

# King County Democrats 2023 Endorsement Questionnaire

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**Candidate name**

Jesse Tam

**Candidate pronouns**

Jesse Tam

**Candidate name pronunciation**

Jesse Tam

**Campaign Filer\_Name**

Elect Jesse Tam (PDC: Jesse Tam)

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**Campaign Facebook page**

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**LinkedIn**

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**Link to candidate headshot**

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/10O\\_TbNVr4YGVKt99IM2Mur4CwHcR\\_e1z/view?usp=share\\_link](https://drive.google.com/file/d/10O_TbNVr4YGVKt99IM2Mur4CwHcR_e1z/view?usp=share_link)

**Campaign manager name**

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Dean Nielsen

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**What type of position are you running for?**

Port

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Port of Seattle

**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?**

Yes

**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?**

Yes

**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).**

Boise State University BA in Marketing, City University MBA in Finance, University of Washington Pacific Coast Banking School.

I worked in the banking industry for 33 years- from the mailroom to boardroom. I retired as the bank's board chair and CEO in 2009 after the global financial crisis.

Consultant for trade, logistics, and real estate investment for 10+ years.

38 years active in Rotary International, served as Club Past President and Past District Governor and soon to be Foundation Chair.

32 years served as a volunteer mentor for Seattle University Albers Business School for both undergrad and grad programs.

40 years active member, past president and current board member for Greater Seattle Chinese Chamber of Commerce. Past president of Seattle CID Preservation and Development Authority.

Member of Transportation Club, Hong Kong Business Association, National Advisore for International Leadership Foundation, Newcastle Chamber of Commerce, Boise State University Foundation Board, United Way Loaned Executive and more.

Politically and publicly, I have been an active member of 41st LD, served as past treasurer and current PCO, and Newcastle Park Commissioner. Candidate for Newcastle City Council.

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

After 4 decades of banking, financial business and trade consulting management, I believe my experience is an asset to the Port. Lately, Port has lost its operational focus and is no longer a smooth running public entity. The Port is responsible for some of the largest capital development projects in our region, but it has had some mishaps in its operational and financial management in the past 10 years. The capital improvement projects, such as the new airport terminal, have had large cost overruns and design issues- the new international terminal isn't designed properly to meet the new jets. It's time for a change.

The Port is a major economic player in our region's economy – one in three jobs in King County is trade dependent. We cannot make progress to keep our economy moving, to improve the environment, increase family wage jobs and to create a fair and equitable economy while throwing our money away. I have the background to deliver the proper oversight and to set operating policy to keep up with regional growth.

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

I have four top issues of urgency:

- 1) Economic Redevelopment – the Port is our major economic engine in Washington State. With the current economy, I will work to increase trade in Seattle and with other trading partners to create more jobs and business opportunities for our residents.
- 2) Fiscal Responsibility – Right now, the residents of King County are paying the price of poor money management. As a Port Commissioner, I'll improve the Port's fiscal management and operations by implanting tough oversight of every dollar. Uncontrollable cost overrun on capital improvement projects should not be a normal or acceptable practice.
- 3) Transparency – I believe the port is a public entity with a duty to listen to its residents. Information and issues should be fully disclosed in a timely manner – not years later like the current commission has.
- 4) Social Accountability – the Port is obligated to protect our environment. I'll work with – not against – our local communities to minimize the impacts of the Port's operations. Getting our fiscal health in order will mean we have more money to support economic development, tourism, educational programs for local schools, job training and environmental initiatives to protect our beautiful Puget Sound for generations to come.

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

I have spent a lot of my personal time in the past 40+ years getting involved with many local and international trade, business and non-profit organizations. If I am elected to be a port commissioner, I plan to have local townhall meetings on the quarterly basis throughout King County to meet with constituents and local residents to discuss issues that they might have, so all parties are informed and have understanding of today's issues.

I am committed to working closely with the other port commissioners and senior management team of the ports to ensure that we take into consideration every angle of an issue and understanding of potential outcomes and consequences of any decision. Open communication with all stakeholder is the key to solve all issues.

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

As an immigrant and Asian American living and working in this country, I have many personal experiences and direct understanding of inclusivity, diversity, and equity. Because of that, I am sensitive to those issues. As a former bank CEO, I set a clear HR policy for hiring with diversity. Diversity is our strength. All wages and promotions were handled with equity. Fairness builds long term loyalty.

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

We should always treat everyone the same with equality. Marginalized communities including BIPOC and LGBTQIA+ communities in the US are experiencing hardships, and the attacks are increasing at alarming rates - whether that is violence in communities or attacks from different governmental bodies.

Policy of equity should be approved in the highest level of port management and published openly to all levels of employment.

An external department should be set up to handle complaints or incidents surrounding the issues, so the port can respond to those issues responsibly, without repercussions.

**Should the Port promote dockside/rail connection to minimize truck traffic congestion and diesel emissions?**

Yes

**Should the Port make "Cold Iron" electrical power required of shippers, including cruise ships, to minimize diesel generator exhaust air pollution?**

Yes

**Do you support allowing coal or oil to be exported from Washington State's ports?**

No

**Do you support the collective bargaining efforts of SeaTac Airport workers for better pay and better working conditions?**

Yes

**Will you be an advocate for alternative methods of transportation including electric rail and high speed, electric, interstate rail?**

Yes

**As the Port recovers from the economic impact of the pandemic, how will you use your position to ensure that future growth and activity among tenant operations minimize climate impact and practice environmental stewardship?**

As we are in the economic recovery stage after the pandemic, we need to find ways for future economic growth, while also paying special attention to environmental impacts. We need to strike a balance. 1) Minimizing use of fossil fuels, while also building up the infrastructure and workforce to transit our economy. Our current trucks and trains are still heavily powered by fossil fuels. EV charging capacity and technology needs to improve along the way to cut cost and time.

2) Set a mandate for electricity use and availability of charging station with technology be available sufficiently to supply power for all the trucks and equipment. Truckers cannot afford to have long charging downtime. 3) Look for a sustainable and renewable source of green power. I believe in PPP projects to bring in more resources and knowhow for development and construction of other green power options. Protecting the environment is a critical part of the Port's every day operations. We need to conserve energy and provide green energy.

**How will you use your position to elevate Indigenous people and encourage more equity and opportunity for BIPOC Communities? Please offer specific examples of your plans.**

We should encourage BIPOC hiring and set a mandate to elevate BIPOC people. Certain jobs or contracts should be allocated to BIPOC within the Port's workforce. Provide training, apprenticeship and grants for such hiring and This is a vitally important issue, and another example of where the Port is failing and not meeting its obligation to its constituents. The Port has been sued by South King County cities recently for environmental pollution which has affected lower income and communities of color. This is not acceptable and doesn't meet our commitments to environmental stewardship and supporting communities in the Port's jurisdiction. As a Port Commissioner, I would support the Port funding cleanup of the contaminated areas and further establishing monitoring of the contamination and health impacts. contracts, with equal pay and benefit.

**Airport activity affects the health and socio-economic circumstances of the many people living in nearby neighborhoods. How will you balance the future growth of SeaTac airport with the interests of the residents of airport-adjacent communities?**

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As a Port Commissioner, I would support the Port funding cleanup of the contaminated areas and further establishing monitoring of the contamination and health impacts on regular basis.

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

Yes

Created on: May 4th, 2023  
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