

## **Adam Smith KCDems Endorsement Questionnaire 2026**

### **1. Please describe your background (education, employment, community and civic activity, union affiliation and political activity.)**

I grew up right here in this community. I went to Bow Lake Elementary, Chinook Middle School, and Tye High School. I started college at Western Washington University before transferring to Fordham University, where I earned my degree in political science. I went on to graduate from the UW School of Law.

After law school, I got to work serving this community as a Seattle city prosecutor, a practicing lawyer, and a judge pro tempore, where I handled domestic violence and DUI cases. I was elected to the State Senate in 1990 and served until 1997. In 1996, the people of the 9th Congressional District sent me to Congress, and I've had the honor of representing them in the US House of Representatives ever since 1997.

Unions have been part of my life for as long as I can remember. My father worked at SeaTac airport as a member of the Machinists Union. During college, I was a Teamster working at UPS. And my son carried on that tradition as a UFCW member when he worked at Safeway.

### **2. Why are you running for this position and what differentiates you as a candidate?**

I'm fighting to rebuild our representative democracy that Trump has tried to tear down, restore accountability, and lower the cost of everyday life by making sure our government delivers real results for working people.

### **3. If Democrats are successful in retaking the House in November, what actions will you support to retake the power and authority inherent in Congress being a coequal branch of government?**

If Democrats retake the House in November, I will support efforts to fully exercise the chamber's constitutional authorities as a coequal branch of government. That includes restoring robust committee oversight and investigations of the executive branch, ensuring the House controls its legislative agenda and debate through its rules process, and advancing legislation through transparent committee work and floor consideration. I will also support using the House's constitutional powers, including the origination of revenue legislation and, when necessary, the impeachment authority, to ensure accountability, uphold the rule of law, and reinforce Congress's role in shaping national policy.

### **4. The Trump administration often ignores due process and long-standing civil rights norms. What immigration policy and goals will you advocate for?**

We were told ICE would go after the worst of the worst, dangerous criminals. Instead we are watching them go into schools, daycares, and workplaces. We are seeing people who have committed no crime detained for weeks at a time without probable cause or due process. We are seeing citizens detained. We have seen violent confrontations, windows smashed, people dragged out of cars, homes entered without warrants. In Minneapolis, two people were killed by ICE forces and the administration lied about it.

ICE is overplaying its hand and violating the rights of people all across this country. We simply want the basic Constitution of this country and the rights of the American people to be respected during immigration enforcement. That is not a lot to ask.

I think there is bipartisan support for reining in ICE and stopping these violations. We have put forward reforms. We do not need all ten points, but we do need to hear some kind of offer from Republicans. The 10 demands are:

- Requiring a judicial warrant to enter private property (as the Constitution's Fourth Amendment already requires)
- Verification of non-citizenship before detention and banning racial profiling and profiling based on job, language, and accent
- Prohibiting immigration enforcement officers from wearing masks and requiring them to wear ID and body-worn cameras
- Prohibiting arrests at hospitals, schools, daycares, churches, polling places, and courts
- Allowing states to investigate potential crimes committed by DHS and to sue DHS over detention conditions, and requiring state coordination for large-scale operations
- Safeguards including immediate access to attorneys for detainees, allowing states to sue DHS for violations, and unlimited congressional access to ICE facilities
- Prohibit tracking and databases of individuals engaged in activities protected by the First Amendment
- Codification and enforcement of a use of force policy

To fund the Department of Homeland Security without getting those protections would be incredibly irresponsible.

We know that immigration is one of the great strengths of our nation. People from all over the world have come to our country because they see opportunity in America and a chance to build a better life for themselves and their families. The hard work and talent of immigrants have helped grow our economy and strengthen our communities. When Democrats are in charge we know we cannot afford to wait any longer to reform our immigration system. We need comprehensive reform to fix our legal immigration process, better support documented and undocumented immigrants, and improve the asylum process.

I have advocated on behalf of immigrants through supporting key legislation and other advocacy efforts during my time in Congress:

- I co-lead the Dignity for Detained Immigrants Act, legislation to reform the systemic problems in our immigration detention system. Our current system is inhumane, unjust, and driven by private, for-profit corporations like The GEO Group, which operates the

Northwest Detention Center located in Tacoma, Washington. This bill will end the use of private facilities and repeal mandatory detention, while restoring due process, oversight, accountability, and transparency to the immigration detention system. It's critical that we reform our immigration system to focus on alternatives to detention that have been proven to work.

