

Washington State Progressive Caucus Questionnaire

Explanatory Note: The Washington State Progressive Caucus supports candidates from, as Howard Dean once put it, “the Democratic wing of the party.” We are old fashioned enough to think that the New Deal and the Great Society were good ideas and modern enough to be up to speed on all the latest organizing methods and apps. If you have reservations about answering any of these questions, please explain why.

Candidate Name: Alida Skold

Position Sought: United States Congress – House of Representatives WA-08

Campaign Manager: To Be Announced

Consultant: Ken Christensen – Christensen & Associates Inc.; Bill Phillips, Sound Strategies

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Do you request the endorsement of the Progressive Caucus? - Yes

Labor

Do you support raising state and federal minimum wages? To what level?

Yes, I support raising the state and federal minimum wages to \$15 per hour and indexing that level to the rate of inflation.

What legislation would you support to make organizing unions easier?

I will advocate for legislation that strengthens the ability of unions to collectively bargain, demand a living wage, and provide for better working conditions.

Education

What is your opinion of high stakes testing? How would you change the way students and teachers are evaluated?

High stakes testing is hurting the academic achievement of our students and limiting the ability of our teachers to help those in need of assistance. If elected, I will work to change the way students and teachers are evaluated.

What is your opinion of charter schools?

If charter schools continue to exist, they must be mandated to meet the same standards that are required of public schools in terms of wages, safety, and public accountability.

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Environment

How would you promote development of alternative energy and prevent privatization of natural resources?

I am a strong advocate of developing alternative energy sources, modernizing infrastructure, and maintaining the beauty of our environment. Through the use of renewable resources such as wind, solar, and hydroelectric power, we begin to reduce the strain on the environment from power generation. With innovative and sustainable infrastructure technology like electromagnetically charged bus lanes, we can reduce the amount of carbon released into the atmosphere from transportation. By switching from a fossil fuel based economy, to an environmentally sustainable economy, we can protect the natural resources of our planet.

What are your plans for increasing investments in renewable forms of energy production? What types of renewable energy do you favor most?

My plans for increasing investments in renewable forms of energy include providing tax credits to companies that become and maintain carbon neutral, prioritizing utility contracts for renewable energy sources over fossil fuel extraction points/ generation plants, and investing in research and development of technologies to improve the efficiencies in the extraction of energy from photovoltaic panels and other sources.

Finance/Taxation

What would you do to facilitate implementation of public banking and monetary reform?

I would promote the benefits of establishing a public bank. It would not replace the private banking industry, but would provide a public option that would be a safety valve. Consumers would have more choices than ever along with valuable protections. Senator Hasegawa and I have met many times to discuss how to gain support from stakeholders.

How would you restructure the federal taxation system to address the growing

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problem of income inequality in America?

I would work to re-establish tax rates in effect prior to Ronald Reagan. I believe that alone would solve many of our nation's financial problems.

Health Care/Retirement

Explain your position (for or against) Medicare for All (aka single payer health care) in terms of the effect on local citizens, service providers, and government.

I favor single payer. Local citizens would see costs go down. Service providers would be assured of payment. Government wouldn't be running the system – which would still be privatized – but would be covering the cost of care. I would highlight nations such as Canada where this system works well, and start moving the conversation in Congress forward on the subject of universal coverage.

What policies do you oppose and what policies would you promote with respect to Social Security and Medicare?

I oppose cutting benefits and reducing COLA's. I oppose raising the retirement age. I favor reforms that will provide more benefits to more people. That's the best investment we could possibly make.

Security/Public Safety

How would you act to stop the militarization of local police forces and establish civilian oversight of law enforcement? – To stop the militarization of local police, I will support legislation that prohibits the sale of used military weapons and vehicles to police forces within jurisdictions under a certain population threshold. Any applicant for such hardware should have to demonstrate the need and agree to strict usage guidelines as a condition of the transfer.

How would you preserve national security while protecting American's right to privacy?

National Security is important. Privacy is important. Our system of going to court and getting a warrant prior to a search or surveillance worked well for over 200 years. I don't think it would compromise our safety to go back to that process. Let

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judges and courts be involved, not a special 'FISA' court with little public oversight.

General

Do you consider yourself a Democrat? Do you consider yourself a progressive? Why?

I am proud to be a progressive Democrat. I embrace new ideas that question the status quo. I engage with people from all walks of life, because I feel that they can offer unique perspectives on life. I strongly support minorities and disadvantaged families and believe that giving them the opportunity to improve their position is infinitely better than holding them back. I believe that we need to protect the world we live in by reducing our impact. Finally, I am a progressive democrat because I believe that standing together is the greatest strength we have as a party, strength so powerful that we can overcome any agenda that seeks to undermine our way of life.

What parts, if any, of the [Washington State Democratic Party Platform](#) (←click link to view) do you disagree with? Why?

I agree with the Washington State Democratic Party Platform with one exception. I agree that its important to address corporate power. However, it is also important to remain competitive in the global market by having access to financing through global banks.

I'm in favor of effective regulation that supports the ability of our largest employers to compete in the global market. If the Federal Reserve, which regulates the banks has determined breaking up the banks is the only way to address the integrity of the financial system I will support the regulation. However, Lehman Brothers was only 33% the size of our large banks when it began the financial crisis. Boeing can't get financing for projects like the Dreamliner from banks the size of community banks.

Breaking up the banks would be terrible for our ability to compete in the global market if our largest employers had to go to banks from other countries. The top 4 are Chinese banks. JPMorgan Chase is the only US bank in

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the top 10 banks of the world and is the 7th largest. The next US bank is 14th and 15th on the list. Foreign banks won't have the same degree of loyalty and may not provide favorable terms to US companies.

If this is not your first election, what other offices have you run for? If it is your first campaign, what other campaigns (candidate or issue) have you participated in? What did you learn from those campaigns? –

This is my first run for elected office. Have you ever been a precinct committee officer or held other Democratic organization offices?

I have not been a precinct committee officer nor held other Democratic organization offices. I strongly support local democracy by which active members of the community join democratic organizations in order to advance common ideas.

What single issue is the most important motivator for your run for office? What proposals do you have for dealing with it? –

Income inequality and the decline of the middle class are the primary reasons I'm seeking office. We need to increase incomes across the board, protect and strengthen unions and working class families, and make sure everyone is paying their fair share. Right now the middle class and working families are overwhelmed. We need to ease that burden and give everyone an equal opportunity to succeed.

Are there also important secondary issues? Describe your approach to implementing solutions?

There are many issues that need to be addressed, from the environment to campaign finance reform to income inequality. While the latter is what brought me into the race, that doesn't come at the expense of anything else. We need to make government fair across the board.

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My approach is collaborative. I look for common ground and go from there. There are always basic points of agreement. I want to use those points as a starting ground for conversation, deliberation, and effective legislation.

If you are running in a heavily Republican area, do you have a reasonable chance at winning? If not, how do you plan to use your candidacy to build ongoing connections among local people who share progressive values?

While the 8th Congressional district is currently ranked +2 by the Cook Political Index, it is winnable for a Democrat. The incumbent is not known for being an effective member of Congress. Overall satisfaction with Congress as an institution is down, and this is a year for change. I will use my candidacy to start conversations all over the 8th CD. We can bring a new energy, a new attitude to the District. I will reach voters, tell them my vision, listen to their input, and together we will create change.