

# King County Democrats

## 2020 Candidate Questionnaire: Lt. Governor

<b>Candidate Name</b>	Marko Liias	
<b>Position Sought</b>	Lieutenant Governor	
Home Legislative District	21 <sup>st</sup>	
<b>Are you a Democrat?</b>	Yes	
<b>Campaign Contact Information</b>	Mailing address: 401 2 <sup>nd</sup> Ave S, Ste 303, Seattle, WA 98104	Phone: (425) 210-2410 Fax:
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Campaign manager or point of contact	Nick Juno: nick@markoforwa.com	
Consultant(s)	Northwest Passages, Blue Wave, New Blue Interactive	

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

### **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'm a lifelong Washingtonian from a middle-class immigrant family, the first in my family to go to college at Georgetown University before going on to earn my MPA from University of Washington, a college professor at Everett Community College, and a proud union member. Right out of college I started my own business to be a better part of my community and paired that with public service starting with my first election to the Mukilteo City Council. I followed my time at the city with

representing the people of the 21<sup>st</sup> District first in the State House of Representatives, and for the last 6 years in the State Senate.

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

I have run successfully for Mukilteo City Council (2005), State House (2008, 2010, 2012), State Senate (2014, 2018), and Snohomish County Charter Review Commission (2015). I was a Senior Advisor to Senator Cantwell's 2012 reelection campaign and I started in politics as campaign manager for my own State Representative Brian Sullivan in 2004. In addition, I have volunteered on dozens of other campaigns at all levels of government.

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

So far, my campaign has been endorsed by incumbent Lt. Governor Cyrus Habib, 12 current state senators (including Senators Carlyle, Das, Keiser, Kuderer, Nguyen, Pedersen, Stanford, Wellman and Wilson from King County districts), 10 current and former state representatives (including Reps. Fitzgibbon, Gregerson, Pettigrew and Walen from King County Districts), a coalition of community leaders including King County Sheriff Mitzi Johanknecht, Snohomish County Executive Dave Somers, mayors, city councilmembers, and other more totaling up to over 50 early endorsers. In addition, I am proud to have hundreds of small donors supporting our growing campaign as well. We are growing organizational support, and have received the endorsement of the Washington Federation of State Employees, representing tens of thousands of incredible public servants. I have also been endorsed by the National LGBTQ Victory Fund and would be the first LGBTQ person to hold statewide executive office in Washington.

Due to "stay at home" orders, we have shifted to a completely digital campaign, relying on an active social media presence that includes live discussions with people in communities across our state. We are ambitiously fundraising, relying on a people-powered campaign to reach \$400,000 by the August primary and an additional \$500,000 to finish the general election strong.

**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?

Homelessness and housing have been a persistent issue all across Washington. COVID-19 has laid bare the inequity that many of us already saw in our economy and it has deepened the impact on people experiencing homelessness. I am proud of the investments that we have made in recent years, and particularly as a member of the Senate Ways & Means Committee, our state investments to communities across Washington to fight homelessness and build more housing. But there is much more to be done. I would like to see more wrap-around services like supportive

housing, and more investments in a multitude of housing options and additional density near transit. I have been part of that effort already with legislation to mandate more backyard cottages and mother-in-law apartments (accessible dwelling units) in Washington. Homelessness is a multifaceted issue, I look forward to continuing these conversations and progressive policy changes as Lt. Governor.

By law, the Lieutenant Governor is the Chair of the Legislative Committee on Economic Development and International Relations (LCEDIR). What ideas can you offer to improve LCEDIR's effectiveness?

As we begin the difficult work of recovering from COVID-19, I am committed to building the framework for a green transition, where we use this moment to build a clean energy and clean technology economy of the future. This means growing small and medium sized businesses in every ZIP code in Washington that are committed to sustainability for the future. Also, with 40% of jobs in our state tied to international trade, our economy is the most trade-driven in the country. LCEDIR offers the perfect platform to focus on the green transition, while connecting business leaders and legislators with foreign leaders, to nourish international ties and build stronger trade relationships. It will be the job of the next Lt. Governor to step forward on the international stage to share the message that Washington is a great place to invest, to create jobs, to work and to live.

