

# King County Democrats

## 2020 Candidate Questionnaire: Federal

<b>Candidate Name</b>	Pramila Jayapal	
<b>Position Sought</b>	U.S. House of Representatives	
Home Legislative District	7	
<b>Are you a Democrat?</b>	Yes	
<b>Campaign Contact Information</b>	Mailing address: Pramila for Congress PO Box 21912 Seattle, WA 98111	Phone: 2068928343 Fax:
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Campaign manager or point of contact	Nathasja Skorupa	
Consultant(s)		

<b>Please answer the following questions.</b>		<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
1	Have you ever been a member of another political party?		X
2	Have you ever failed to pay any taxes or court ordered judgments?		X
3	Have you ever been found in violation of a Public Disclosure Commission, Federal Election Commission or Seattle Ethics and Elections Commission regulation?		X
4	Does your campaign have a code of conduct for staff and volunteers? If not, are you willing to implement one?	X	

### **Part I – Candidate Background (*maximum of 200 words per question please*)**

Please briefly describe your education, employment, community and civic activity, union affiliation, and other relevant experience.

I am an activist and organizer with 25 years of experience building movements for justice and to expand the middle class and lift people up out of poverty, both domestically and internationally. I am the founder and former Executive Director of OneAmerica, now the state's largest immigrant advocacy organization. Founded in the wake of 9/11 as Hate Free Zone, I built the movement to take on the Bush Administration around civil liberties abuses, post-9/11 backlash, and anti-immigrant xenophobia, as well as fighting for immigrant rights across our state. We led on key victories to

register new immigrants to vote, secure legislative wins in Washington state for immigrants and refugees, stop illegal deportations and shore up the strength of our democracy in Washington state.

Prior to OneAmerica, I worked in international public health for PATH, running the Fund for Technology Transfer, a loan fund that helped ensure socially responsible health projects in developing countries had access to affordable capital. I have been honored to win numerous awards and recognitions, including a White House Champion of Change Award in 2013 from the White House. I have a BA from Georgetown University and an MBA from Northwestern University's Kellogg School of Management, as well as several years working in the private sector. I am an immigrant from India who came to the United States at the age of 16 by myself for college, and my parents still live in India.

From 2014 to 2016 I represented the 37th Legislative District in the Washington State Senate. I was the sponsor and chief architect of the legislation that required the Department of Transportation to allot funding for pre-apprenticeship programs and recruit women and people of color to participate. I stood up for women's health equity by working to ensure that Medicaid recipients have access to reproductive health care. I took on payday lenders' attempt to profit off of working families and low-income people, introducing dozens of amendments to stifle legislation that imposed repayment plans and additional fees. I also served on a bi-partisan committee that took on the issue of untested rape kits in the state.

I am honored to represent Washington's 7th Congressional District in the U.S. House of Representatives. During my first term I have been appointed Senior Whip of the Democratic Caucus, Vice Ranking Member of the House Budget Committee, and sit on the influential Judiciary Committee. I was the First Vice Chair of the Congressional Progressive Caucus, and am now co-chair. I recently was appointed to co-chair the health care policy group for The Unity Task Force.

I have been a long-time champion for universal health care. I am proud to be the lead sponsor for The Medicare for All Act. I am proud of the progress of the bill and I will continue to fight to end our broken healthcare system.

I have introduced and led on additional key proposals including, most recently, The Paycheck Guarantee Act, the Medicare Crisis Act and Health Care Emergency Guarantee Act.

It has been my priority to use any levers available to me to deliver for my district. My constituent services team has secured backpay and due benefits worth more than \$3.8 million to constituent including veterans and seniors, as well as assistance with immigration cases resulting in resolved visas and work documentation. I strive to be in constant conversation with the district, which is why I have held 96 town halls with over 100,000 people in attendance (in person, over the phone and through Facebook live), and have delivered over 110,000 responses to emails and letters.

Describe your history of involvement in Washington state politics. What campaigns, if any, have you run or worked on?

As the founder and former Executive Director of OneAmerica, now the state's largest immigrant advocacy organization. We built leadership amongst young people, people of color, women and those whose voices are too often marginalized. Under my leadership, we led the largest voter registration drive in the history of the state, registering over 23,000 new immigrant citizens to vote; established the Seattle Office for immigrants and refugees; started and ran the Washington New Americans program to help legal permanent residents get citizenship across our state; helped write and pass the Washington State Dream Act; helped lead the efforts to pass the Washington Voting Rights Act.

