

# PLANNED PARENTHOOD ASSOCIATION OF UTAH

## 2023 MAYORAL QUESTIONNAIRE

### ROCKY ANDERSON

#### **Rocky's Support for Planned Parenthood Association of Utah:**

For several decades, I have been an ardent supporter of PPAU and have fought many of the battles for reproductive freedom and sex education alongside it. I was a PPAU Board member twice. (I was once asked to be Chair of the Board, but at the time I was Chair of the Utah ACLU Board and could not do both.) I provided pro bono legal representation for PPAU in federal court when we successfully challenged the denial of an occupancy permit for a newly renovated PPAU clinic in West or South Jordan. I was Chair of the Public Information and Education Committee at PPAU.

When I was Mayor, I held community meetings to address the need for reproductive freedom and sex education and spoke out about fundamental freedoms being denied the people of Utah by our Legislature, including the "freedom to teach children about family planning and prevention of sexually transmitted diseases." <https://www.deseret.com/2004/8/4/19843608/the-7-freedoms-espoused-by-anderson>

I have continued to speak out and write about the cruelty and harm of anti-choice legislation, most recently in an op-ed in The SL Tribune entitled "Utah's anti-abortion legislation is cruel and dangerous to women", found at <https://www.sltrib.com/opinion/commentary/2022/11/04/linn-goldberg-rocky-anderson/>.

I feel strongly that reproductive rights are basic human and civil rights that cannot be denied in a free society. They impact almost every person in significant ways. The denial of such rights can be particularly dangerous and cruel to women.

**Which of the following policy areas do you believe are most important to address in order to uphold and create a healthy community for residents of your city? Please rank them from most important to least important.**

1. Expanding Affordable Housing
2. City Funding for Educational Resources on Medicaid/Medicare
3. Police Reform
4. Expanding Food Access
5. City-Sponsored Resources for Pregnant People, such as a Doula Program
6. Passing Non-Discrimination Ordinances
7. City-Sponsored Sex Education

8. Expanding Parental Leave and Healthcare Benefits for City Employees
9. City-Sponsored Donation Drives for New Parents and Less Fortunate Residents

**Please comment on your top three choices. Why did you rank them so highly, and what is your plan to address these policy areas if elected?**

Salt Lake City has become unaffordable for most people due to the high cost of housing. The absence of affordable housing results in homelessness, which poses enormous risks to people's health and longevity. It also results in an unhealthy gentrification of the city, leading to an inability for students, working people, and others who do not have a lot of wealth to live our city. It also results in renters (the majority of residents in SLC) spending, on average, more than 50% of their income on rent, leaving little for nutritious food, health care, recreation, and other endeavors vital to mental and physical health. I would approach the affordable housing crisis facing Salt Lake City by ending the subsidies to private developers, who are building mostly unaffordable and often architecturally awful apartments throughout our city, and investing in building city-owned and -controlled mixed-income non-market housing (often called "social housing" in other parts of the world). Removing the profit margin from housing would permit a significant reduction in rental rates for all occupants. This solution has had great success in many nations and several states in the U.S.

Many people in SLC, including numerous homeless people, are entitled to public benefits, such as Social Security Disability or Medicare, but they are denied it because of the absence of professional outreach and case management workers. The provision of effective outreach and case management workers for every person living on the streets (and others who are in need) will be a top priority of mine. It is a need I have emphasized to the current mayor and others in city government, without even a reply. Good outreach and case management, with an individualized plan for every person being served, is crucial.

Every person in our community should be safe and secure, able to live and use our public places without fear of exposure to hypodermic needles, human feces, open-air drug markets, and dangerous drug use. The SLCPD claims a reduction in crime in SLC, but clearly only because so much crime occurs that is not reflected in the statistics because (1) police are incredibly slow to respond to priority 1 calls (even with an outrageously dangerous "goal" of 10-minute responses); (2) police sometimes never even show up when 911 calls are made, so crimes are not recorded; and (3) even when police respond, they often do nothing in response to illegal conduct, offering the excuse to business owners and residents that the mayor has instructed them to just tell offenders to "move on." That practice is made clear by the SLCPD CompStat report for 2022, reflecting a 59% reduction in drug crime in the Rio Grande area, which is, of course, absurd.

