

SECTION II

In this section, we are seeking responses that reflect the four ratings criteria: involvement, effectiveness, character, and knowledge. These are defined as follows:

- **Involvement:** What has the candidate done previously in family, neighborhood, community, volunteer work, employment or public life to suggest readiness to accomplish challenging objectives? How do these activities demonstrate readiness for the challenges unique to the office sought?
 - **Effectiveness:** Has the candidate demonstrated promise of being productive in the office sought? Has the candidate shown the ability to work with other people?
 - **Character:** Do the candidate's personal traits show the ability to take on the responsibilities of campaigning for and holding the public office she or he is seeking? Is the candidate a leader, participant or observer? Is the candidate trustworthy, reliable and candid?
 - **Knowledge:** Has the candidate demonstrated the willingness and ability to learn and adapt? Does the candidate understand the duties and challenges of the office sought? Does the candidate have a firm grasp of the issues important to his or her constituency and their potential effects?
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1. In one page or less, why are you running for this office? (Note: the interview committee will be given a copy of this statement before your interview; at the beginning of your interview you will have the opportunity to expand on this statement in any way you wish.)

I am running for reelection because I am an effective legislator and we still have so much work to do. Our state is in a downward spiral that we absolutely must turn around or our children will condemn us forever. We are at a point in time now that presents a huge opportunity to do just that, led by the political revolution that the Bernie Sanders campaign is spearheading. I can use my experience as a lifelong community organizer for economic and social justice to help steer the energy of the growing political movement for change in a progressive and principled direction.

At the top of my list is comprehensive progressive tax reform. Our current system is totally inadequate, unfair, and unsustainable. Most people know the basic components of such a package, but I submit that starting a publicly owned state bank modeled after the Bank of North Dakota is a crucial component of building long term sustainability into our revenue and debt system.

Economic development and creation of living wage jobs is another top priority. As the Ranking Member of the Senate Commerce and Labor Committee, I am the leader of our Senate Democratic Caucus on most matters relating to labor and commerce. From this position I can have a significant influence on policy affecting working families and small businesses. The legislature needs someone who comes out of the labor movement, who has lived and raised a family as a blue collar worker and has that world view and hope for the world.

But more than that, I'm also on the Senate Ways and Means, and Rules committees. I worked hard to get on these two committees because there are no other people of color on them, so I'm sure you know how strategically important it is for me to be there. Because there are so few members of color in the Legislature, I have a responsibility to look out for the interests of all those communities with the perspective that only a person of color can bring through experience.

From the vantage point of Ways and Means and Rules, I can apply my lens to every bill that has money attached to it or goes to the floor for a vote. For example, it was through working with the Ways and Means Committee that I was able to get a budget proviso to create a process known as Racial Impact Statements. Racial Impact Statements are similar to Fiscal Impact Statements except they predict racial impacts rather

than fiscal impacts of proposed legislation.

So, I am running for re-election as State Senator for the 11th District because it is the best place for me to be right now to fight for racial, educational, economic, environmental, and social justice.

2. Describe your most important personal characteristics or traits as they relate to the office you seek.

I think my most important personal characteristic for success in the Senate is my ability to work with just about anyone. That is why I passed more significant pieces of legislation than any other Senate Democrat this year.

SB 5342 Human Labor Trafficking (PASSED)
SB 5752 Racial impact statements (PASSED as budget proviso)
SB 6206 Authorizing the growing of industrial hemp (PASSED)
SB 6295 Coroners' inquest venue (PASSED)
SB 6398 Cultural foods (PASSED)
SJM 8014 Wm. P. Stewart Memorial Hwy (PASSED, as HJM 4010)
SR 8617/8724 Day of Remembrance (ADOPTED)
SR 8679/ Filipino History Month (ADOPTED)
SR 8686 Honoring Herb Tsuchiya and Sam Mitsui (ADOPTED)
SR 8687 Honoring Northwest Center (ADOPTED)
SR 8693 Honoring Wong Tsoo (Boeing's first engineer) (ADOPTED)
SR 8702 Honoring Cyndie Shepard/WWU, (ADOPTED)

The reason I work well across the aisle is because I pick and choose my issues and find allies that want to do the right thing on any given issue. I don't hide my positions and I think my colleagues respect that honesty. I don't work through backstabbing or subterfuge. It takes time to build those types of trusting relationships. Others may not agree with me, but it's ok to disagree. Sooner or later we'll find something to agree on. When that happens, we're both successful.

3. Please describe, in sufficient detail, one to three accomplishments or contributions of which you are most proud. These examples should illustrate skills and capabilities you think apply to the office you are seeking. These accomplishments may have occurred at any time in your personal, professional, or public life.

I've had many hard fought victories over the years, but with regard to my legislative career, I think my proudest moment was two years ago when my bill SB 5173 (2013) was passed and signed into law. SB 5173 provides for two days leave of absence for all public employees and students in public schools for matters of faith or conscience. The issue was first brought to me by the Muslim community who were not able to celebrate their two holiest holidays (Eids) because they follow a lunar calendar rather than the western Gregorian. It took us a couple years to get the bill passed but in the end we'd built a beautiful coalition of Muslims, Jews, Christians, Buddhists, Sikhs, Hindus, Native Americans and others with ethnicities and cultures from all around the world. The community celebration to celebrate the victory opened with blessings from the seven faiths listed above. We were entertained by a broad array of performances from Cambodian dancers to African vocalists to Pacific Island dancers to Chinese martial arts and a Lion and Dragon performance, and the mixed menu was catered by local ethnic restaurants supplemented with a diversity of potluck food. It was truly a great victory and the celebration was fabulous. SB 5173 was the first of its kind in the nation, and the victory was very sweet indeed!

4. Please list or describe current and past activities in the community in which you have acquired skills that relate to the office you seek. Include your role in the activity and the year(s) in which you were involved. Involvement consists of many areas such as family, neighborhood, community, employment, or public life.

Prior to being elected, I was a fairly broad political activist. I was involved in civil rights, media justice, racial justice, environmental, gender justice, and labor movements. The goal was to bring the movements together for more power to effect progressive change. I was involved with many grassroots organizations working to build these bottom-up movements.

But I believe in a dual organizing strategy: building from the top-down as well as the bottom-up. So I sit on several boards to work my issues from the top. I'm a member of the UW Evans School Advisory Committee, the UW Harry Bridges Center for Labor Studies, Washington State Labor Council, and the Japanese American Citizens League Boards, among others.

5. Please describe the duties of the office you seek. Which are the most important duties and why?