

Candidate Questionnaire – 2018

Why are you running for office?

I decided to run for office because I believe government can be smaller, more efficient, effective, and cooperative. I believe we owe it to our children to do more with our limited resources and embrace new methods and technologies to prepare them for the 21st century.

What do you view as the top issue(s) for your district?

The top issues are education and transportation, but taxpayers are growing increasingly frustrated with how their money is spent. They demand a culture of fiscal responsibility and performance accountability in Olympia. As an outspoken proponent of both education reform and fiscal responsibility, I know we can do better than the status quo. Frankly, we must do so. There is no place left in the state budget for waste or inefficiency.

What, in your view, is the role of the legislature?

Although the legislature is known primarily as our lawmaking body, it is also an intrinsic link to the citizens of the state—it's representation. In a representative democracy the legislature acts as the eyes, ears, and voice of the people. The legislative process also represents our system of collective decision making, a public process of deliberation that helps educate the public on important policy issues.

As part of the endorsement process, AWB will require a background check for all new candidates. Are you willing to participate in a background check?

Yes, and this has already been done through [Candidate Verification](#) as part of the candidate evaluation process for the Municipal League of King County. I've posted my latest [background check](#) and [resume verification](#).

Transportation:

In 2015, the legislature adopted a 16-year, \$16 billion statewide transportation funding and reform package. Given the ongoing shift to more efficient alternative fuels, this might be the

last gas tax increase in Washington state. How do you see Washington paying for infrastructure in the future?

The gas tax will likely remain the primary revenue source for transportation projects for some time, given its extremely low administrative overhead (<1%) and relative invisibility to taxpayers (since it's paid by fuel wholesalers, not added at the pump). Promoting the use of more fuel-efficient vehicles will also remain in the state's best interest until internal combustion engines are no longer mainstream, as the transportation sector represents the vast majority of greenhouse gas and toxic emissions in our state. As electric and alternative fuel vehicles gain popularity, however, we should use those markets to pilot new types of road usage fees, such as Vehicle Miles Travelled (VMT).

Environment:

Is Washington doing enough today about managing its share of greenhouse gas emissions, or do we need to do more? If we are doing enough on climate, what other environmental priorities would you have? If you believe we need to do more, what would you support as appropriate steps to reducing greenhouse gas emissions?

According to the [U.S. Energy Information Administration](#), the latest energy profile (Jan 2018) for Washington state shows that 95% of our power production is zero emissions sourced. I was also the Republican co-sponsor of the bill that started the decommissioning process for the older two of four coal-fired electric power plant units that Puget Sound Energy operates in Colstrip, Montana. With this significant reduction in our coal-by-wire program, I believe that Washington is now leading the nation on reduction of greenhouse emissions without the need for new carbon taxes.

Where I would continue to invest is in the transportation sector, where we can leverage the fact that we have both the greenest and cheapest electricity in the nation. In 2015 my bill (HB 1853) allowed regulated utilities to expand infrastructure investments for electric vehicles, and I believe it would be appropriate to expand this new program to municipal utilities (e.g. Seattle City Light) and PUDs.

Health Care:

Washington faces challenges to making quality health care more affordable, more accessible, and more reliable for its residents. Washington businesses are focused on promoting effective private sector solutions to our health care challenges that will help control costs, expand access, and improve the quality of care. What steps should be taken to improve Washington's health care system?

I did not support Obamacare or its Medicaid expansion, and don't support further expansions or a shift to a single-payer health care system. I believe that consumers should be in charge of their health care decisions and that they need access to a wide variety of providers and insurers so that they can select the best fit for their needs and means.

To improve Washington's health care system, I would support legislation that promotes consumer-driven health care (CDHC) plans. These allow members to use health savings accounts (HSAs), Health Reimbursement Accounts (HRAs), or similar medical payment products to pay routine healthcare expenses directly, but a high-deductible health plan (HDHP) protects them from catastrophic medical expenses.

Medicaid programs can then be focused on providing a "last resort" HDHP, for those who are unemployed and without the means to purchase health coverage on their own.

