



Washington State Labor Council, AFL-CIO 2022 Legislative Candidate Questionnaire

Thank you for taking the time to fill out our questionnaire. The Washington State Labor Council, AFL-CIO (WSLC) represents over half a million workers, represented by over 600 local unions and councils of 57 national and international unions from every corner of Washington's economy.

We are aware that this questionnaire is lengthy, however, the WSLC is the voice of Washington's working families and our endorsements require serious deliberation. Please answer all questions, sign on the last page, and consider signing the supplemental Statement of Principles. You are welcome to email or mail your completed questionnaire, but please make sure it is signed. You may add as much additional space as you need to answer the questions.

Upon receipt of your completed and signed questionnaire, you will be contacted with next steps and information to set up a candidate interview with a local Central Labor Council.

Questionnaires should be returned to the attention of Cherika Carter, Washington State Labor Council, AFL-CIO Political and Strategic Campaigns Director, at endorsements@wslc.org or 321 16th Ave South, Seattle, WA 98144. You may also contact Cherika at 206-384-1133 or ccarter@wslc.org with questions.



First Name: _____

Middle Name: _____

Last Name: _____

District: _____

Party: _____

Incumbent

Challenger

Open

Do you currently hold, or have you previously held public office(s)? Describe:

Have you received a Washington State Labor Council, AFL-CIO endorsement in the past? If so, for which office(s)? _____

Official Campaign Committee Name: _____

Campaign Address: _____

City: _____ **State:** _____ **Zip: Code** _____

Campaign Consultant: _____ **Email:** _____ **Phone:** _____

Campaign Manager: _____ **Email:** _____ **Phone:** _____

Social Media Handles: _____

Are You a Veteran? _____

Are you now or have you ever been a union member? _____

Please list union(s) and local(s): _____

Rewriting the Rules of the Economy to Build a Better Future for Workers

The policy choices we make today determine whether working people share in the benefits of economic growth and technological progress. The Washington State Legislature must prioritize policies that equip workers and families with tools to improve their lives.

Please respond to the following questions to support your stance on these key issues.

Union Representation: Recent U.S. Supreme Court rulings have undermined workers' abilities to negotiate with their employers. By imposing "Right-to-Work" policies from the bench, the Courts have forced unions to provide services for free to all workers, regardless of whether or not they pay union fees. This undermines unions' ability to raise funds and effectively weakens their negotiating power.

How would you respond to "Right to Work" attacks in Washington State and demonstrate your support for workers to join together to strengthen their voices at work?

Would you support innovative reforms to state-level employment law to create new avenues for workers to organize? If so, what kind of reforms would you propose implementing to protect unions?

Do you commit to supporting public employees' contract fights?

Economic Climate: Washington is considered a high-skill, high-wage state and has one of the highest standards of living in the country. Washington is consistently ranked as a top 10 state in the country in which to do business, by both Forbes and CNBC, with much of this business coming from the Puget Sound area. But at the same time, many business associations decry our state as bad for business claiming wages are too high and workers' compensation and unemployment insurance benefits are too generous.

How do you view Washington's economic climate?

How would you make our economy stronger in office?

How would you propose to bolster Washington's economy outside of the Puget Sound/Seattle area?

Retirement Security: For several decades, Americans' ability to retire with dignity has been eroding. As employers have taken defined-benefit pensions away, and high-fee 401(k) plans have become increasingly common, workers have found themselves without the means to retire decently.

As an elected official, how would you address the retirement crisis?

Would you commit to opposing efforts to cap existing pensions and replacing them with savings plans that guarantee no benefit at retirement?

What policies would you propose to ensure that our elderly can live with security after retirement?

Would you support public employee pension benefit improvements?

