

Washington State Progressive Caucus Questionnaire 2019

Submission Note: The submission deadline for this questionnaire is 12:01 PM PT, ten days prior to the membership meeting where the candidate's endorsement will be considered. Please refer to the questionnaire deadline and meeting date here:

<https://waprogressives.org/endorsements/endorsement-policy-and-timeline/>.

☐ This questionnaire must be submitted to waprogressives@gmail.com to be considered.

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: Melissa Hall

Position Sought: Seattle City Council, District 6

Campaign Manager: Sherae Lascelles

Consultant: Riall Johnson

Campaign Email: info@hall4six.com

Campaign Phone: 509-869-8380

Website: www.Hall4six.com

Campaign Address: 1752 NW Market St. #1601 Seattle, WA 98107

Do you request the endorsement of the Progressive Caucus? Yes

Questions:

Labor

Do you support raising the minimum wage in your local jurisdiction if state and federal action continues to be stalled? To what level?

Yes, to at least \$20

Education

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

We have a bad habit of putting arbitrary standards on children that many of them are not equipped to sufficiently meet. Standardized testing does not accurately measure a student's capability and we should be finding ways to amplify more talents that children have instead of repeatedly narrowing the scope of success to a test.

Environment

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What can be accomplished at the local level to promote development of alternative energy and prevent privatization of natural resources?

There are a ton of things we can do. We can move to make all public transportation electric, increase standards on pollution, and incentivize new building projects to use renewable energy sources. Other cities are enacting their own Green New Deals, and it's time Seattle does too.

Finance/Taxation

What will you do to support public banking at the local level?

Propose that Seattle creates a public bank or switch to the state public bank if/when they make one.

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 a single payer system. It is what is best for everyone in our country. Other countries do it right, so can we. We are just choosing not to.

Security/Public Safety

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

Seattle has a Community Police Commission that provides oversight for our police, but in my opinion, it doesn't have enough authority. The Seattle police continually ignore oversight recommendations, which was all too apparent where they were found to be out of compliance with the consent decree. I will push the City Council to push for more oversight of our police and give the Community Police Commission more authority.

General

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

In a sense, I am a democrat because I usually end up voting for democrats on my ballot. I am definitely a progressive, and I work with many other progressive democrats that align with the issues I am most passionate about.

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

It's hard to disagree with vague stances that sound good and cover so much ground. I would need more time to see exactly what I disagree with on this platform. But I do disagree with plenty of bills that were pushed primarily by Democrats in office, that contradict with even their own platform. I am a land use attorney and am disappointed at the vagueness of what the Democratic Platform plans to do with public lands to address our statewide homelessness crisis.

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- 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 election. I have volunteered for other campaigns, mostly around issues. What I learned is that it takes movements to win, but sometimes those movements are built over time through unsuccessful campaigns. Many things that are normal today were once radical ideas. I plan to continue that mantra, win or lose.

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

No

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

Better Land Use by the city is the biggest reason I am running for this office. I am a land use attorney and want to better our policies to help fix our homeless crisis.

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

Community accountability is one of the biggest problems with our city council. Policies that are proposed should be developed with communities most impacted by them from the start. I plan to make pacts with community organizations that advocate for these issues to make sure I keep my word to them on all issues I have been campaigning on. If I can't hold myself accountable, I have no right to ask anyone else to.

- 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?

Seattle is not a Republican area in the least. Everyone else running in my district is a Democrat, but I challenge that notion because the NIMBYism in this election has reached an unprecedented level. The lack of compassion for the most troubled in our city is disturbing. We have to be bolder in our advocacy and stand up to this anti-homeless rhetoric coming from this conservative movement in Seattle that is even coming from many Democrats.