

# 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:** Tyler Vega

**Position Sought:** US House of Representatives District 6 (WA)

**Campaign Manager:** Courtney Love

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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?

A living wage ideally, based on the cost of living. For now the fight for 15 has to suffice because it has the momentum, but I don't consider it sufficient. I make 17 and am barely making it.

What legislation would you support to make organizing unions easier? I'd support any legislation that supports unions or unionization.

## Education

What is your opinion of high stakes testing? How would you change the way students and teachers are evaluated? In a perfect world I'd eliminate it altogether. I'm a lifelong teacher, and I've found over and over again that people, young or old, learn best without pressure and learn worst with pressure. If the point is actually the mastery of the subject at hand (which it clearly is not in our society), testing of that nature is antithetical to said point.

What is your opinion of charter schools? Good in theory and great for the few, but at the cost of the many. I am opposed from a legislative perspective.

## Environment

How would you promote development of alternative energy and prevent privatization of natural resources? Stop subsidizing the things that are hurting us first: Oil, monocrops, mega corporations. Then subsidize green energy sources with energy independence on a reasonable but soon-as-possible basis.

What are your plans for increasing investments in renewable forms of energy production? Same as above.

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What types of renewable energy do you favor most? Solar for sure, but I actually prefer ideas that get into tidal current and rising/falling. GeoThermal is actually viable in this part of the world without too much of a stretch. Really, in my book, you just see what the people are stoked to self organize around in the private sector and support it with the public sector.

## Finance/Taxation

What would you do to facilitate implementation of public banking and monetary reform? Do whatever Bob Hasegawa says with regard to public banks.

How would you restructure the federal taxation system to address the growing problem of income inequality in America? Progressive tax structure in short. End corporate welfare. Stop wasting it in the first place by streamlining the American military and getting honest about what we're really doing out there which is defending rich people's infrastructure. Getting real about the armed forces and the amount we waste in destructive force would solve all of our financial problems immediately.

## 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.

Strongly support.

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

Hands off SS. Medicare becomes single payer for all. Bernie is leading the charge on this, I'd just be following his lead.

## Security/Public Safety

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

Just need a progressive majority. Then, ideally, the people can actually dictate how they want to hold the police accountable. As for demilitarization of police, that would likely be more of a statewide and or local office issue, but if federal legislation were available or appropriate I would be more than bold about supporting or introducing such.

How would you preserve national security while protecting American's right to privacy? Stop bombing people and making terrorist and stop being terrorists for starters. Privacy trumps security in my book. And all that spying isn't doing much to keep us secure.

## General

Do you consider yourself a Democrat? Do you consider yourself a progressive? Why? I'm both. I'll run as both simultaneously (on principle) this year. For CD6 I'll run as a Progressive, specifically to state

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my values on the ballot and differentiate myself from my extreme neo-liberal opponent. I also intend to run for PCO (707) provided it doesn't risk a split.

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

I have no major problem (in fact I have much respect) for the document itself. I take issue with the fact that the most powerful "Democrats" of the "Democratic" party do not work in alignment with said document, and in fact are really quite antithetical to it, to be mild about the matter. If, for example, I compare that document to my opponents voting record, I wonder just what the hell is going on up there? Certainly not a match as one might or might not expect. That document has literally nothing in common with the actions of the most powerful within the party. I do take issue with the fact that the superdelegate resolution is not in this document, and that the people of the "Democratic" party will again have their voices silenced by the wealthy elite come next cycle. The very existence of superdelegates within the "Democratic" party is so absurd and oxymoronic that I am compelled to put quotes around the word and actually think about whether or not I will capitalize it. End rant.

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?

LD22 State House of Reps 2004 Interdependence Party. Made it through the nominating convention but never actually filed. I learned that we needed a revolution to get anywhere with this system and promptly went back to sleep politically until Bernie hit the scene.

CD6 US House of Reps 2016 Green Party. I ran specifically to draw attention to the superdelegate issue. Learned more than I can write here, but specifically just how much you can get accomplished by running for office. Words and attention have incredible power, and even amidst the strife and apathy, one can accomplish wonders with a little bit of intention and a willingness to work.

CD2 US House of Reps 2016 General Election. I and many others ran as write ins specifically so that people wouldn't be forced into the lesser of two evils trap. At the very least, we gave people the right to put someone down that they actually support and who would actually support them. I learned that you can do what people say can't be done, and it has value regardless of the outcome. We planted seeds for 2018 and beyond, and several of our candidates now have thriving campaigns as a direct result.

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

Not yet. I'm all about #DemEnter, but have only been supporting by encouragement thus far. I go to dem meetings and am a member of the party but have always focused on my own groups (mixed/coalition based) up until this cycle.

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

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Article the First, aka the Congressional Apportionment Amendment, and the lawsuit that brings it to the table. It can/should/would/could put the people of America back in the drivers seat. The court case LaVergne Vs. US House of Reps is the keyhole. We are the key.

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

Not truly secondary, I actually usually put Universal Healthcare first, it's just that the former issue is so little known and is such a huge lesson in what could be that I have to stomp on it for the good of the people. It's the one thing that could actually make the kind of change we desperately need. So for the purposes of this questionnaire, the answer is that: Medicare for All.

The third and fourth are Sustainability and Responsible use (or non use) of military force.

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?

I am in a deep blue district held by a long time establishment neo liberal. He is a democrat in name and on social issues but a republican when it comes to money and war. My chances of beating him have mostly to do with Article the First (aka the Congressinal Apportionment Amendment) and LaVergne V US House. There is no chance of splitting the vote in this scenario as it's top two with only two (expected) left of center. If he's even left of center.

Thank you for your time and attention.