Racial Justice: Racism is a system of oppression, designed to divide the working class so the wealthy elite can consolidate their wealth and power at the very top. At the WSLC, we believe this to be true. Since 2015, WSLC delegates have passed three resolutions affirming this, and we have committed ourselves to doing the work to become an anti-racist organization. Union membership helps close the racial wealth gap: as long as it exists, the racial wealth gap hurts us all. In a study by American Progress, over a 10-year period: "Black households with a union member have median wealth that is more than three times the median wealth of nonunion Black households. Hispanic households with a union member have median wealth that is more than five times the median wealth of nonunion Hispanic households." We are moving an anti-racist agenda in our unions because economic justice and racial justice are inextricably linked.

As an elected official how will you commit yourself to supporting policies to make sure that the economy works for people of all colors and backgrounds?

How will you address the economic disparities that permeate our state and what policies would you propose to lift up economic opportunities for families of color?

Are you committed to working with and supporting communities and organizations who are leading anti-racist agendas?

Protecting Immigrant Workers and Communities: The Washington State Labor Council, AFL-CIO supports all working people in Washington, including immigrants and

refugees. The WSLC supports working people with temporary protections granted by the executive branch through the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals and Temporary Protected Status programs. By extending relief and work authorization to more than a million people, DACA and TPS have helped prevent unscrupulous employers from exploiting unprotected workers to drive down wages and conditions for all working people in our country. We believe in raising wages and standards, empowering workers and creating pathways to citizenship for all those whose labor helps our country prosper. We oppose immigration enforcement tactics like raids at the workplace and believe extending workplace protections for immigrants regardless of immigration status will allow all workers to assert labor rights on the job.

What role should the Washington State Legislature play in helping ensure safer workplaces and the basic rights of immigrant and refugee workers?

Would you support policies that raise standards and increase protections for immigrant farm workers, undocumented workers, refugees, TPS holders, and undocumented students?

Would you support legislation to expand or build state-based social insurance and other safety net programs for otherwise excluded immigrant workers?

Climate Change: The two greatest challenges we face as humans and as workers on this planet are global climate change and income inequality. As the average global temperature increases, those of us with the least means will surely carry the greatest burden. We have seen this manifest in Washington State during periods of extended drought, record breaking heat waves, and devastating wildfires during the Summer months. Farmworkers, firefighters, construction workers, utility workers, and others have to put their health on the line with regularity to perform their essential work in support of our economy and well-being.. At this critical point in time, workers, communities of color, climate activists, and forward-looking governments around the world have an opportunity to grow jobs, protect the most vulnerable, and address climate change. As we consider policies to address climate change, we recognize that they have the potential to displace workers in the energy and manufacturing sectors, as well as those workers who support those industries in other sectors, like construction.

As an elected official, will you commit yourself to supporting policies to reduce carbon emissions by investing in high quality, union represented, low-carbon jobs in much-needed green energy, water, and transportation infrastructure?

How would you ensure that these policies will not disproportionately affect communities that depend upon work in carbon-intensive industries?

Would you support a transition program to maintain wages, retirement, and health care, and help displaced workers find work in their communities in low-or-no-carbon industries? How?

Healthcare: As a labor movement, we represent frontline care providers and the working people that make that care possible. In the workplace, increasing consolidation and corporate culture takeover of health care has created a staffing crisis that drives burnout and trauma amongst workers, and puts licensure and safe patient care at risk.

That same profit model — driven by employers, insurance and pharmaceutical companies — drives up costs for us all. Today, thousands remain uninsured, hundreds of thousands forgo necessary health care due to out of pocket costs, and our members often still lack affordable healthcare themselves.

When it comes to healthcare affordability, access, and quality, will you stand with workers, consumers, and purchasers over the hospitals, insurers, and pharmaceutical companies in reducing costs?

Will you support mandatory safe patient-to-worker staffing standards, breaks and overtime protections, and oversight that ensures quality patient care?

Quality Education: With the challenges facing society today, and in order to best support our future workforce, it is important that public schools from K-12 through post-High School remain strong, have the ability to attract and retain quality, caring educators at all levels, and have resources to meet the needs of all students. Additionally, more students are coming to school with severe issues caused by trauma and/or other mental health needs. Creating a safe learning environment is a critical part of helping all students achieve their full potential.