- As an original cosponsor of the Dream and Promise Act, which would provide a pathway to citizenship for DACA recipients and Temporary Protected Status (TPS) holders, I am committed to finally ending the uncertainty that so many DACA recipients, TPS holders, and other immigrants face in the current system. These immigrants are a part of our communities and deserve to have the opportunity to continue to live, work, and raise their families in the United States.
- I strongly support expanding the U.S. refugee admissions program, which was decimated by the Trump Administration. I've fought to increase funding for refugee resettlement and raise the floor for the number of refugees that come to the U.S. each year. These steps are critical to continuing to rebuild refugee resettlement here in the U.S. to meet the growing number of refugees globally.
- The current immigrant visa and naturalization system is simply insufficient. There are tens of thousands of people waiting for visas and work authorizations, lengthy delays in processing applications, and unnecessary restrictions that sometimes require individuals to leave the U.S and separate from their families. The system is not designed to succeed. We need reforms that will enhance legal immigration to make it more efficient and humane.

The immigration system in the United States is broken and needs to be reformed. Allowing immigrants to become productive members of our society will only strengthen our communities, our economy, and our country's future.

**5. Republicans are taking extraordinary action to limit voting. In addition to passing the John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act, what actions will you take to protect and restore the integrity of individual voting rights?**

Congress should be making it easier for people to exercise their right to vote. The wave of state laws restricting the right to vote in the name of election security flies in the face of our democracy. The people passing these laws are the same people who supported Trump's conspiracy to overturn a free and fair election. I am proud to have voted for the H.R. 4, the John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act in the House, a bill that strengthens the Department of Justice's ability to enforce the Voting Rights Act of 1965 and safeguard the right to vote without arbitrary barriers.

Unfortunately, this bill did not pass the Senate and has still not become federal law.

I am also a strong proponent of campaign finance reform. Corporations are not people, and should not be treated as such. We must overturn the disastrous Citizens United ruling. Particularly in the wake of the Citizens United ruling, I have been an advocate of working

towards the public funding of our elections and have personally chosen to not accept any money for my campaign from fossil fuel companies. Public funding of campaigns would allow for a much more just and equitable system for not only candidates, but more importantly, for the American people.

Not only do we need more accountability when it comes to finances and donors, but American elections would also benefit from requiring that all ads, including those aired online, are properly regulated and defined.

We must stop major lobbies and corporations from having gross amounts of power in our election system. I am proud to have co-sponsored constitutional amendments to overturn Citizens United.

**6. Under the current administration, there is economic uncertainty and many citizens are struggling to get ahead. What will you do to support a tax structure that grows both the economy and the middle class?**

I voted against the Republican budget, and I am adamantly opposed to what Republicans are trying to do to working families in this country.

We need a budget that strengthens the working class and the middle class. We need a budget that helps American families access affordable healthcare, improves kids' access to nutritious meals at school, and sets American workers up for success. Instead, Republicans have offered a budget that rips away healthcare access, raises costs on groceries for Washington families, and jeopardizes education for many Americans.

The numbers are stark. In Washington's 9th District alone, 204,721 people on Medicaid are at risk of losing their healthcare, including nearly 92,000 children and 17,000 seniors. The 29,000 people in WA-09 who rely on the ACA would see their average premiums go up by \$1,620 a year. For a 60-year-old couple making \$85,000, premiums could soar by nearly \$17,000 a year, a 234% increase. And 95,000 people in WA-09 who rely on SNAP to put food on the table would be put at risk.

Even worse, Republicans are cutting these programs for low-income and middle-income Americans to increase tax breaks for billionaires. The top 0.1% of earners, those making more than \$4 million a year, would receive an average tax cut of nearly \$390,000 in 2026 alone. Meanwhile, the lowest-income families could see their taxes go up or their benefits cut. That is unfair and deeply unsustainable.

And despite all of these harmful cuts to essential services, the bill still increases the deficit by trillions of dollars over the next decade. This is not a serious or responsible budget. No family in America should lose their healthcare coverage or have a child go hungry to pad the pockets of the rich.

I believe we need a budget that protects essential services, invests in opportunity, and restores fiscal integrity. I have supported an increase in the corporate tax rate, defending and expanding clean energy tax credits under the IRA, investing in modernization efforts of the IRS, supporting the expansion of the Child Tax Credit, and reforming the SALT deduction cap. I will continue to ask corporations and the wealthiest to contribute their fair share while protecting middle-class taxpayers and investing in national security, economic competitiveness, and long-term deficit stability.