When city government creates a sense of impunity among people who are led to believe they can violate the law without any consequences, we are all left in far more danger. I don't believe people violating drug laws should be arrested and jailed for the sake of punishment or retribution. I know, however, that we are all better served (including the offenders) when they are brought into a system based on restorative justice, where the aim is problem-solving (as is accomplished with Drug Court and the availability of drug treatment). When I was mayor for 8 years, we had the nation's most comprehensive restorative justice program, focused on solving problems and restoring victims, offenders, and the community alike.

We are also left less safe when our current mayor and Chief of Police "support" first responders who stand by and do nothing to help a man (who died two hours later) bleeding profusely, rather than exercising the first-aid training they have received. When asked by a reporter if the mayor would prefer that first responders utilize their first-aid training and help people who are in need, the mayor (sounding like the school police chief in Uvalde) said she would prefer that our first responders stay safe because that's their job.

**Are there any policies you believe are important to helping your city become a more healthy community that were not listed above? If so, which?**

If "educational resources" regarding Medicare and Medicaid (above) does not include outreach and case management, then I would definitely make them a priority, for the reasons described above.

Our air quality is very poor much of the time, creating tremendous health risks and shorter lives for the people in our area. We should do everything possible to end dependence on automobiles and create both incentives and disincentives that will lead to people driving no-emission vehicles. I created the program allowing low- or no-emission vehicles to park free at city meters. I would expand those incentives and also provide more free charging stations, with parking places reserved for EVs. I would also vigorously explore legal remedies against industries that significantly contribute toward our poor air quality. I would also do everything to require, or at least strongly incentivize, the installation of solar panels and batteries and the electrification of everything possible in buildings (e.g., heat-pump water heaters, clothes dryers, and HVAC, induction stoves) and rid them of the use of fossil fuels. I would raise awareness about subsidies under the Inflation Reduction Act. I'd also push to expedite the provision of 100% of SLC's electricity from renewable sources and to end reliance on coal-burning power plants.

Poor nutrition is an enormous contributor to serious health problems and shorter lives. I would engage in public education campaigns about good and bad nutrition and

encourage providers, like the Food Bank, to provide more nutritious food and to cut back substantially on foods with a lot of sugar and dangerous fats.

Unwanted pregnancies entail serious mental and physical health problems. I would seek to have the city and PPAU join together in a massive public education campaign to help make certain that every child is a wanted child.

Of course, the drying up of the Great Salt Lake poses very serious long-term health problems for everyone in our area. We need to make clear what the causes of the problem are and what will need to be accomplished for solutions to be achieved. Public education and advocacy about that will also be a priority.

The dangers of many illicit drugs are not well known by most people, as a result of almost no public education campaigns about them. When I was mayor, we ran billboard and bus board campaigns to encourage people to process, when they are not high on drugs, what they will do if someone overdoses when they are together. (There had been at least three cases of friends abandoning people who died of overdoses.) We made clear that people should get overdose victims to a hospital or call an ambulance—and that if they did, they would not be prosecuted for drug offenses. That sort of public health education can make the difference between life and death.

The climate crisis poses tremendous health risks for everyone—including wildfires, killer heat waves, droughts, and extreme weather events. When I was mayor, SLC was viewed internationally as a top leader in climate protection, receiving the World Leadership Award in London for our environmental programs and the EPA Climate Protection Award. We reduced greenhouse gas emissions in city operations by 31% in three years, an extraordinary achievement. Then we presented to audiences, including municipal officials, in many forums in the U.S., including the Sundance Summit, where Robert Redford, ICLEI, and I hosted dozens of mayors each year for three years for everyone to learn about the climate crisis, how to communicate about it to constituents, and best practices for cities to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. I also presented about SLC's successes in Sweden, Australia, China, and Canada, and at side meetings at three U.N. Conferences of the Parties on Climate Change in New Delhi, Buenos Aires, and Bali. Since the climate crisis is a global problem, it's vital that we set an example that can be replicated by cities around the world.