

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: Adam Aguilera

Position Sought: Vancouver City Council, Position 6

Campaign Manager: Anthony Peña

Consultant: Argo Strategies, Valo Consulting

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Campaign Address: 7202 NE Hwy 99, Ste 106-210, Vancouver, WA 98665

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, I would like to an appropriate living wage scale through the expansion of collective bargaining rights between workers and employees, subsidizing costs in affordable housing, food supply chains, and daycare. Local jurisdictions can help generate market forces that lift wages and lower costs in city living.

Education

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

High-stakes testing segregates public schools, creates socio-economic inequities, and perpetuates institutional racism. It has been used to defund public schools and expand the privatization of education. It is a system that must be removed. Students and teachers should be evaluated on more than just a few select content areas. Students should be evaluated holistically. Their social-emotional intelligence, life skills, and citizenship are just as important to evaluate. Teachers should be supported to teach and provide instruction from robust, teacher-led professional development and curriculum development. Evaluations should be a support, not a punitive measure.

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Environment

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

Municipalities should focus on investing resources into more solar power. For example, Clark PUD is required to refund excess profits back to customers. They could take those profits and invest it into more solar projects to decrease their dependency on natural gas. Vancouver City can also influence the Clark County council not to allow developers to just build housing indiscriminately over valuable, natural environments.

Finance/Taxation

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

On a local level, the city does not have much influence over public banking. However, we do have a strong, local credit union community that I am a part of. I will continue to use my voice to encourage residents in the community to save and invest locally in credit unions that circulate and keep dollars in the community.

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.

Medicare for All is a viable solution because the system is already in place to expand capacity and meet the healthcare needs of all Americans. Healthcare is a right. If everyone had access to it, it would be one of the biggest economic stimuluses this country has seen because millions of Americans would have the flexibility to choose their employment or start their own business without having to worry about employer healthcare coverage. To keep costs low, it will require the regulation and negotiation of drug prices from the pharmaceutical industry.

Security/Public Safety

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

Community enforcement has the ability to supplement public safety and empower residents to assist in law enforcement. Body cams and dash cams provide transparency and protection for both the resident and the officer providing the necessary policies are in place to protect resident privacy and clear protocols for the officer.

General

- Do you consider yourself a Democrat? Do you consider yourself a progressive? Why?
I am a progressive who is a member of the Democratic Party.
- What parts, if any, of the [Washington State Democratic Party Platform](#) (← click link to view) do you disagree with? Why?
The values outlined in the party platform align with my views. One area in Education that could be improved is the curriculum and pathway to teach students entrepreneurship and starting their own small business. That is as important as trade apprenticeships and a free college education.
- 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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I have ran for positions of elected union leadership. I am currently a Board of Director for the Washington Education Association, elected by the WEA's annual Representative Assembly. I've been elected for multiple terms by the 1,800 member Evergreen Education Association for positions like Secretary/Treasurer. I have extensive experience working on political campaigns of other candidates I've helped get elected such as State Rep. Monica Stonier, State Sen. Manka Dhingra, Clark County Councilor Temple Lentz, and Vancouver Mayor Anne McEnerny-Ogle. I learned the effectiveness of a strong canvassing strategy which I have the unique advantage over my opponents in accomplishing since I am on summer break from teaching while most of them are still working full-time. I'm experienced in fundraising, event planning, phone banking, and organizing canvassing events. My consultant has worked on several successful social media campaigns for candidates and produces some of the best graphic and content work in Clark County.

- 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?
Expanding opportunity for all residents is my focus for equitable economic development and reversing homelessness. By looking at a Community Schools model, school buildings can become the town squares of a neighborhood with rezoning that allows campuses to become small business incubators that branch out across the street to convert single family homes into the next small grocer, coffee shop, retail space. School buildings are open all days of the week providing free education to families and creating trade apprenticeship and entrepreneurial pipelines for graduating students.
- Are there also important secondary issues? Describe your approach to implementing solutions?
Affordability compliments the expansion of opportunity with new, living wage jobs. A city should be affordable, not impossibly expensive. I will call for the expansion of ADUs by using ordinances to remove barriers and incentivize homeowners to create accessory dwelling units on their properties. This will increase urban density to support emerging local neighborhood economies from community schools. ADUs allows seniors to age in place, creates multi-generational housing, and supplements homeowner income. All of this will be built into a review of the city's Sustainability Plan which has not been updated since 2009. Vancouver can lead the way in being one of the nation's greenest cities. For example, grass and lawn can be replaced with edible landscaping where new micro-farming businesses can cultivate single-family neighborhoods to create local food supply chains that can mitigate food deserts. Food should also be looked at to enhance city affordability where schools can feed students breakfast, lunch, and supper throughout the year to make sure children are developing with healthy diets and families are saving hundreds of dollars in grocery costs by living in the city's school districts.
- 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?
Vancouver is an increasingly liberal city. Whichever liberal candidate pulls through in the primary will beat the conservative candidate. For example, in the 2018 election, progressive Temple Lentz handedly beat incumbent Jeanne Stewart (also one of my opponents in city council race). If I were to face Jeanne in the general, I would beat her with similar margins.