

King County Democrats 2024 Endorsement Questionnaire

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Candidate pronouns
He/Him
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Link to candidate headshot
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What type of position are you running for?
State Executive
What position are you running for?
Governor
Are you a Democrat?
Yes
Have you ever been a member of another political party?
No
Does your campaign have a code of conduct for staff and volunteers?
No
What top priorities will you advance with your budget?

I want to break the silo budgeting mentality we have in Olympia. The operating budget has had substantial growth during my time in the Senate, going from \$34 billion to \$71 billion. We need to share that operating budget growth with our transportation budget to make sure people can get to and from work on time with safe streets. We also need to share that operating budget growth with cities and counties so we can make progress on public safety. As a small business owner during COVID-19, my pizza restaurant did great, but my Ben & Jerry's ice cream store in Bellevue Square struggled because the mall was closed. I did what every small business owner would do, which is transfer money from my pizza restaurant doing well to the ice cream store that was struggling. This is how we have to think about our state budgets. The operating budget has been doing well, it is time to use that growth to make sure we are funding all the things we need to fund so our state stays safe and affordable.

How will you generate more revenue more progressively?

I'm not running for Governor to raise people's taxes. I'm a firm believer that we must get maximum efficiency out of our current state agencies, so they are delivering results for the residents of Washington. I'm also a firm believer in making sure we are getting every federal dollar that is on the table. An example of this approach is the capital budget I chair in Olympia. We invested tens of millions of dollars to partner with our tribes to expand access to substance abuse treatment and behavioral health facilities. I did this because the tribes get five times more money than Medicaid reimbursement rates, but you have to build the facilities (which is what I did in my budget).

What factors will primarily influence your selection of appointments to Washington's Courts?

They need to prioritize the protection of individual rights, which means they must stand up for women's reproductive rights and make sure members of our LGBTQ+ community are being treated fairly. I will be on a quest for judges that are fair and impartial in how they view the justice system.

What will you do to place Washington last in gun-related deaths?

I have supported every common sense gun responsibility bill during my twelve years in the Senate, which is why I have an A rating from the Alliance for Gun Responsibility. What makes me different from other Democrats is that no part of me thinks this alone will keep our communities safe. We need to become a better financial partner for our cities and counties so we can move the needle when it comes to public safety. This will be the best way to reduce gun-related violence.

How will you address the state's housing crisis?

As the chair of the state's capital budget, I have written the budget that invested over a half a billion in the Housing Trust Fund in one budget cycle, the largest in the history of our state. What makes me different is that I acknowledge this only builds an extra 4,000 units a year. We are trying to build 55,000 units a year to keep up with housing demand. This means we must partner with the private sector to solve our housing crisis. I have focused on making sure permit times are quick and predictable so we can attract the private dollars necessary to reduce housing inflation.

How will you mitigate climate change and preserve clean air and water?

I voted for the CCA in 2021 and don't support the current repeal efforts. What makes me different is that I have been extremely vocal about how the Inslee administration has implemented this policy. I hate the false choice he has created that anybody complaining about the price of gas does not care about climate change. I have solar panels on my house and drive an electric car to Olympia, but acknowledge that the price of gas matters for average working families in our state. As Governor I promise to focus on lowering the price of gas so we can fight climate change without making our state unaffordable for the average working family.

What infrastructure additions and improvements will you initiate and maintain?

This goes back to my point about budgets and silos. We need to share more of our operating budget growth with the transportation budget. Our ferry system is a disaster, and we can't afford to delay or cancel any of our current road projects. We also can't afford to not fix potholes that appear on our state highways. I sponsored SB 6311 this past session which would have been a smart way to gradually get an extra \$5 billion into the transportation budget in the next decade without impacting any operating budget programs. These are the creative ideas we need from our next Governor to keep our highways moving.

CERTIFICATION: The candidate hereby certifies that, to the best of their knowledge, the provided information is true and accurate.

Yes