

# Washington State Progressive Caucus Questionnaire 2020

**Submission Note:** The submission deadline for this questionnaire is 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](mailto: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:** Hillary Madsen

**Position Sought:** King County Superior Court, Position 13

**Campaign Manager:** Emily Carmichael

**Consultant:** John Wyble

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**Campaign Address:** Friends of Hillary Madsen P.O. Box 9100 Seattle, WA 98109

**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?

**Unfortunately, the Code of Judicial Canon prevents me from answering any questions about raising minimum wages in my area. I can say when budget and hiring decisions are being made by the King County Superior Court, in my role as an administrator of the court, I will always advocate for the living wage to ensure workers have enough money for a decent standard of living in King County.**

**Education**

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

**Speaking as a graduate of public schools, from kindergarten through college, and a parent with a child in public school and two more on their way into kindergarten in 2022, I am concerned about the use of testing to make decisions about students, teachers, and schools. It is important to understand what students are learning so we can continue to identify opportunity gaps, and we need to recognize unintended consequences of testing. All kids should have a fair chance to thrive in school, career, and civic life. As the executive board vice-chair at the Children's Alliance, I have been impressed by efforts to change public policy on key health**

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issues for children and expand access to high-quality early childhood education. As a staff attorney at Columbia Legal Services, I was proud to work closely with my clients and advocates to create the Homeless Student Stability Program, making Washington one of the first states to specifically protect the rights of students experiencing homelessness. I believe students (and teachers) should be evaluated in a way that shows what students are learning and generates constructive feedback for teachers to improve their teaching.

## Environment

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

**At the King County Superior Court, we have been using electronic filing for over 12 years. The commitment to reducing paper waste has been important, and the court can and should continue to identify ways to further reduce our carbon footprint. Lack of access to healthy food, reliable transportation, air and water pollution, and unsafe homes are issues that show up in our courtrooms every day so judges should receive training on the principles of environmental racism and potential responses at the community level.**

## Finance/Taxation

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

**Senator Bob Hasegawa has provided incredible leadership during his years in the Senate, and I have seen his passion for the creation of a public bank like the Bank of North Dakota. As a judge, I can support consumer protection and sound fiscal policies in the decisions made by the King County Superior Court in holding litigants' money and property.**

## 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.

**Unfortunately, the Code of Judicial Canon prevents me from answering any questions about Medicare. The Constitution of the World Health Organization (1946) states: "The enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health is one of the fundamental rights of every human being without distinction of race, religion, political belief, economic or social condition". My understanding of international law is that the right to health implies a clear set of legal obligations for WHO member states to ensure appropriate conditions for the enjoyment of health for all people without discrimination. The United States joined the WHO as a member in 1995. The right to health is important. In my legal and volunteer work with people who are incarcerated or detained as immigrants, I have witnessed discriminatory practices and unjust power relations resulting in inequitable health outcomes.**

## Security/Public Safety

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

**As a candidate for judge, I recognize that public safety is a critical issue. King County continues to experience rising numbers of emergency and non-emergency calls related to people who are elderly, people in need of medical care, and people experiencing homelessness. Our first responders, including local police, must respond effectively and responsibly to life-threatening,**

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time-sensitive incidents while ensuring the most vulnerable people in our community receive the care they need. I look forward to supporting efforts, resources, and funding for court programs that help ensure public safety, such as diversion and re-entry services.

## General

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

The Code of Judicial Canon, Rule 4.1(A)(5) prohibits any judge or judicial candidate to publicly identify themselves as a member of any political organization except in two limited circumstances: (a) as required to vote, and (b) for participation in a precinct caucus limited to selection of delegates to a nominating convention for the office of President of the United States. The purpose of this rule is to avoid any suggestion that a judge is subject to political influence. Therefore, I cannot join any political organization or discuss the status of my membership in any political organization during a campaign for judicial office or afterwards (if elected). Second, Rule 4.1(A)(10)-(12) requires judicial candidates to be scrupulously fair and accurate in statements made by them. To answer this question factually, in the past I held several leadership positions within the 43rd Legislative District Democrats, including two consecutive terms as chair of the 43rd Legislative District Democrats, in addition to roles on the State and King County Democratic Central Committees. My husband, Rob Dolin, serves as the Secretary of the State Democratic Central Committee. We met in February 2002 at the Young Democrats Convention in Olympia.

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

Please see answer above.

- 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. In 2004, I served as the campaign coordinator for my mother, Justice Barbara Madsen, and I have supported many judicial candidates over the years.**

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

Yes.

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

**I am motivated by (1) the need for judges who are willing to do the work necessary to understand multiple perspectives, especially the impact of gender, race, geography, and socio-economic status on the range of choices people may experience; and (2) the important role judges play as administrators of the legal system.**

**Over the years, I have been able to work on many issues of legal system reform including strengthening juvenile record sealing laws, challenging the use of solitary confinement against youth, securing attorneys for children and youth in foster care, and advocating for the rights of students experiencing homelessness and unaccompanied youth.**

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**My work has impact. I want to take that impact to the bench. Specifically, I am interested in working with individuals and communities most affected by our legal system to identify solutions to urgent issues in administering the King County Superior Court, including:**

- **coordinating technology and court record programs with King County district and municipal courts and other jurisdictions;**
- **improving jail intake screening and assessments;**
- **reforming pretrial release practices, including cash bail;**
- **relieving overcrowded court dockets through supplying courthouse facilitators, appointing lawyers to indigent parties, offering early mediation of disputes, and diversion;**
- **expanding restorative justice programs in juvenile court;**
- **simplifying our sentencing guidelines;**
- **reducing racial disparities in sentencing;**
- **expanding our drug courts;**
- **reducing funding mechanisms that depend on user fees and legal financial obligations;**
- **tracking charging decisions and outcomes; and**
- **improving jury pay and addressing the roles of racism and poverty in jury selection.**

**There is no mistaking the fact our legal system is reaching a crisis point. People do not believe our legal system can deliver justice at the same time as we are confronting an economy devastated by disease and the fallout of closing our courtrooms to the public. Talking about progress always makes people uncomfortable, but growth and comfort cannot coexist. We need people with my unique experiences in representing children, youth, and adults who have experienced poverty and discrimination to be at the table when we are talking about recovery in King County. These will be difficult conversations, and we need to make sure no one is left out.**

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

**In serving my community as a lawyer for the past 12 years, I have seen countless times that the people closest to the problem are closest to the solution. As a judge, I want to hear from the people in my courtroom about their individual preferences, needs, and values, and I want to understand from a system level how we can fully maximize our available resources to empower people to solve their problems peacefully. Judges say what the law is – not what the law should be – and how we deliver that message makes a difference in whether people believe they were treated fairly.**

- **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 a county-wide race. I have support from Republicans and Democrats because I believe my message about expanding access to opportunity and ensuring basic fairness to everyone resonates across the political spectrum. At a time when we are experiencing multiple catastrophes, people recognize that King County needs judges with a demonstrated commitment to working with people who cannot afford to pay for lawyers.**