

King County Democrats 2025 Endorsement Questionnaire

Candidate name

Ryan Calkins

Candidate pronouns

He/him

Campaign Filer Name

Ryan Calkins for Port

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Campaign phone

(206) 682-7328

Number we can text or call if we have questions about this form

(425) 387-0785

Campaign website

<https://ryanforport.com>

X/Twitter/BlueSky/Threads/etc.

<https://bsky.app/profile/ryancalkins.bsky.social>

Link to candidate headshot

<https://images.squarespace-cdn.com/content/v1/5906c502cd0f68a24029813a/1616712238768-G6UH001WLYQDVPL2CAC5/image0.jpeg?format=1500w>

Campaign manager name

Ryan Calkins

Campaign manager email

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(425) 387-0785

What type of position are you running for?

Port of Seattle

Which position are you running for?

Commissioner Position No. 1

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 motivated you to run for this position and how will you evaluate your success?

In 2017, when I first ran for this position, my motivation was jobs, environment, and transparency. While those continue to be strong motivators, I would also add justice to that list. The longer I'm in this role, the more apparent to me is the inequity associated with not only who benefits from Port-related activities but also who is harmed by the secondary impacts of maritime and aviation related industries. In order to ensure that the jobs, contracting opportunities, and other benefits are distributed fairly in our community, we have to actively work against systemic biases that privilege those who already have access or resources. At the same time, we have to expand our efforts to address historical and current air, water, and noise pollution that disproportionately impacts low-income communities in our region.

Now that we are facing a presidential administration that is hostile to environmental justice and diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts, it's even more important for local government to serve as a bulwark against federal activities that harm our most vulnerable residents. There is more demand for air travel than the current SeaTac capacity. How is the commission planning to meet the needs of travelers?

As our region's population continues to grow and the individual demand for air travel increases, the Port will need to accommodate at least another 10 million passengers per year transiting through SEA. In the near term, we are making improvements to existing facilities and executing the Ground Transportation Access Plan to encourage mass transit use for travelers coming to and from the airport. In the medium term, the Sustainable Airport Master Plan will add a new terminal and taxiways to increase our throughput capacity to 66 million passengers.

I am also advocating for a renewed regional conversation about the need to find alternatives to SEA for travel, which could include high speed rail and a second commercial airport.

What air and water pollution control facilities are within the control of the Port Commission? Tell us about them.

Both the airport and seaport properties have extensive stormwater facilities. In both cases, our systems are some of the most advanced used in any port facility in the United States. At the seaport, the Port established its own stormwater utility which allows us to channel utility revenues directly back into the improvement and expansion of the stormwater infrastructure. At the airport, we have led a national initiative to remove PFAS/PFOS (so called 'forever' chemicals) from airport firefighting foams which end up in stormwater when applied.

For air pollution control, we are working to electrify equipment across seaport and airport facilities, compel all ships to plug in to shorepower at berth, and incentivize the electrification of drayage trucks that serve the Port.

Human trafficking and illegal cargo remain issues. What more can the port do to reduce and eliminate these problems?

Through our partnership with Businesses Ending Slavery and Trafficking (BEST), under the leadership of Commissioners Cho and Hasegawa, the Port of Seattle has established best practices for airports and seaports in the United States and globally. In fact, our staff and leadership are regularly invited to speak at events supporting industry-wide adoption of these efforts to reduce human trafficking.

The challenges of illegal cargo require coordination among the Port, the terminal operators, the cargo owners and shippers, and national governments. With the increasing prevalence of synthetic drugs like fentanyl—that are so potent that even small amounts are lucrative enough to smuggle—the challenge has worsened. Ultimately the solution to most contraband issues is to address demand rather than controlling supply, but the Port will continue to work with our partners to eliminate the flow of illegal cargo.

The Port of Seattle has committed to pro-equity contracting with minority- and women-owned businesses (MWBES). What actions will you take to reduce systemic discrimination against MWBEs and expand the participation of MWBEs in Port contracts of all sizes and scope?

During my time on the Commission, we have expanded our Diversity in Contracting program by ratcheting up our targets, refining the program to address WMBE business concerns, leading workshops to help first time bidders navigate our application process, and advocating for changes to state and federal law that impede our progress on WMBE participation goals.

King County ports commonly manage the ingress and egress of dangerous materials, such as nuclear, chemical, biological, and radioactive. Within the scope of the Port Commission, how would you reduce the risk from these materials dangerous to people, land, water, and air?

Most of the responsibility for managing the ingress and egress of dangerous materials falls under the purview of federal agencies such as Customs and Border Protection, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, and the Nuclear Energy Regulatory Commission, which have capabilities beyond those of the Port to track those materials on a national and global scale. The Port remains committed to working with those agencies to ensure our communities' safety.

Certification

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

Created on: March 1st, 2025