

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: Varisha Khan

Position Sought: Redmond City Council

Campaign Manager: Nabrath Sheriff

Consultant: Prism Washington

Campaign Email: Varisha@electvarishakhan.com

Campaign Phone: 206-409-6124

Website: www.electvarishakhan.com

Campaign Address:

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, and it should be raised to \$15-20 an hour.

Education

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

I think we depend way too much on tests that are not culturally competent. We are judging children based on their knowledge of one perception of what a student is supposed to know. This restricts innovation and growth for most of our students of all races and backgrounds. If I can change this, I will immediately. As a city council member, the most I may be able to do on this is to propose programs and trainings for our teachers to bridge cultural gaps and help them communicate with students from different backgrounds of their own.

Environment

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

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privatization of natural resources?

Preservation of green spaces in cities. Pushing for city controlled institutions to use renewable.

Finance/Taxation

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

Work with our local state legislators to push for a state public bank.

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.

Health care

Security/Public Safety

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

Propose body cameras for Redmond City Police. Cut ties and contracts for international occupational training for our police forces, and re-evaluate are obsolete weapons contracts.

General

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

Yes, and yes. The historic ideologies of the democratic party has not always served my community, which is why we need new ideas and approaches to achieve true racial and socio economic justice. The Democratic Party is the only major party capable of doing this.

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

Not that I have seen, I just wish we stood stronger on many issues that are in the resolutions.

- 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?

Zero. I've volunteered on multiple candidate campaigns, most of my work in campaigns has been issue based. I've learned that there is always a way to reach out to people that haven't voted before.

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

I've served as a PCO for the 45th LD, and am currently one for the 48th.

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

Environmental sustainability, and I plan on reworking our Zero Carbon plan to truly put Redmond and King County on a path to achieve this.

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

Equity and affordability in Redmond. We must stem housing displacement before it gets out of hand as our city grows.

- 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 have a great chance at winning this, with your help ☺