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

I was proud to move the legislation to completely comply with the McCleary decision, investing billions of dollars to raise teacher's pay, reduce class sizes, and invest in the support and resources our students and families need. But we have to continue to make public education our top priority.

My mom was a school lunch lady, so I know that our schools are full of both teachers and support staff, all focused on the education and well-being of our students. Our school counselors are invaluable to the mental and emotional health of our students, but the resources gap between schools that have access to counselors and those that do not is still too high. I also know that students with special needs are not receiving adequate support to succeed. More investments need to be made so we can fill that gap and give every student the same access to a great public education – a tool we already know will help us recover from the impending recession faster. As Lt. Governor, I will be a loud and clear voice that austerity doesn't work and new progressive revenue must be identified to continue these critical investments and services for our children.

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?

Climate change poses an existential threat to our survival on this planet. This is a moment for our innovative Washington spirit to help lead the world to find solutions that can grow our economy, create jobs throughout our state, and address this pressing threat. I believe that we must place a price on carbon emissions to create market pressure to reduce our investments. I support many possible mechanisms to achieve this, from a clean fuels standard to a cap and invest program to a carbon tax. Whichever pathway we select, we must ensure that there are strong worker

protections, like those included in the Clean Energy Transformation Act in 2019. I have also supported every action we have taken in recent years, voting for CETA, a ban on superpollutant HFCs, new building and appliance efficiency standards, the zero-emission vehicle (ZEV) standard, and updated greenhouse gas reduction targets. As Lt. Governor, I will focus on identifying win-win opportunities to create jobs and new industries in areas like pumped hydro storage, creation of new clean hydrogen fuel manufacturing, and expansion of our use of sustainable mass timber products. The more we innovate, the better equipped we will be to reach our goals.

Many Washingtonians are unaware that the Lieutenant Governor has the power to make appointments to over forty boards and commissions. What principles guide your process and what do you look for in candidates?

The Lt. Governor is in charge of appointing the Senate representation to these boards and commissions that generally guide policy decisions for the coming years. These appointments are not something to take lightly as we should only have the best at the table for these conversations that will inevitably guide our state. As an overarching philosophy, I will work to ensure that equity and social justice are at the core of what we do as a state government. I am proud that Gov. Inslee has appointed the most diverse Supreme Court in the nation, I will follow his lead as I make appointments. Many appointments are in conjunction with Senate caucus leadership, for these I believe that the Senators appointed should be as close to subject matter experts in that specialty as possible to have the most constructive ideas for the conversation. I will look at a Senator's policy portfolio they have focused on, their committee assignments, and the expertise they bring to the table when I make these appointments. To the maximum extent possible, I will work with Senate leadership to ensure that equity and social justice are reflected in the appointments I make.

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

In the Senate, I am a proud cosponsor of legislation to chart the path to universal single-payer healthcare in Washington state. I also have supported and voted for a state public option, one of the strongest prescription drug transparency laws in the nation, as well as urgent action to bring down insulin costs for those who rely on life-saving medication so we can bridge the gap while health officials in our state make the road map to stronger universal access. As Lt. Governor, while health care policy is not one of the primary responsibilities of the role, I will use my platform and position as Chair of the Senate Rules Committee to move progressive, accessible healthcare legislation through the process and make sure that universal healthcare remains a high priority.

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

I have been a longtime supporter of more equitable tax structures and I voted for every single progressive tax structure change that the legislature put forward when we crafted our finance package in 2019. In that package, we closed loopholes on corporate taxes, we lowered real estate taxes for low and middle income families while raising it for the multibillion dollar corporations building skyscrapers in Seattle, and many other progressive changes. While we did not get every win on moving us towards a more balanced tax structure, it has set a precedent that I hope we are able to continue with so we can get smart, progressive revenue sources like a capital gains tax.

This progress is more important than ever as we recover from COVID-19. We cannot go back to the austerity measures of the Gregoire era that harmed our most vulnerable, and must instead raise new, progressive revenue so we can bounce back faster and stronger.

**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: April 20, 2020
Printed Name	Marko Liias	