

2026 King County Democrats Questionnaire

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

Elected in 2016, Congresswoman Pramila Jayapal is now serving her fifth term in Congress representing Washington's 7th District, which encompasses most of Seattle and its surrounding areas, including Shoreline, Vashon Island, Lake Forest Park, and parts of Burien and Normandy Park. She is the first South Asian American woman elected to the U.S. House of Representatives and one of only two dozen naturalized citizens currently serving in the United States Congress.

Congresswoman Jayapal is a member of the House Judiciary Committee, where she serves as Ranking Member of the Subcommittee on Immigration Integrity, Security, and Enforcement. She also serves on the House Foreign Affairs Committee, where she serves on the Subcommittee on Africa and the Subcommittee on South and Central Asia. Additionally, she serves on the House Budget Committee. She is a Chair Emerita of the Congressional Progressive Caucus, which represents nearly 50% of the entire Democratic caucus; the Chair of the Immigration Task Force for the Congressional Asian Pacific Asian Caucus; and a Vice Chair of the Congressional LGBTQ Equality Caucus where she is the co-chair of the Transgender Equality Task Force.

In Congress, Representative Jayapal has been a leader on immigration, including fighting the Trump Administration's inhumane policies of separating children from their parents and crafting legislation to create a fair and humane immigration system. She has also championed legislation to address income inequality, such as the \$15 minimum wage and expanded collective bargaining rights for workers. She has worked extensively on health care issues as the lead sponsor of the Medicare for All bill in the House, and she is the author of the College for All Act, which would ensure every American has access to higher education. She has authored other landmark pieces of progressive legislation including the Ultra-Millionaire Tax Act, Dignity for Detained Immigrants Act, the Housing is a Human Right Act, and the National Domestic Workers Bill of Rights. She has also helped to introduce the THRIVE Act and other legislation to transition our economy to 100% clean energy and address the crisis of climate justice.

Prior to serving in elected office, Congresswoman Jayapal spent twenty years working internationally and domestically in global public health and development and as an award-winning national advocate for women's, immigrant, civil, and human rights. She spent almost a decade working on global health and development for the international

nonprofit organization, Program for Appropriate Technology in Health (PATH), and spent 12 years as the founder and Executive Director of OneAmerica, the largest immigrant advocacy organization in Washington State and one of the largest in the country.

Representative Jayapal was born in India, grew up in India, Indonesia and Singapore, and came to the United States by herself at the age of 16 to attend college at Georgetown University. She later received her MBA from Northwestern University, worked in a number of industries in both the public and private sectors, and published her first book in 2000, *Pilgrimage to India: A Woman Revisits Her Homeland*. She has since published a second book, *Use the Power You Have: A Brown Woman's Guide to Politics and Political Change*.

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

I'm running for reelection because I believe government should work for working people, not corporations and the ultra-wealthy. As an immigrant, an organizer, and a member of Congress, I bring lived experience, policy expertise, and a deep commitment to justice.

I've consistently paired bold vision with the ability to build coalitions and deliver results. Whether advancing Medicare for All, leading the fight for economic justice, or holding the Trump administration accountable on immigration and human rights, I will continue to fight for working people in my district and across the country.

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, I will support strengthening congressional oversight, including robust investigations and enforcement of subpoenas; reasserting Congress's constitutional authority over war powers and emergency declarations; reforming ethics and anti-corruption rules to prevent executive overreach; and ending the abuse of executive authority to bypass Congress. Congress must reclaim its Article I powers and serve as a true check on the executive branch, regardless of which party holds the presidency.

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

I will continue to advocate for a clear pathway to citizenship for undocumented immigrants, including Dreamers and TPS holders. And, I will focus on humane and just

policies like the ones outlined in my Dignity for Detained Immigrants bill, which is a comprehensive bill aimed at reforming the U.S. immigration detention system by prioritizing humanitarian standards, ending mandatory detention, and eliminating for-profit detention facilities. As an immigrant and former organizer, I believe our immigration system must reflect our values of fairness, dignity, and opportunity.

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?

In addition to passing the John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act, I support expanding vote-by-mail access, stronger protections against partisan gerrymandering, campaign finance reform, and federal protections against voter intimidation and election interference. Protecting democracy requires both expanding access and limiting the influence of big money in politics.

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?

As millions of families are struggling under the weight of inflation, tariffs, and rising gas prices, the richest billionaires continue to see their net worth grow. We live in the richest country in the world, but that wealth is incredibly concentrated in a tiny group of people.

I will continue fighting for raising wages, workers' rights, and a more progressive tax code that ensures the wealthy and corporations pay their fair share.

This includes passing my Ultra-Millionaire Tax Act, which would be a major step toward making sure the wealthy finally pay their fair share. With this legislation, we could narrow the racial wealth gap and invest trillions of dollars in health care, schools, clean energy, housing, and more to improve lives in communities across America.

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?

I remain a strong advocate for Medicare for All, which I plan to re-introduce again next Congress, because healthcare is a human right. I will also continue to fight to protect and expand Medicaid and the Affordable Care Act, safeguard reproductive healthcare access nationwide, lower prescription drug prices, expand mental health services and

veterans' healthcare access, and defend federal healthcare programs from privatization and funding cuts.

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 three priorities would be:

Economic Justice: lowering costs for families by expanding tax credits, reducing prescription drug prices, advancing Medicare for All to guarantee health care as a human right, raising wages, and tackling the housing affordability crisis so working people can get ahead.

Immigration Reform: advancing humane, comprehensive immigration reform that protects Dreamers, provides a pathway to citizenship, and ensures a just system.

Protecting Democracy: passing critical voting rights protections, strengthening election integrity, and enacting anti-corruption reforms to ensure our government truly represents the people.

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?

I am proud to have co-introduced the AI Civil Rights Bill, which would prevent companies from using biased and discriminatory AI-powered algorithms to help make critical decisions in Americans' lives, ensure algorithms are tested before and after deployment, and increase transparency of complex algorithms used for critical decisions.

Artificial intelligence has become a part of our everyday lives and grown into a projected \$244 billion industry. A major risk of this new technology is the biases and discrimination that are built into algorithms – denying people housing or jobs based on race or gender. Our bill would place critical guardrails to ensure that the technologies of the future do not harden the injustices of the past.