I also served on the Mayor's Income Inequality Committee to raise the minimum wage, served on several Police Accountability panels, and co-chaired the Seattle Police Chief Search Committee. We have worked closely with labor for more than a decade, including co-chairing the Immigrant Workers Freedom Ride in 2003 with the King County Labor Council and playing critical roles in union contract negotiations at the Westin and Safeway. I was appointed by Governor Gregoire in 2008 to serve as Vice Chair of the Washington New Americans Policy Council, in addition to the other appointments by numerous Seattle Mayors.

Following OneAmerica, I co-directed the We Belong Together campaign, a national campaign to bring a gender lens to immigration that came out of an op-ed I published with Gloria Steinem titled, "Surprise! Immigration is a Women's Issue." We worked with Sen. Mazie Hirono to hold the first ever hearing in the U.S. Senate Judiciary Committee on women and immigration, and then with women Senators to write parts of the comprehensive immigration reform bill that passed the US Senate with 67 votes and included important new provisions to ensure gender equity in immigration.

In 2014, I was elected to represent Washington's 37th district in the State Senate, and ran in 2016 to assume the position of Congresswoman for the 7th Congressional District in the U.S. House of Representatives. Through both of my campaigns I focused on a robust organizing effort because of the value direct voter engagement has to truly bringing people in to the inner workings of our democracy. My 2018 campaign blanketed the district knocking on thousands of doors, calling thousands of voters, and engaging over 1000 volunteers.

I consistently work to engage voters in key races across the region and nationally. Our movement knocked on 6,000 doors in the 45th district to support Manka Dhingra and help win a Democratic majority in the Washington State Senate. We knocked on 1500 doors for Teresa Mosqueda. We also knocked on over 2000 doors for the "Burien for All" slate of progressive City Council candidates, including the now first Latino Mayor of Burien - defeating a group of dangerous anti-immigrant candidates. Most recently we have canvassed for Tammy Morales, and Lisa Herbold and will continue to support candidates around the state and country.

## **Part II – Free Response Questions (*maximum of 200 words per question please*)**

What issues do you think aren't getting enough attention from media or elected officials? How

would you seek to remedy that through your campaign or when elected?

One of the issues that does not get enough media attention is the disparity of race and how that disparity is being exacerbated by and exposed through, this pandemic.

The effects of COVID-19 are astronomical. As I write this, we've lost more American lives than we had as a result of The Vietnam War. This devastation is real and will likely shape our economy, society and politics for many years to come. And what we have also come to learn is that for black, brown, Asian American and Pacific Islander and Native American communities, this global economic and public health crisis has hit even harder.

The deck was already stacked against many communities of color even before COVID19. Now, we see these disparities and disadvantages in all facets of this crisis: in higher rates of infection and unemployment, in disparities accessing relief funds from federal programs like the Paycheck Protection Plan (PPP), and, sadly in the spike of racial violence and hate crimes over the last several months.

Counties that are majority black have 3 times the rate of coronavirus infections and 6 times the rate of deaths as counties that are majority white.

Just last week, the Department of Labor reported a nearly 15 percent unemployment rate overall across the country -- a record high. But the report also found that a staggering 16.7 percent of African Americans are now out of work and nearly 19 percent of Latinos. These numbers are the highest on record for those groups as well.

According to the Center for Responsible Lending, roughly 95% of black owned businesses stand close to no chance of receiving a PPP loan through a mainstream bank or credit union. For Latino-owned businesses, it's 91%. For Asian American and Pacific Islander-owned businesses, it's 75% standing close to no chance of receiving one.

Finally, I have been absolutely horrified to see the stories of verbal and physical violence and scapegoating of our Asian American and Pacific Islander neighbors.

To address the failures of the PPP, I've introduced The Paycheck Guarantee Act. This plan would quickly get grants -- not loans -- to businesses and nonprofits to cover the cost of payroll for salaries up to \$90,000 and maintenance expenses like rent.

