

NAME: Benjamin Haynes
PARTY: Democratic
SEEKING: Gwinnett County Sheriff

1. Why are you seeking your office?

The Gwinnett Sheriff's Office is in need of desperate reform. I am running for Sheriff because I have over 25 years of law enforcement experience and I am the candidate with the strongest vision and ability to enact effective change at this office. I am seeking the Democratic nomination because this party is the one that will make sure everyone in our County is accounted for.

2. What do you expect to accomplish if elected?

I support significant reform of the 287(g) program. I would limit the program to major felony offenses and eliminate its use for misdemeanor offenses. I am also committed to making significant and lasting reforms that focus on promoting rehabilitation, de-escalation efforts, and fair treatment for inmates as they go through the criminal justice system. Everyone who goes through the criminal justice system deserves to have their human and civil rights respected and protected. Gwinnett should be a model for reformist criminal justice policies.

3. What distinguishes your candidacy?

I have the experience and track record to get the job done. I am the only candidate that can offer and produce meaningful reform at the Sheriff's Office. I have not worked within the Gwinnett System my entire career like the other candidates. I am not in the "good 'ol boy" club with all the rest of Gwinnett Law Enforcement. I am the only candidate from the outside and the only one with no ties to the systemic issues within the county now. I will not play favorites.

4. Pick any one issue. Expand on how you will address it.

I support significant reform of the 287(g) program. Gwinnett 's reported 287(g) instances totaled close to 5,700 in 2017. Most of the people detained under 287(g) are being held for minor offenses such as driving without a license and ICE should not be involved. These would merely be ticketed offenses in other counties. It should be a priority to protect and serve all people in Gwinnett and have the trust of the community. As Sheriff, I will institute a policy that enforces 287(g) only on major felony cases and ends racially based enforcement.

5. Suggest ways to jump-start the economy after COVID-19.

My office would have no authority or role in policy related to jump-starting the economy following COVID-19. However, I would personally support and advocate for any plan that would get our citizens back to work supporting our local economy.

6. Please give a 100 word summary on your background

I am not a not a politician, but a law enforcement professional. I earned my Bachelor Degree in Sociology from the University of Georgia and Masters Degree in Public Safety Administration from Columbus State University. I have worked in law enforcement for over 25 years. I have over 2,900 hours of training including de-escalation and use of force investigations with certifications for Field Training and Executive. My career shows a record of results and reformist mindset, from my time at the Dade County Sheriff's Office, the Georgia Bureau of Investigation, Lilburn Police Department and the Gwinnett County District Attorney's Office.