

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: Ivan Lewis

Position Sought: State Representative, 39th LD, Position 1

Campaign Manager: N/A

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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 state and federal minimum wages. I believe a day's work is worth a day's pay. I support increasing the Washington State minimum wage to \$15.00/hour with future increases indexed to inflation.

What legislation would you support to make organizing unions easier?

Opposing right to work legislation is the most important measure currently, especially in the presence of the current Supreme Court decision. I support legislation that allows workers their inherent right to collectively bargain. Supporting our workforce is the most important step forward to support our economy and our communities.

Education

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

I oppose all forms of high stakes testing for students, schools and faculty. High stakes testing causes undue stress on both teachers and students and doesn't promote quality education. Curriculum standards and evaluations should be an appropriate way of identifying a student's success and teacher evaluations should be a comprehensive look at their ability to teach and their student's success. High stakes testing is not the answer for evaluating education.

What is your opinion of charter schools?

I oppose the privatization of public institutions, including charter schools. We need to focus on improving funding and resources for public schools to help them succeed, not undermine their foundation. If we need specialty schools and programs they should be implemented by the public school system and publicly funded.

Environment

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

Green energy must be able to compete within our current energy market. This means ensuring a robust green infrastructure, a just transition for labor, and incentives to allow green energy to fiscally compete. I vehemently oppose the privatization of natural resources and will be steadfast in my resolve to protect the public interest from corporate greed.

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

A transition to renewable energy requires a systemic shift of how we look at our infrastructure and energy sources. By establishing a strong framework of renewable energy through public utility projects, new construction that utilizes renewable energy sources and robust opportunities for workforces to have a just transition to these green solutions. We must increase the resources available to the state's Clean Energy Fund and ensure we appropriately incentivize industry to encourage and help the shift to energy that is sustainable and clean. I favor solar, wind and geothermal energy.

Finance/Taxation

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

I support the creation of a Washington State bank and the implementation of state usury laws. I support legislation and proposals that deter predatory lending and ensure working class families have access to the banking resources they need, like the proposed return of a USPS check cashing and cash advance service.

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

I support the *replacement* of regressive tax structures with progressive ones. Therefore, any progressive tax reform that I would support would be geared toward closing corporate loopholes, reforming the State's B&O tax to be based on income (not gross sales) and the implementation of other means, income and profit-based taxing mechanisms to replace the regressive taxes like sales 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.

Healthcare is a human right, no one should face uncertainty when it comes to the resources necessary to treat or prevent illness or injury. I am a strong proponent for single payer healthcare, we must ensure that every single person has access to a doctor without fear of financial burden. The first step in fighting the opioid epidemic, homelessness, the housing crisis, low wage jobs, etc. is to ensure that we all have access to comprehensive healthcare. The benefits in a single payer healthcare system are extensive, from ensuring guaranteed universal coverage for the individual to reducing overhead waste and lost revenue for providers.

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

I support scrapping the cap on Social Security, reforming Medicare drug plans and including Medicare supplemental coverage within a Washington State single payer system.

Security/Public Safety

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

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enforcement?

I oppose the practice of providing surplus military equipment to local law enforcement (with the exception of some specialized units). We must also ensure strong separation within police forces of their policing and specialized units. I support the use of civilian commissions as it pertains to oversight.

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

There is very little that can be done by the Washington State legislature to protect an individual's rights in our current national security environment. With that being said, I vehemently oppose the warrantless violations of American's privacy under a broad claim of national security and would support legislation that moves to protect the privacy rights of Washington State residents.

General

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

I consider myself a progressive Democrat. It is my belief that our Government should always be looking for and implementing ways that improve the lives and wellbeing of the people.

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

I disagree with the Healthcare plank in that it does not explicitly demand a guarantee that every Washington resident have universal access to comprehensive healthcare.

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 campaign.

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

I am the appointed/elected PCO for the Wallace Precinct and am the Fundraising Chair for the 39th LD Democrats.

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

The single highest priority for me is guaranteed comprehensive healthcare for every Washington State resident. It is not possible for our families and neighbors to prioritize any investment in their future and the future of our state (the environment, social programs, schools, infrastructure) if their basic needs are not being met. I unequivocally support a burden free healthcare system; a system free of copays, deductibles and networks. I support HB1026 and will vigorously pursue its success.

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

We must begin the replacement of highly regressive taxes with more progressive taxes in order to ensure a more equitable taxing structure for everyone.

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?

We absolutely have a chance at winning this District in the general. Despite a long history of Republican representation in the 39th LD, I received almost 46% of the vote in the Primary. That tells us we have been extraordinarily effective at activating Democrats and progressives with a clear progressive message.