

Washington State Progressive Caucus Questionnaire

Explanatory Note: Our endorsements (and sometimes donations) are generally made to people running for the state legislature, municipal and county offices, public utility commissioners, etc. If you are running for such an office, you may wonder why we are asking questions about state-wide or national issues. The reason is that local officeholders are tomorrow's senators, representatives and governors. Even if you have nothing of the sort in mind now, you may easily feel differently in a few years. We want to put people into the pipeline 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: **Hilary Franz**

Position Sought: **Commissioner of Public Lands**

Campaign Manager: **Kristin Elia, former Political Director of AFT Washington, AFL-CIO**

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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?

I am 100% in favor of raising the state and federal minimum wages. We must move forward in ensuring our workers are making a living wage and raising the minimum wage to \$15 an hour, adjusted for inflation, is a step in the right direction. Furthermore, I would oppose any efforts to lower the minimum wage whether by tip penalties, training wages, healthcare penalty, teen wage or other. It is my sincere hope that we can increase the statewide minimum wage this year to \$13.50 an hour so we can continue to push our Legislature to do more on this issue, instead of discussing legislation that would undermine raising the wage at the state or local level. As a previous city council member on Bainbridge Island, I strongly support local governments' having the ability to increase the minimum wage above the state level.

What legislation would you support to make organizing unions easier?

My deep, personal belief is that workers should be free to organize a union and that employers should not in any way stand in the way of employees organizing and should instead support such opportunities. I support the idea that unions should have free and easy access to current and newly hired employees by allowing for union briefings at new employee orientations, regular and updated access to employee lists, and ability to conduct union business in the workplace. Additionally, I oppose employers mandating employee attendance at "anti-union" meetings. Should any legislation be introduced that would in any way support making union organizing easier, I would be a vocal advocate. Additionally, I would support requiring

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employers to recognize any union when a majority of employees sign cards indicating they want representation.

I want to also say that I strongly oppose any legislation aimed at weakening our labor unions. As Commissioner of Public Lands, I will oversee approximately 600-800 public union employees and will work side by side with them to defeat any attempts at passing these types of laws. These types of legislation reduce union strength and funding, which impacts our unions' ability to further protect workers' rights, increase pay and benefits, and ensure worker safety. Ultimately, these impacts reduce the quality of life of workers, families, and our communities.

Education

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

High stakes testing has been far too pervasive in our public schools. The number of tests currently administered has placed an unfair burden on our teachers and students alike and takes up too much time in the classroom. We must find alternatives to the way we assess progress and learning; test scores alone are not a meaningful indicator of student success. I was pleased to see that ESSA moved away from a reliance on high-stakes testing by allowing stakeholders in each state review and design accountability measurements. Rather than high-stakes testing, we should be looking at best practices for evaluation of students and consider a broad number of indicators that could impact learning and achievement including the effects of race, poverty, language barriers, homelessness, and others.

With regard to teacher evaluations, too often the systems in place provide just a snapshot of what happens in the classroom. There should be a comprehensive approach to how we evaluate. More importantly, teachers should be supported every step of their career. We must ensure that teachers are well-prepared, supported, have small class sizes, and time to collaborate with one another. We cannot rely on student test scores alone to determine teacher success and effectiveness. I support reviews by peer evaluators, trained experts, and principals and those reviews should be based on teaching standards and practices.

What is your opinion of charter schools?

I am not in favor of charter schools. At a time when Washington State is under a court mandate to fully fund K-12 public education, we cannot afford — literally — to take away resources for education entities that are not held to the same standards or accountable to the tax payers.

Environment

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

Over the course of my 20 year career as an environmental attorney, city councilmember, and Executive Director of a non-profit, I have focused on the protection of our public natural resources and the development of clean renewable energy sources.

I led a landmark water rights settlement with Kittitas County, the Washington State Department of Ecology, RIDGE, and the Kittitas County Conservation Association that resulted in resolving over a century of over-appropriation of water in the Yakima Basin which has experienced some of the worst droughts on record. I helped prevent the privatization of water resources and establish the first ever public water bank to ensure long-term public control of water resources and ensure water is available to support the farming, fish and wildlife, and existing residences and businesses in the Kittitas County.

