

King County Democrats 2023 Endorsement Questionnaire

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Candidate pronouns

they/them

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Link to candidate headshot

https://images.squarespace-cdn.com/content/v1/63f00c891f657e166ef32a1a/f89aed91-a173-4478-ac6c-9ea461eeaddf/20230228_213405.jpg?format=1500w

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What type of position are you running for?

City - Seattle

What position are you running for?

Seattle City Council

Are you a Democrat?

Yes

Have you ever been a member of another political party?

No

Have you ever been found in violation of a Public Disclosure Commission, Federal Election Commission, or Seattle Ethics and Elections Commission regulation?

No

Do you have a code of conduct for campaign staff and volunteers?

No

If you have campaign staff, do you support them joining a labor union?

Yes

Do you support employees of your jurisdiction (e.g. your city's employees, the Port's employees, etc.) exercising their collective bargaining rights without fear of retaliation, including the right to bargain and strike for better working conditions and pay?

Yes

Are you willing to have yourself, your staff, and your peers undergo training to understand and combat institutional racism, implicit bias, and sexual harassment?

Yes

Will your campaign accept contributions from corporate fossil fuel PACs?

No

Will your campaign accept contributions from corporate pharmaceutical PACs or corporate health insurance PACs?

No

Will your campaign accept contributions from corporate building industry PACs, including the Building Industry Association of Washington (BIAW) and the National Association of Home Builders?

No

Will your campaign accept contributions from law enforcement or sheriffs' organizations?

No

Will you return contributions from companies or PACs who are aligned with the organizations listed above and others that conflict with Democratic Party values?

Yes

Have you made any donations to Republican candidates or Republican Party organizations in the last 5 years?

No

Have you previously participated, or will you be participating, in a candidate training program like Institute for a Democratic Future or Emerge?

Yes

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

I attended Seattle University and received a Bachelor of Science in Psychology, with an Honors focus on Existential Phenomenology and Social Psychology. I also have three masters degrees, one in Nonprofit leadership, one in Mental Health Counseling and Addiction, and my last one on Public Administration targeted on equitable governance. I was a member of SEIU 1199 Northwest at ESC and Harborview. I worked as a Clinical Support Specialist in the Downtown Emergency Services Center, and as a Housing Navigator in Harborview Medical Center. I also am the Executive Director

and Founder of the Elizabeth Institute for Black Empowerment, and worked as a Social Equity Consultant in DiverseCity LLC. Currently, I am the CEO and Founder of Epiphanies for Equity, a consulting firm specializing in equity change management, policy analysis, and strategic planning. I was a Board and Equity Council Member in the Washington Low Income Alliance and Chair to the Housing Committee in the Seattle Disabilities Commission.

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

I was motivated to run for this position because I felt that a voice that brings an intersectional lens and represents regular people should be present in the Seattle City Council. As someone who experienced the failures of our systems, I believe that I am the best equipped to tackle the issues head-on, because they are deeply personal to me. Being a social worker, as well as being involved in different equity, pro-affordable housing organizations, made me realize that the systems we currently have in place are ones that perpetuate injustice, not alleviate it. I would consider myself successful when I see that I am pushing and enacting legislation that will improve the quality of life of people in Seattle. When marginalized voices are represented in all of our policies in the city, and when the community is an active participant in policy-making.

What are the top three issues of urgency that you will address if elected?

The top three issues in my platform are affordable housing, addressing the homeless crisis, and addressing community safety concerns. I plan to push for policies that will make housing more affordable to all, including minimum wage workers. Housing is a human right, and I believe that it is egregious that we exist in a city rife with wealth and opportunities while having one of the biggest homeless populations in the country. I will advocate for encampment support and increased funding for social and mental health services, as folks are transitioning into stable housing. As for community safety, I plan to prioritize investing in community policing, mental health crisis response teams, restorative justice initiatives, and other alternatives to traditional policing. Overall, I will approach those three issues and other issues in our city with an intersectional lens that includes the experiences of those who are the most vulnerable in our community.

How will you involve all residents and engage all communities in the decision-making process?

I plan to work across intersections, in an ongoing process with continuous engagement and collaboration. I will have regular office hours where constituents can come in and speak to me about their concerns. I will also seek out feedback and input from the community by holding public forums or town halls, and work with community leaders and organizations to identify the most pressing issues and the best strategies for addressing them.

How have you promoted an enduring environment of inclusivity, diversity, and equity?

I own and run my business called Epiphanies of Equity, LLC, which is a social equity and consulting firm. Our goal is advocating for disability justice, antiracism, and reconstructing systems for equity and justice. We work with nonprofits, businesses, and governments to facilitate equity trainings and strategically plan actions for equity. We also aim to help organizations disrupt inequity from the inside out, and establish lifelong strategies and structures that will propel the achievement of equity and inclusion in workplaces and our community. I also previously worked as the co-chair for the Seattle Disabilities commission, and currently serve as a member of the King County Board for Developmental Disabilities Legislative Council. I featured on learning series by Diverse LLC, to educate on the importance of diversity, equality and inclusion

If elected, how will you address inequalities experienced among BIPOC, LGBTQIA+, or other marginalized communities and advance an agenda of equality?

Being an indigenous, Black, queer, disabled person, I understand the inequalities experienced in my communities on a personal level, and have spent my life addressing them and organizing to fight against them. I plan to center marginalized voices in my office and advocate for issues that have a multiplied effect on disadvantaged peoples. I have a long track record of centering BIPOC, LGBTQIA+, disabled, and other underprivileged communities, and will bring that experience everyday when I am elected to develop policy that best serves those communities.