And with up to 35 million people at risk of losing their health care and 30 million Americans already uninsured, people are looking for certainty about whether they'll be able to see a doctor and afford their prescriptions.

I have also advocated for increased funding and reporting on hate crimes and called on the administration to condemn its racist and xenophobic comments on behalf of Asian Americans.

Climate change is an urgent environmental and humanitarian crisis in the US, and around the world. How would you use your office to enact aggressive climate change policy, and what specific policies have you supported?

We need bold, progressive policies if we are ever going to move away from fossil fuels, combat climate change and create a healthy planet for ALL. The Green New Deal is paramount to ensuring that our children have a chance to swim in our lakes, eat the fish that they catch and breathe in air that doesn't cause them harm. I am proud of my track record in standing up to big oil and supporting policy that will not only help restore our planet to a level of vibrance, but create living-wage jobs.

Prior to the Green New Deal, I was a proud co-sponsor of the "100 by '50" Act, which lays out a road map to achieve 100 percent renewable energy by 2050, including a just transition for workers in the fossil fuel industry. I understand the dire consequences any further delay will have on our environment, public health, and local fishing and tourism industries.

As a State Senator, I helped lead the effort to strip bad environmental provisions from the transportation package and fight for the largest investment in multi-modal transportation options. I also helped pass incentives for electric vehicles and investment in the state's electric vehicle infrastructure.

How will you use your office to promote universal access to healthcare?

I have been a long-time champion for universal healthcare and am very proud to be the lead sponsor for The Medicare for All Act of 2019. COVID 19 is exposing the dozens of broken elements of our current for-profit healthcare system. The cost of prescription medicine, the availability of personal protection gear for our frontline workers, a centralized response system and the amount of people with pre-existing conditions are just a few of the critical components that would have been addressed in ways that result in saved lives. We need Medicare for All now more than ever before.

As I'm writing this, almost 90,000 people who have died in our country; and frontline workers and all workers are worried about their fundamental health and safety. 27 million workers have lost their healthcare since COVID 19 alone, joining 75 million people who were uninsured or underinsured before. Yesterday Washington State crossed the threshold of 1,000 deaths.

The scale of the crisis must be met with policy that is far reaching enough so that it addresses the reality of the devastation that people are in and the global pandemic that are country is in. That is why Senator Bernie Sanders and I have introduced the Health Care Emergency Guarantee Act, which would have Medicare reimburse all out-of-pocket costs for both insured and uninsured Americans throughout the coronavirus pandemic.

Joe Kennedy and I have a proposal called the Medicare Crisis Program. It would expand the number of people that are eligible for both Medicare and Medicaid—so if you're unemployed, you would be covered by Medicare, if you're uninsured, you would be covered by Medicaid.


The bill prohibits any cost sharing—copays, co-insurance, deductibles—for public or private plans related to COVID care. We eliminate those and then we cap the out-of-pocket costs for Medicare enrollees so that nobody's going to go bankrupt on these costs. We really need to make sure we're protecting everybody [even people with private insurance]. That's also a very simple way to ensure that everyone has coverage.

I'll also be using my most recent appointment as co-chair of the Biden-Sanders Unity Taskforce on Healthcare for universal coverage, that is a right to all, and not a privilege to those that can afford it.

How can federal policy better advance equity in K-12 and post-secondary education systems?

I have a long history of, and will continue to advocate for closing the gap for low-income students and children of color. No student, regardless of background or income level should be afforded a lesser education than another. Federal policy must prioritize strong investments in early education, where children get the foundation for their future development and can provide a leg up to disadvantaged children. I continue to support increased pay and benefits for public school teachers – we need to attract and retain the best teachers for all children. I have introduced the College for All Act to make public universities and colleges tuition free for 80 percent of all students, allow exiting student borrowers to refinance and slash their interest rates in half. We must also continue to legislate support for children of immigrants, language translation and interpretation for limited English proficient parents, and additional support for teachers of bilingual and special needs kids. We cannot overlook the value of trades apprenticeships that can help build a robust green economy and that have helped so many when traditional education was not the best fit for that student.

**I affirm that all the information provided in response to this questionnaire is true, complete, and correct to the best of my ability, and that no relevant matter has been omitted.**

Signature		Date: 5/18/2020
Printed Name	Congresswoman Pramila Jayapal	