I also created a nationally recognized energy efficiency program, including an energy efficiency loan program, job training program, and energy efficiency campaign that helped complete thousands of home energy assessments, retrofits and renewable energy installations in Kitsap, helping reduce energy use, increase clean energy jobs, and save homeowners and businesses money.

I would bring this same commitment, experience, vision and track record of results to the Department of Natural Resources where I could continue protecting our state's valuable natural resources and growing our renewable energy opportunities. Besides keeping these natural resource lands and waterways in public ownership, my priorities as Commissioner of Public Lands will be:

1. **Restoring Healthy Forests:** Our publicly owned and privately managed forests are Washington's defining landscapes and the foundation for healthy communities and healthy rural economies. Climate change, unsustainable logging and poor management threaten our forests, requiring immediate action. I will:
 - a. Implement a wildfire prevention plan and secure funding from the Legislature to prevent and respond to ever-increasing and dangerous fires;
 - b. Enlist the best science and management practices to slow and reverse impacts of insect and disease that kill trees, create fire risk, and threaten jobs; and
 - c. Reform management practices to stop risky steep-slope logging, ensure needed setbacks for salmon habitat, and protect critical wildlife habitat.

2. **Sustainable Management of Natural Resources:** We need to protect our natural resource legacies -- our public rangelands, forestlands and water bodies -- from unsustainable use or conversion to development. Once degraded or lost these iconic places cannot be returned. That's why I will:

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- a. Increase sustainable leasing of DNR's grazing and agricultural lands for local agricultural production and farm-to-market enterprises;
 - b. Finish the Habitat Conservation Plan for our aquatic lands and continue to protect critical salmon habitat and shellfish beds, as well as managing resources for sustainable water supplies; and
 - c. Protect state lands in and near growing cities and communities to safeguard habitat, increase recreation opportunities, grow natural resource economies, and maintain growth boundaries.
3. **Promoting Clean Energy, New Jobs, and Environmental Justice:** The Department of Natural Resources has a critical role to play in securing a future for Washington that is cleaner, more sustainable, and more equitable. With your support, I will:
- a. Adopt a landscape approach to energy development, identifying best locations, setting renewable energy goals, improving transparency, and ensuring local job creation;
 - b. Seek clean energy solutions for land and water management, showing longer-term more environmentally and economically sustainable solutions to dirty fuels like coal terminals that threaten low income populations along rail lines, water quality, and contribute to carbon pollution;
 - c. Serve as a statewide partner and leader in efforts to transform our economy, curb carbon pollution, and promote equity in how we manage our land and water resources for all Washington families.

Our public lands have the ability to contribute to the quality of life for people and communities across the state while also helping to advance environmental stewardship, sustainably manage our resources, and ensure energy independence. As we experience a growing population and even more impacts of climate change – from forest fires, drought, storm events, sea level rise and ocean acidification, we need effective management of these resources. As Commissioner of Public Lands, I will bring effective management of our most critical natural resources, utilizing modern strategies to confront major trends including the likelihood of continued and increasingly constrained funding resources, the changing demographics of a population that is becoming more urban, and a changing climate that will continue to have impacts on land, water, wildlife, and tribal and rural communities.

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

The Department of Natural Resources has a critical role to play in securing a future for Washington that is cleaner, more sustainable, and more equitable. With your support, I will:

- a. Adopt a landscape approach to energy development, identifying the best locations, setting clear renewable energy goals, improving transparency, and ensuring local job creation;

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- b. **Seek clean energy solutions for land and water management, showing longer-term more environmentally and economically sustainable solutions to dirty fuels like coal terminals that threaten low income populations along rail lines; and**
- c. **Serve as a statewide partner and leader in efforts to transform our economy, curb carbon pollution, and promote equity in how we manage our land and water resources for all Washington families.**
- d. **I favor wind, solar, and geothermal energy sources. Not only are they renewable, they create the most jobs in a clean energy economy.**

Finance/Taxation

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

Banking as we have seen has significant repercussions when unregulated. I support regulation of our banking industry to prevent the economic recession we saw in 2008-2012 that significantly burdened middle and low-income families.