Labor & Employment

Local jurisdictions have passed ordinances that modify state labor laws creating a patchwork of regulations for employers who do business in Washington. Some local jurisdictions have introduced regulations that would restrict the ability of employers to work with their employees regarding a flexible work schedule. Do you support legislation that would restrict an employer from working with an employee to provide flexibility in their work schedule? Should local governments be allowed to set different labor regulations for employers than those set at the state level?

I opposed the Seattle Secure Scheduling Ordinance and would support state preemption language to ensure local governments discontinue this practice.

Education & Workforce Training:

The state's education system, early learning, K-12, and post-secondary, is the base by which our state's workforce is developed and it is important that business be part of the education conversation. Having invested \$4.6 billion in the state's K-12 system in the last four years and an additional \$8.4 billion through 2021, lawmakers in 2018 added another \$1 billion and additional investments in early learning and post-secondary education, the conversation has been focused on K-12 funding. Do you believe this is the totality of the discussion? If not, what else should be part of the discussion? How are we currently spending the money being dedicated to K-12 education and what role should Career and Technical Education (CTE) play? How would you suggest the state's education systems, early learning, K-12 and post-secondary work together to ensure the next generation of workforce is prepared, aware of their opportunities, and well-trained?

I was one of the lead negotiators for the McCleary remedy, which increased state funding for K-12 education by 105% over 8 years while reducing net school levy rates for 44% of districts. This week the Supreme Court unanimously validated our work by concluding that the State has complied with the court's orders to fully implement its statutory program of basic education.

While it's nice to take a well-earned victory lap, the truth is that there's still much left to do. Money alone will not solve our problems with public education, and it's up to us to ensure that this once-in-a-generation influx of new funding is put to good use by school districts in ways that will best improve student outcomes. We need to address federal shortfalls in special education funding and adjust the prototypical school model to provide more nurses and counsellors so that we can address growing problems with bullying and teen suicide. Most importantly, we need to ensure that students are graduating with the skills needed to complete in a 21st century workforce, and not just graduating with burdensome college debt.

CTE programs offer some of the most competitive starting salaries in the state, and the workforce demand far exceeds the supply. Consequently, you'll see a new focus on CTE from my caucus as part of the state's program of basic education, making appropriate investments to meet the market needs and to ensure that hands-on learners choosing not to attend college know that they still have many opportunities to gain valuable skills and credentials while in high school.

In an effort to help students become more aware of their opportunities, I prime sponsored legislation in 2014 that created the [Earnings for Graduates Dashboard](#). The Seattle Times was just [highlighting this resource last December](#) and quoted me several times in the article, calling attention to some of the amazing opportunities available through apprentice and certificate programs.

Tax & Fiscal:

Do you think the State is collecting adequate revenue to fund essential government services? What role does Washington state's tax policies, including major structural tax incentives for key industries, play in sustaining a competitive business climate in Washington? Washington State's general fund relies on three major categories of tax revenue: sales tax, property tax, and business and occupation tax. Do you think our tax structure needs fundamental reform, and if so, should that reform include new major categories of taxation like a capital gains or income tax?

Most businesses currently pay more than their fair share of taxes, especially when compared to similar states. According to Forbes Magazine, Washington state has one of the highest startup business failure rates in the nation and I believe this is due in large part to our outdated and complex B&O tax. I would support reforms to the B&O tax statute to allow more flexibility for businesses along the lines of what Rep. MacEwen introduced with HB 2150 in 2015. However, given the experience he had working with the AWB on that bill, it may be quite some time before anyone else has the courage to take point on this issue.

I do NOT support efforts to introduce new major categories of taxation like a capital gains tax or an income tax. These are unnecessary, unconstitutional, highly volatile, and unpopular. Any efforts by the legislature to enact these new types of taxes would be challenged in the courts and via ballot measure, but damage to our state's reputation as a business-friendly state would be immediate and far-reaching.

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District: 5

Office: State Representative, Position 1

Signature: 