Will you commit to change zoning, permitting, and other obstacles in your city to increase housing availability for mid and lower income levels?

Yes

Will you commit to an increased percent of funding towards community and behavioral health services?

Yes

Will you actively support increased non-auto dependent transportation?

Yes

Do you support alternatives to the forced removal of unhoused people?

Yes

Do you support regulations to restrict police practices historically applied unfairly or abusively?

Yes

Do you support offering broadband internet access as a public utility?

Yes

Will you support allocating public safety budget dollars to the LEAD and CoLEAD programs of community-based intervention and diversion?

Yes

All municipalities are facing housing issues in their region. What changes will you make and how will you fund those changes?

I will advocate for increased funding for affordable housing programs and utilizing inclusionary zoning policies to incentivize developers to build more affordable housing units in their new projects. I also will implement a vacancy tax to ensure that housing prices are not artificially rising, and use that income for affordable housing programs. I will push for investing in preserving current affordable housing units through renovation or rehabilitation programs. All of those changes can be funded through progressive revenue sources.

All municipalities are facing behavioral health issues in their region. How is your community specifically affected, what changes will you make, and how will you fund them?

First, we cannot lose sight of the fact that people navigating behavioral health flares are our neighbors and have full, holistic lives beyond what they perceive. There is an implicit bias -- the othering of our neighbors due to our own assumptions and stereotypes -- that has become pervasive throughout our community and in our policy towards people with behavioral issues. We must amplify the voices of those most impacted in our assessment, policymaking, and accountability for progress. Second, we must address the root cause of behavioral and mental health flares and provide people with real support outside of therapy and mental health resources. Increased mental health and behavioral health services must practice disability justice and address both why the person is having a flare and what is needed for resolution, and what does the person need proactively to address basic survival needs and have the space they need to continue to heal. Everyone in our community needs access to holistic, intersectional, just, and person-centered support and care for behavioral and mental health. We do this by broadening our scope and dismantling our social biases so we can find multidimensional solutions and embrace the beautiful complexity of our neighbors and community.

Ongoing inequity is an issue in King County. Other than housing, what are your immediate plans for addressing this injustice?

I plan to address the issues of over policing, access to transportation, and environmental racism, among many others. I will push for the expansion of our transit system, and ensure that it is accessible to all, especially those living with disabilities. I will advocate for more green spaces and less noise pollution in low-income, and BIPOC-majority areas, in my district and in the rest of the city. I will also emphasize community and indigenous-led solutions and voices when it comes to combating any of the issues discussed.

Many cities have claimed a commitment to reducing carbon emissions. What specific actions will you take to ensure that your city drastically lowers net carbon emissions by 2030 and achieves carbon neutrality by 2050?

Our city needs to have a progressive carbon tax on corporations, as well as the expansion of accessible transit with extended hours that anyone can use including disabled people. Expanding bike lanes, creating walkable neighborhoods, and making our transit system more efficient is important. I will also advocate for reforestation especially of indigenous trees and plants around the area and restoring the ecosystems that were destroyed by the city. I believe that we need to hold corporations accountable for their excessive use of packaging and invest in our ability to compost and recycle.

Will you support allocating ongoing operational and future capital funding, as well as prioritizing public lands to ensure the Seattle Social Housing Developer (as enacted by I-135) is successful?

Yes

Will you support re-funding JustCARE or a similar program to provide community-based public safety resources?

Yes

Do you support safe consumption sites in every city council district?

Yes

Will you introduce or support legislation to fund affordable childcare facilities, with workers paid a living wage?

Yes

Will you support moving Seattle elections to even years to increase voter turnout?

Yes

What specific legislation would you introduce to reform the Seattle Police Department?

Community safety is of utmost concern to me, and I will advocate for community policing, and will push for the reinvestment of police dollars into upstream services that have downstream impacts. I believe that the Seattle Police is doing work that is outside of their scope, meaning that there needs to be mental health resources, rehabilitation programs, and other community-based violence prevention programs. Engaging community members in the development and implementation of public safety strategies and ensuring that their voices are heard when it comes to the safety of their communities. There needs to be a distinction between what is a task that requires police intervention and what should be a community service, and the budget would be cut accordingly. I also believe that a consent decree is necessary to maintain accountability for the police.

What are your policy priorities to ensure that Seattle residents are able to earn living wages?

I would like to revisit minimum wage policies and start a conversation on wage disparity especially with disabled individuals and others with intersectional identities. I believe everyone has the right to a safe working environment, a living wage, and a life-work balance. I believe that our wages and labor standards and protections need to match the importance of workers and their rights. I will push for an increased minimum wage so that it can match with the cost of living and ensure that Seattleites are able to survive even while working a minimum wage job. I also will advocate for strengthening collective bargaining rights, increasing unionization, and other labor protections

Do you support the taxes recommended in the 2018 Report of the Progressive Revenue Task Force? Please share your thoughts.

Yes. I wholeheartedly support a Progressive Tax in our city, especially one to help resolve the homelessness crisis. We have a regressive taxing system in our state which does nothing but further perpetuate income inequality and I believe that having that increased revenue from a progressive tax will greatly support the in alleviating the issues I prioritize in my campaign.

Will you support a Comprehensive Plan that includes upzones that allow for multifamily housing, light industrial, and commercial uses in all residential areas, as well as allowing for high rises near all light rail stations, as described in the proposed Alternative 6 plan?

Yes.

CERTIFICATION: I hereby certify that, to the best of my knowledge, the provided information is true and accurate.

Yes

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