

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: Shir Regev

Position Sought: State Representative 8th LD – Position 1

Campaign Manager: None yet

Consultant: None

Campaign Email: shir.regev@yahoo.com

Campaign Phone: (509)460-7220

Website: atthetablewithshir.com

Campaign Address: 114 Patton St, Richland WA 99354

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 do. As for level I will keep it open ended because I believe if you work 40 hours a week you deserve to be able to afford your life. Whatever level ensures workers can afford housing, healthcare, food, clothing and other essentials and still be able to save for the future, that's the level I support.

What legislation would you support to make organizing unions easier? I want to be honest and not waste your time. As a union member myself I fully support the right of workers to organize but I haven't really given the issue a lot of thought. If there is something the caucus wants me to know, I am all ears.

Education

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

I loathe standardized testing. I would prefer to see students be evaluated on the progress they make from the beginning of the year to the end. For example, at the beginning of the year, have a child try to read from a book and then give them a very basic quiz to see how much they comprehend. That's their baseline. Depending on where they are at they can have a curriculum developed to meet their needs. At the end of the year, they get the exact same task and quiz to measure their improvement. I like the idea of more free flow classrooms. When I went to school I was in the gifted program and one thing they did which I love is that you weren't constricted by your grade level. They would have math breakout classes and you could be in there with anything from second to fifth graders without stigma or pressure, that was just where you were. It's kind of a radical idea but maybe students just need to be put in cohorts and have their total progression over a period of years determine if they are ready to level up to the next school.

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What is your opinion of charter schools? I hate them I feel like they are a way for parents to segregate their children. They make the playing field so unlevel, it's not funny.

Environment

How would you promote development of alternative energy and prevent privatization of natural resources? Given the current administration in DC, I would love to find a way to subsidize solar panels in a way to offset the new tariffs and help make going solar less cost prohibitive. As for the rest for this section I have to be super honest. I am super liberal and I want to do the right thing, but we all have to choose our battles and my bigger passion is social justice. I will always be a reliable vote for the environment, but apart from being a reliable vote to conserve what we have, I haven't given a lot of thought to legislation.

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

Finance/Taxation

What would you do to facilitate implementation of public banking and monetary reform? Again...I am so new to this I don't have an answer ready for you at this time. I do like the idea of postal banking. I have lived in countries with the service and I know it works. How to make a state equivalent I don't know but I am curious to see what kind of pressure the states can put on the USPS to make this happen.

What solutions do you propose to fix WA State's highly regressive tax system? This is hard for me because I really enjoy not having a state income tax. I think it's one of the best things about living in Washington. However, I know sales tax is regressive. I would like to see more tax exemptions given to necessities like diapers and feminine hygiene products but I also want to see a progressive sales tax table. Think about it. When people come here from Oregon they flash their license and we waive the sales tax. Why can't we issue cards to people who fall below a certain income level so they pay lower sales tax? We can make up the difference in revenue by raising the cigarette tax. I also like what Seattle has done by taxing large corporations a head tax.

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 am for it. I signed the petition for 1600.

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

Security/Public Safety

How would you act to stop the militarization of local police forces and establish civilian oversight of law enforcement? Well...give no state funding for the purchase of excessed military gear. Establish a

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Human Rights Commission office in all incorporated municipalities to provide independent oversight.

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

I don't have a good answer. On a state level I think there should be an independent branch, it can part of a Human Rights Commission which has the authority to see the names of citizens being surveilled. It won't stop government prying, but the oversight can look to see if there is profiling and if so, and they find the surveilling to be without merit, have the right to inform the citizen so they can sue.

General

Do you consider yourself a Democrat? Do you consider yourself a progressive? Why? I am a lifelong Democrat because I see myself in the party. How many queer, Jewish/freethinking women do you see in the Republican Party? I am progressive. I support universal healthcare, am pro-choice, support unions...

What parts, if any, of the [Washington State Democratic Party Platform](#) (← click link to view) do you disagree with? Why? *Wish I could answer this but the link is not working.* ☹

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?

I ran for Richland City Council last year. I learned being smart and fair is not enough to win. I am going to fight a lot harder this time. I also learned that in Richland, there is a strong core of people who really would be happy to go back in time to the 1950's. It's depressing.

Have you ever been a precinct committee officer or held other Democratic organization offices? NOPE! I did file for PCO this election cycle.

What single issue is the most important motivator for your run for office? What proposals do you have for dealing with it? I am tired of having to rely on voters and politicians from the West Side to preserve my rights. Just being elected will do so much to turn things around for our queer community, immigrant community and religious minorities.

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

See above answer. But...having a Democrat who will work with the rest of the representatives instead of a Republican who is always working against the rest of the House (like Klippert) will ensure a lot more gets done for everybody.

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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?

I am running in the reddest part of the state. I don't plan on winning (again with the honesty) but last year I was the first openly LGBTQ candidate to seek public office in Benton County when I ran for Richland City Council. This time I am the first openly LGBTQ candidate to seek a state office in my LD. My campaign keeps a dialogue going forward, shows voters you can have a choice and shows people who might feel voiceless in Benton County that they are seen. I hope in 2020 more people like me run and every cycle we break down forces keeping us in a status quo. My dream...my goal is make it into the general election at least. Our incumbent, Brad Klippert is a bad representative who continually introduces or backs regressive bills, votes against progressive ones and has accepted donation money from companies like Monsanto.

Finally, I am so sorry my answers are not the greatest. I was just told about this questionnaire the same day it's due so I wanted to at least get in SOMETHING ahead of the deadline.

I would be happy and proud to be able to say I am endorsed by the progressive cause. If there is anybody at the endorsement meeting who knows me, they will tell you my heart is in the right place and once I have a solid platform, you will be impressed. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Regards,

Shir