What solutions do you propose to fix WA State's highly regressive tax system?

There are solutions to fixing our declining revenues and our regressive tax system. Washington is one of only nine states that that doesn't tax capital gains or profits from the sale of high-end corporate stocks and other financial assets. We should close wasteful tax breaks and wasteful tax incentives that do not promote public interest. Specifically, I would support sunseting all tax incentives and vote to renew only those that can meet minimum performance standards in job creation and public benefit like affordable housing or renewable energy. These changes could bring \$1.5 billion in new revenue to fund critical funding for schools, health, human services, infrastructure and environment, while ensuring that all our residents and corporations pay their fair share.

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 strongly support single payer health care. First, it would provide coverage for everyone. Second, it removes "for profit" from our health care system.

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

With respect to Social Security, I am in favor of scrapping the cap and against raising the retirement age. I believe that in addition to Social Security and pursuing other policies that

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strengthen retirement security, we must keep our promise to public employees by meeting our annual contribution requirements to pension funds. I commit to opposing any efforts to undermine existing defined benefit (real) pension plans and replace them with defined contribution (not real) pension plans. Eroding retirement security and income inequality are two of the most pressing issues facing our society today. Everyone deserves to retire with dignity.

With respect to Medicare, we must ensure that everyone has access to affordable prescription drugs. I support lifting restrictions on Medicare in order to negotiate with pharmaceutical companies over drugs costs.

Security/Public Safety

How would you act to stop the militarization of local police forces and establish civilian oversight of law enforcement?

I will support efforts to prevent the provisions of heavy military equipment to local police, and support enhanced officer training and efforts to increase community policing where police are building relationships with community members.

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

General

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

I am a Democrat; I have never been a part of any other party. I have served as a local PCO and local government official. I also consider myself a progressive. I have spent my 20 year career working to make progress on critical environmental, social and racial equity, and economic issues; working on the ground in over half the counties in this state with local communities to develop real solutions to real problems. Those solutions have moved those communities forward, making them stronger while keeping our environment healthy.

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

None.

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?

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In 2007 I ran for, and won, a seat on the Bainbridge Island city council. I learned in that campaign that it is absolutely critical to raise sufficient funding, to be in the community and connecting with community 24/7 in the campaign.

Have you ever been a precinct committee officer or held other Democratic organization offices?

I served as an elected PCO for the 23rd District Democrats, for over 5 years until I moved out of the district and to Seattle last year. I am looking to become a member of the 36th District Democrats and plan to seek a PCO role when the current leader steps down.

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

I deeply believe that you cannot take care of place without taking care of people and you cannot take care of people without taking care of place. That is why I am so committed to take on our greatest environmental and economic challenge - climate change. I believe we can grow a strong economy without sacrificing our environment. As Commissioner of Public Lands, I am committed to addressing climate change, not only in adaptively managing the state's natural resources, but also in mitigating and adapting to climate change impacts. I will take the following steps to address the climate change crisis:

1. Climate Mitigation. The Department of Natural Resources has the opportunity to play a significant role in developing and implementing a clean energy strategy to secure an energy future for the state that reduces carbon pollution, through the responsible development of clean energy on public lands. I will seek adoption of a landscape approach on our public lands for energy development, identifying best locations (that avoids impacts to wildlife and other critical uses of the land), setting renewable energy goals, improving transparency, and ensuring local job creation. Specific steps I will take include:

- Set clear clean energy generation goals that increase capacity for renewable solar, wind, and geothermal energy resources on public lands while ensuring full environmental review;
- Develop understanding of biological carbon sequestration capacity on public lands to develop ecosystem services approach to critical public lands and opportunities for carbon mitigation and offsets.; and
- Protect and promote sustainably harvested local natural resource materials – wood and food products to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from exportation.