Do you support fully funding K-12 basic education including professional, competitive compensation and benefits for educators, as well as additional mental health staff (school counselors, nurses, psychologists, social workers, etc.) necessary to meet the needs of our students?

Public education, from K-12 through post-High School has seen state disinvestment for several decades. What will you do to increase the funding of community and technical colleges in order to invest in the workforce? Do you support pay equity for part-time faculty?

Public Services: As a labor movement, solidarity and supporting one another is a fundamental value. Public services are a crucial part of our social safety net and benefit our communities as a whole. Often they are used to offer support for people and

communities during their most vulnerable times, and often help keep families and individuals out of poverty. Public goods should be widely available, but in our state they are not because of the underfunding of resources invested into our state institutions and public employees. Our state employees, the very individuals that provide the safety net, take on unsustainable workloads due to understaffing and poor retention practices. Perpetual underfunding has caused this problem, and the system is buckling under the weight of the COVID-19 pandemic, and remaining state employees are leaving public service for less stressful work at the same or higher pay.

What potential solutions do you think would improve employment retention in the state's public services workforce?

How would you advocate for a healthy and thriving work environment for state employees?

How would you support paying state employees a thriving wage?

YES OR NO SECTION:

In this section, please respond with either **“Yes”** or **“No”** regarding your stance on these important policy issues.

Apprenticeships: Washington State has more than 300 occupations with apprenticeship standards in fields ranging from construction, to health care, to aerospace manufacturing, to the culinary arts. Apprenticeships are 2-5-year programs – commonly funded by employers and employees, not the state – that combine on-the-job training with classroom hours. New workers (“apprentices”) work under the supervision of experienced (“journey level”) workers.

Would you promote union apprenticeship opportunities? Yes or No

Contracting of Public Services: Some argue that the state government should be reduced in size. They support privatizing certain state functions such as the state printing office, state prisons, services for developmentally disabled folks, and more. In general, unions have opposed these efforts because they replace family wage public service jobs with low-paid private sector jobs that don't necessarily save the state money due to contractors' profits, and often lower the quality of service.

Would you oppose the privatization of public services? Yes or No

Competitive Wages in Public Service: The Office of Financial Management – State Human Resources (State HR) – is required by law (RCW 41.06.160) to conduct a salary survey to determine the prevailing pay rates for jobs that are comparable to state

classified general government. According to a Survey conducted by the Office of Financial Management, 99% of surveyed state salary positions are below market value, with 66% being more than 25% below.

As an elected official, will you commit to only supporting budgets that ratify and fund Collective Bargaining Agreements (CBAs)? Yes or No

Gig/Task Based Economy: The National Labor Relations Act (NLRA) excludes workers classified as “Independent Contractors” from organizing under the Act. Increasingly though, more and more employers, especially in the emerging task-based economy, are misclassifying workers as independent contractors. This misclassification exploits workers, weakens Unions, severely hinders workers’ rights, and limits workers’ access to Union representation.

Would you support legal and political efforts by these misclassified workers to form and join a labor organization? Yes or No

Rest breaks: Under state rule, an employee may not be required to work more than three hours without a paid rest break. The current rules stipulate that workers should receive at least a 10-minute, uninterrupted rest break unless the nature of the work permits the use of intermittent breaks that add up to ten minutes. Widespread evidence across industries reveals that workers are not getting ten minutes of uninterrupted breaks and that the intermittent break rule has resulted in workers simply not getting breaks at work.

Would you propose policies to ensure workers are not being exploited and are getting all meal and rest breaks to which they are entitled? Yes or No

Revenue and Tax Break Accountability: Washington has faced a structural revenue deficit for more than a decade. Our system of taxes and tax exemptions hasn’t always raised sufficient revenue to cover the social, educational, health, public safety, and infrastructure needs of our growing population. In addition, our tax structure is considered to be the most regressive in the nation. Yet, until recently, the most common tax policies passed by the Legislature have been to create special breaks for big businesses, without ensuring that only the best jobs are created for this preferential treatment.