**7. Access to healthcare — from Medicaid to reproductive treatments to veteran’s benefits — is being curtailed or eliminated. What will you do to ensure Washington residents have access to quality care, and protect that access from future assaults?**

Access to quality, affordable healthcare is something I have fought for throughout my entire time in Congress. I strongly opposed Republican efforts to repeal the Affordable Care Act. The ACA is not perfect, but it is one of the most important steps taken in many years to reform healthcare and health insurance. Repealing it would take us back to a time where millions of Americans were uninsured, costs increased unchecked, and people with pre-existing conditions could not access affordable coverage.

Right now, 15 million Americans are at risk of losing their healthcare entirely, and 22 million have seen their premiums double or triple with the expiration of ACA tax credits. When costs are already up, that puts undue strain on working families. I will do everything in my power as a Member of Congress to protect our most vulnerable citizens and access to affordable, quality healthcare coverage.

On Medicaid specifically, the Republican plan eliminates the ACA's Medicaid expansion, which has extended coverage to over 59,000 constituents right here in Washington's 9th District. I will fight to protect that.

I am proud to cosponsor the Medicare for All Act, which recognizes healthcare as a basic human right and would provide all Americans access to primary care, prescription drugs, emergency care, mental health services, dental, vision, and long-term care.

On prescription drugs, I support changes that lower costs by incentivizing more competition in the market and better regulating drug companies rather than passing costs onto working Americans. I will continue working to keep necessary medical treatments within reach for everyone who needs them.

On women's health, personal health decisions should be left between women, their doctor, and their family, not the United States Congress. I will continue to support and advocate for policies that protect women's right to choose and improve access to family planning services.

I also strongly support Community Health Centers, which provide quality, affordable care to low-income and medically underserved Washingtonians and generate roughly \$24 billion in annual savings to the healthcare system nationwide.

The bottom line is this: we simply cannot revert to an old healthcare system that allows costs to increase unchecked, covers too few, and drains our economy while providing us too little in return.

**8. If Democrats are successful in retaking the House, what are your top three policy priorities for the first 100 days?**

If Democrats retake the House, my top priorities in the first 100 days will focus on lowering costs and improving economic security for working families. First, I will prioritize expanding housing supply and affordability by advancing legislation that incentivizes new construction, reduces barriers to building, and strengthens federal support for first-time homebuyers and renters. Second, I will work to lower health care costs by protecting and strengthening the Affordable Care Act, expanding the enhanced ACA premium tax credits to keep coverage affordable, and continuing efforts to reduce prescription drug prices. Third, I will support policies that address income inequality by raising wages, strengthening tax fairness, and investing in economic opportunity so that hardworking families can keep more of what they earn and build long-term financial stability.

At the same time, national security concerns are always top of mind. That is especially true today as President Trump has taken unprecedented military actions across the globe. Congress must exercise rigorous oversight and ensure that any use of military force is lawful, strategically sound, and consistent with our constitutional system in which Congress serves as a coequal branch with a central role in matters of war and national security.

**9. Artificial Intelligence (AI) is beginning to transform how we work and access information in our country. What federal policies would you support to govern AI in the United States?**

Artificial intelligence is advancing at an extraordinary pace, and federal policy must keep up to ensure the technology benefits the public while minimizing harm. I support a comprehensive approach that promotes innovation while establishing clear guardrails for safety, transparency, and accountability. That includes setting national standards for how AI systems are developed and deployed, protecting Americans' personal data, and ensuring that large technology companies cannot operate without meaningful oversight. Strong consumer protections and transparency requirements are essential so people understand when and how AI is being used in decisions that affect their lives.

We must also address the broader economic and infrastructure impacts of AI. The rapid expansion of data centers powering these systems is placing growing demands on our energy grid, which can drive up electricity costs for individuals and families. Federal policy should

ensure that the energy needs of this industry do not shift costs onto consumers and that new infrastructure investments prioritize efficiency, grid reliability, and affordable energy.

Finally, Congress must prepare for the ways AI could reshape the workforce. The technology has the potential to increase productivity, but it could also displace workers across multiple industries and job types. I support policies that invest in workforce training, reskilling, and education so workers can adapt to a changing economy, as well as safeguards that ensure AI is used to complement workers rather than simply replace them. Thoughtful legislation is necessary now to ensure AI strengthens our economy while protecting workers, consumers, and the public interest.