

King County Democrats

2020 Candidate Questionnaire: Legislature

Candidate Name	John Stafford	
Position Sought	State Representative, Position 1	
Home Legislative District	37 th	
Are you a Democrat?	Yes	
Campaign Contact Information	Mailing address: 1723 13 th Avenue South, Unit 404; Seattle, WA 98144	Phone: (206) 722-6338 Fax:
	Website: www.staffordforstaterepresentative.org Email: staffordforstaterepresentative.com Twitter: twitter.com/staffordone Facebook: facebook.com/StaffordForStateRep	
Campaign manager or point of contact	Matthew Reyes	
Consultant(s)	None	

Please answer the following questions.		Yes	No
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.

- Employment: AP Social Studies Teacher, Mercer Island High School; Prior Career – Partner with Strategic Planning Associates, a Management Consulting Firm based in Washington, D.C.; Member, Mercer Island Education Association and WEA.
- Civic Activity: Executive Board, 37th District Democrats; Steering Committee Member, South Seattle Climate Action Network; Board Member, the Environment and Climate Committee of the Washington State Democratic Party; Member, 37th Legislative District Environment and Climate Caucus; Author of 40+ Articles for the South Seattle Emerald

- Education: B.A. History, Dartmouth College (1984); M.A. Teaching, St. Martin's University (2000); M.A. History, Harvard Extension School (2020)

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

I have run previously several times for State Representative and State Senate in the 37th LD. I volunteered on Bill Bradburd's City Council Campaign.

Describe the progress of your campaign and campaign goals. What is your plan to win? If you have received endorsements, please list them here.

I filed for office three days ago. My campaign is focused on making much-needed major structural change in Washington State; not just incremental reforms. Policy priorities: (1) Restructuring how the state does business to respond to the pandemic, economic and pending budgetary crises (e.g., moving toward a single-payer health care system to respond to the obvious problem of having individuals receiving health care from their employers); (2) Focusing scarce budgetary resources on those most in need (i.e., no Universal Basic Income at this time); (3) A new source of progressive taxation; (4) Aggressively address climate change. I intend to demonstrate a highly-informed, highly-substantive approach to policy and a commitment to effecting major structural change.

Part II – Yes/No Questions

#	Question	Yes	No	Additional Comments
1	Do you support the right of public workers – excluding military personnel – to bargain and strike?	X		
2	Do you support raising the statewide minimum wage?	X		
3	Do you support increased state funding for Sound Transit and other regional transit authorities?	X		
4	Do you support repealing the 1% limit on property tax revenues?	X		
5	Will you allow your campaign staff to unionize?	X		
6	Do you support ending Washington State funding for privately run prisons and detention centers?	X		
7	Do you support statewide mandatory age-appropriate sex education in public schools?	X		
8	Would you be willing to have yourself, your staff, or your peers participate in	X		

	cultural competency, anti-racism, and/or anti-sexual harassment training?			
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Part III – 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?

It is important to understand that Washington State public policy is not nearly as progressive as commonly believed. We are a low-tax state (when measured as total taxes as a percent of personal income); the state with the most regressive tax system in the country; a laggard in gun control regulation; etc. Thus, the state has considerable room to implement much-needed progressive reform in many areas.

In the post-McCleary era, how do you propose to strengthen the K-12 education system?

Three changes are critical – more funding for Special Education; more funding for Wraparound Services; and new mandatory K-12 curriculum on climate change science. However, there is a more urgent education challenge – how to structure K-12 education in the era of the pandemic. This will require creative thinking, and likely involve a mix of on-campus and online education, and this in turn raises important issues of equity which must be addressed.

Washington State's carbon emissions have increased in recent years, most recently by 1.6% from 2015-17. What policies would you propose to reduce our statewide emissions by 50% by 2030?

It is critical for Washington State to make major progress on climate change policy. This will be made more difficult in the next Biennium, because of the pending budget crisis. Thus, it will be critical to implement high-impact, low-cost solutions. I prioritize five: (a) Declare a climate emergency in Washington State; (b) Pass the Clean Fuels Act; (c) Pass the HEAL Act; (d) Ban the sale of new internal combustion vehicles starting in 2030; (e) Institute mandatory climate change curriculum in K-12 schools statewide.

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

I support the single payer model for healthcare, and I support implementing it in Washington State. The pandemic is demonstrating one of the many flaws with an employer-based health care system – individuals lose their healthcare when they lose their job. A single payer system, if well-designed, will increase coverage levels (by making them universal), improve health care outcomes, and lower costs (in part by reducing administrative costs).

Washington has one of the most regressive tax structures in the country. What steps would you take to make our tax system more fair?

The fact that Washington State has the most regressive tax system in the country is appalling. It is especially problematic in the era of the pandemic because the state's budget is being devastated by the combination of lower revenues (from decreased tax revenues) and higher costs (from pandemic response requirements), and increased tax revenue from high-income individuals is essential. I strongly support the introduction of a new source of progressive revenue, but I am somewhat flexible on which specific method – capital gains, income tax, wealth tax, financial transaction tax, etc.

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	John Stafford	Date: May 17, 2020
Printed Name	John Stafford	