not unique to Minnesota. Part of the solution, I believe, is to elect secretaries of state who are unaffiliated with the two major parties.

4. What actions will you take to prevent Federal immigration enforcement personnel from monitoring polling locations?

The presence of such personnel would undoubtedly discourage some voters from exercising their right to vote. I'd contact local law enforcement and seek emergency judicial injunctive relief to immediately address their presence, and I'd lead media advisories to quell any voter hesitance about going to the polls.

5. What are your plans to combat election misinformation?

Good question! Any government official responsible for elections must be held to the highest standards when explaining and discussing election laws and rules. But I am adamantly opposed to any form of censorship, especially with regard to political speech. If a candidate gets something wrong (misinformation) or deliberately misleads (disinformation), the consequence should not be censorship but rather more speech by other speakers.

6. How do you plan to ensure safe and secure elections in Minnesota?

One area of improvement is in regard to the petitioning process for independent and minor party candidates. Minnesota should transition to online petitions, administered by the Secretary of State's office. (Arizona provides a model.) No longer would volunteers be forced to ask total strangers for signatures. The odds of a hostile confrontation may be slim, but they are *not* zero. During the 2020 election at the onset of the COVID pandemic, Minnesota permitted digital signatures, but this accommodation was not extended to the 2020 election, when I can personally attest meeting people who told me through a glass door that they wanted to sign, but didn't feel comfortable opening the door to sign. Moreover, if we transitioned to online petitions, there would be total confidence that voters sign only the petitions that they are entitled to sign, based on their residence.

7. What other improvements would you make to our elections? (i.e. voter education, safety and security, election administration)

There are two additional reasons, unrelated to safety and security, why Minnesota should institute online petitions. First, it would respect the privacy of people who sign petitions. Why should neighbors be able to see whether the person down the

street signed the same petition, or worse, learn the age of their neighbor because that information is on the signature line? Second, and this is more important to me, an online petition system would respect the dignity of disabled individuals, who currently must have another person fill out the petition form on their behalf. I commend Secretary Simon for instituting accommodations to protect the voting rights of disabled Minnesotans, and we should extend such accommodations to citizens who sign candidate nominating petitions.