2. Climate Adaptation and Resiliency: DNR's responsibilities for management of lands, waters, and wildlife provide first-hand experience of the impacts of a rapidly changing climate. Impacts

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include increasing wild fires, drought, severe flooding, changes in fish and wildlife habitat and behavior, warmer rivers and streams, and sea level rise. As leader of DNR, I will bring the best science to bear to understand these consequences and will undertake mitigation, adaptation, and enhancements to support natural resilience. Specific steps I will take include:

- Develop and implement a comprehensive wild fire management strategy that aligns preparedness, suppression, hazardous fuels reduction, and habitat restoration programs that consider the impacts of climate change;
- Develop and implement strategies for healthy watersheds and sustainable water supplies given increased droughts, promoting water conservation and partnerships for the responsible management of water supplies;
- Incorporate climate change projections into analyses of all resources threats, trends, data, and monitoring needs, as well as future planning and resource needs; and
- Develop clear forecasts and landscape mapping of landslide and erosion hazard areas as a result of increased storm events.

I am committed to making DNR a national leader in integrating preparedness and resilience efforts into its mission, goals, strategies, and programs; identifying vulnerabilities and systematically addressing these vulnerabilities; and incorporating climate change mitigation and adaptation strategies into management plans, policies, programs, and operations.

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

As Commissioner of Public Lands and head of Department of Natural Resources, I will represent the entire state in my role. Effective management of the Department of Natural Resources requires dynamic, data-driven strategies to confront major trends both global and local: increased fires and a forest health crisis made worse by climate change; a growing population pushing against natural landscapes and changing management priorities; threats to Puget Sound and Hood Canal that impact fisheries and shellfish health; increased pressures on traditional range and farm lands as drought, recreation needs, renewable energy, and sprawl place pressure on traditional uses.

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4. Supporting Recreation and Access to our Public Lands: If we do not engage people and especially youth in our natural resource lands and waterways, we will fail to have people care about them. We need to find more ways to engage people in our forests, farmlands, and waterways. Working with public and private stakeholders, I will work to develop the following ways to engage more people in our public lands that are appropriate for recreation use:

- a. Develop and implement strategy that expands recreational opportunities on our public lands and waterways.
- b. Facilitate community-led natural resource conservation and outdoor recreation projects in communities, connecting DNR with non-profits, community groups, and schools.
- c. Work with organizations like Nature Bridge to promote the engagement of young people as active stewards and students of the environment, providing educational opportunities for K-12 students.
- d. Develop or enhance outdoor recreation partnerships with cities and counties to create new, systemic opportunities for outdoor play for millions.
- e. Increase volunteers working on public lands and waterways.
- f. Develop Youth Employment and Training Priority program, building the next generation of conservation community leaders by supporting volunteer youth/internship program.
- g. Explore developing a Conservation Service Corps to leverage public investment and private philanthropy that will build job skills, improve public lands, create opportunities for youth, veterans, and others to create connections to the land while building experience.

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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?

This office is an executive position and therefore statewide, so I will be running in Democratic and Republican areas. I absolutely believe I am the best candidate for the job. There are a number of candidates running in this race. However, I am the only candidate in this race who has worked for over 20 years on all three areas DNR works – working forestlands, farmlands, and aquatics. I am the only candidate who has worked statewide in over half of the counties of this state on these issues. I am the only one who has worked directly in the community to reach resolution of challenging issues regarding fish and wildlife habitat, working farmlands and forestlands protection, and clean energy projects. I am also the only one who has spent 20 years on the ground, working with communities across the state to develop and implement solutions that address our greatest economic and environmental challenges. Finally, I have received key sole endorsements like that of King County Democrats and the endorsement of key organizations like Washington Conservation Voters, as well as other individual and organizational endorsements.

This position is arguably one of the most important offices up for election this year. How we manage, protect, and care for Washington's precious public lands and waterways will shape how we mitigate climate change, protect our air, water, and food sources, and safeguard our timber, shellfish, and agricultural industries. As we experience a growing population and even more impacts of climate change – from forest fires, drought, storm events, sea level rise and ocean acidification, we need effective management of these resources.

My goal with this campaign is to engage voters in the important role that the Department of Natural Resources plays in our beautiful state, to show them that we can protect our environment and create new jobs that boost our economy, that how we manage and implement policies now, as they relate to our natural resources, will last for generations to come. It's my hope that the more my campaign is out in communities across the state, the more we can raise awareness for this office, share a vision for our future, and help voters understand what is at stake this year when they come across Commissioner of Public Lands on their ballot this summer and fall.