Would you support a more progressive tax structure? Yes or No

If considering tax incentives, would you ensure that they are tied to tried and true labor standards, job maintenance, and investments in our workforce here in Washington? Yes or no

Do you support the use of tax policy to promote job training and apprenticeship opportunities in construction and manufacturing? Yes or No

Wage Theft: It is illegal to not pay or to underpay workers, but many times workers are forced to work off the clock and are not paid their owed wages. The state is also shortchanged in unpaid taxes, unemployment insurance, workers' compensation premiums, and other social insurance premiums. There is currently no effective administrative remedy to protect workers who were retaliated against for speaking up about wage theft.

As an elected official, would you commit to addressing wage theft and enforcing wage laws, leave laws, and anti-discrimination laws? Yes or No

Have you ever experienced wage theft? Yes or No

Worker Protections: We have many great workplace protections in Washington — wage and hour, equal pay, health and safety, and anti-discrimination laws. But wage theft, work hazards, and discrimination are problems all too common across industries, and enforcement agencies often have years-long backlogs resulting in less protections for workers.

Do you support creating private pathways for workers to achieve and maintain fairness in the workplace, and generating the resources for stronger state enforcement? Yes or No

Would you support increasing workers' access to legal avenues to be made whole? Yes or No

Workers' Compensation: Washington State has a workers' compensation system that has guaranteed injured workers sure and certain relief, in exchange for giving up the right to sue their employers when they are hurt on the job. Some employers have chosen to self-insure their workers' compensation coverage – opting out of the state system – and others have formed special rating groups to reduce their rates. Unfortunately, many of these employers aggressively manage claims in an effort to suppress them, attempting to reduce costs at the expense of injured workers' well-being. Either through endless protests and appeals, or through intrusive, frequent medical examinations, some employers have sought to deny relief to workers who are just trying to heal.

Would you support policies to reduce workplace injuries, and hold accountable employers who refuse to put in place necessary protections? Yes or No

Would you support reforming the use of independent medical examinations in workers' compensation, and help advance policies that level the playing field for injured workers? Yes or No

Please explain why the Washington State Labor Council and its members should endorse you:

Candidate Signature: _____ **Date Signed:** _____

STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES FOR PUBLIC OFFICIALS

The Chance to Make Life Better, The Freedom to Join a Union

As a candidate for public office, I am committed to making our community a better place to live and work. I support efforts to raise living standards and to promote good schools, safe streets, a trained workforce, and a vibrant local economy. I know that the quality of life in our community depends on the quality of our jobs, and I recognize that unions give employees a voice at work, improve productivity, and contribute to the economic vitality of our community.

I respect the right of every working person to pursue equality, opportunity, and a better life for themselves and their families. I understand that the decision to join together in a union belongs exclusively to employees, not their employers. I believe that any employer that uses legal or unlawful tactics designed to harass, threaten, or fire workers for trying to form a union, does its employees and our community a great disservice. I fully support the principle, guaranteed under federal law, that employees are entitled to a free choice to form a union without interference, intimidation, or fear of reprisals.

I am committed to stand by working families that are trying to make life better by forming unions. I will urge employers to remain neutral, respect the choices of their employees, and voluntarily recognize a union when a majority of workers have indicated the desire to join one. I will stand with striking workers who want a fair return on their work. I will monitor what goes on in workplaces in our community and speak out when employers abuse their power.

Additionally, I am committed to supporting union workers during my campaign and will use a union printer and sign shop for printing needs, and work with union stage employees for campaign events

On behalf of all working families in our community, I will raise my voice to help restore the chance to make life better and the freedom to join a union.

This is my commitment.

Name (print): _____

Signed: _____

Office Held/Sought: _____

Date: _____

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