

2016 Candidate Questionnaire

**SECTION I**

**BASIC CANDIDATE INFORMATION**

1. Name as it will appear on the ballot

First Name	Middle Initial or Nickname	Last Name
Mike		Pellicciotti

2. Office sought (include office, jurisdiction, position/district number):

**House of Representatives – 30<sup>th</sup> Legislative District (Position One)**

3. Are you the incumbent?                     Yes  No

4. How long have you resided in this district/city?

**1+ years**

5. How long have you resided in King County?

**11+ years**

6. Is the office sought partisan or nonpartisan?     Partisan     Nonpartisan

7. If partisan, please indicate party: Democratic

**CAMPAIGN CONTACTS**

Campaign Name:                    People for Pellicciotti

Address:                                P.O. Box 26236

City/State/Zip:                    Federal Way, WA 98093

Campaign Phone:                    253-237-2838

Campaign E-mail:                    Mike@electmikep.com

Campaign Website:                    www.electmikep.com

**POLITICAL BACKGROUND**

1. Beginning with the most recent position, please list public offices you have held. Include positions on appointive boards or commissions.

Public Office	Elective or Appointive?	Dates Held	Leadership Role (if any)
Federal Way Human Services Commission	Appointed	06/2015-Present	Alternate
Assistant Attorney General	Appointed	07/2013-Present	Deputy Director, Medicaid Fraud Unit
Deputy Prosecuting Attorney	Appointed	09/2005-06/2013	Led over 100 trials and appeals

2. If you ran for public office but were not elected, please list those races below:

Office Title	Year of Run
<i>First time candidate</i>	

## 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 like working with people from diverse perspectives and solving complex problems – and there are no shortages of both in Olympia right now. Legislative sessions going overtime are the new norm; legislators are being held in contempt of court for failing to fund basic education; and some elected officials do not even talk to each other anymore. I'm stepping up to run, because it's time for a change. I embrace challenges and believe that with new leadership we can better address many of the issues facing my community and our state. I want to step up to improve our government and renew the public's faith in it.

My career in public service has focused on giving a voice to the voiceless. As a King County Deputy Prosecuting Attorney, I led cases in South King County to promote public safety in our community and have developed insight into how to improve criminal justice policy in my community and my state. I especially want to take this experience to lead on these issues in Olympia. As an Assistant Attorney General, I managed efforts to combat corporate fraud and protect taxpayers. I also led efforts to combat the abuse of seniors by healthcare providers. I want to be a leader in Olympia in protecting seniors and also workers' hard-earned tax dollars.

As chair of our Washington Equal Justice Coalition, I worked with the legislature to provide equal access to our courts by our most vulnerable, to protect veteran benefits, and to reduce predatory behavior by payday lenders and banks. I want to make sure that my district is represented by someone who sides on behalf of consumers and the most vulnerable in our district, not payday lenders or other predatory powerful actors.

I am the child of educators, and had grandparents who were janitors. I learned early how an education is the great equalizer of opportunity. I had many opportunities as a result of my quality public education, including my Fulbright Scholarship studying economic development. I have since served on the Board of Regents of Gonzaga University, and am dedicated to make sure a new generation of students in my district has access to educational opportunities and are trained to meet the needs of our transformative global economy. It is unacceptable that our legislators are held in contempt of court for failing to fund basic education.

Ultimately, I want to see government work effectively again. Our community and state deserves it. As someone who has worked in our state executive and judicial branches, I know I can contribute on day one in the legislature and continue to serve our South King and North Pierce community. I want to rebuild relationships among our branches of government and return public trust in our legislature.

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

I have been told that I have an ability to bring creative solutions to complex problems, while always being good about including stakeholders in the decision to bring stakeholders along stakeholders in the process. I am an analytical thinker, who appreciates detail. These are skills that have made me a results-oriented attorney and community leader. I enjoy complex challenges and bringing people together to address issues around shared interests. I believe that our legislature is too often divided by party lines and narrow ideologies. We need more leaders in Olympia who are inclusive, open-minded and detail oriented – willing to read the fine print.

When I see an injustice, I am a strong advocate, whether it has been my work fighting for victims of child abuse, sex trafficking, domestic violence, or for Medicaid recipients being shortchanged by powerful corporate interests. I believe this energy to give voice to those who feel like they are without one in our community will make me a good representative to our 30<sup>th</sup> Legislative District.

Our community is today facing unique and serious challenges. Public safety, the need to attract a new generation of young professionals to our district, and specific economic development concerns need to be addressed. These issues match well to my strengths and experiences leading on issues of public safety, leading young professional organizations, and my academic background as a Fulbright Scholar studying in economic development. I believe that I am uniquely qualified to serve the new issues facing our district.

I am also told by colleagues that I am an honest, trustworthy, and loyal friend. I do not quit when coming upon challenges, and can be reliable in the tasks to which I am assigned. Sometimes I volunteer a bit too much, but I remain dedicated to achieving the goals to which I am tasked.

Finally, in all I work I do, I seek government functionality and effectiveness. As someone who has argued cases to our State Supreme Court – often in an effort to argue what the proper interpretation was less-artfully drafted laws – I have particular appreciation for the need to be thoughtful and intelligent in how bills are drafted. I enjoy policy-making in an effort to make life better for people, but understand that the complexities in such undertakings. I have worked on legislative matters for the Attorney General. After arguing the meaning of legislation as an appellate litigator, drafting legislation as an Assistant Attorney General, enforcing legislation as a prosecutor, and assisting in interpreting legislation as a State Supreme Court law clerk, I look forward to accepting the responsibility for writing legislation as a State Representative.

**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.**

Throughout my career in public service and community volunteerism, I have focused on maintaining the public trust of those who have afforded me the opportunity to serve. The following are three specific examples of this extensive leadership in my professional and public life (as a King County prosecutor, Assistant Attorney General, and legal leader) that reflect those values:

1. I am proud of the work that I did as a King County prosecutor, representing the people of the State of Washington and serving the people of 30<sup>th</sup> Legislative District for nearly eight years. I led hundreds of complicated South King County criminal cases that involved being a voice for the victims of mass-shooting in Auburn, sex trafficking in Federal Way, store robbery in Des Moines, and domestic and gun violence in Federal Way. I developed an understanding of the complexities of criminal justice and how to better reform the system – experience I now want to take to Olympia. Our community is facing public safety challenges that need new ideas and policies. I valued my experience with the King County Prosecutor's Office, which has a long history of focusing on justice, not simply convictions. I had the opportunity over leading over 100 trials and appeals, focusing on fighting for victims in our 30<sup>th</sup> District community, while always focused on justice. However, I never lost sight that each criminal defendant deserves respect and individual attention. Thus, while I never failed to achieve a criminal conviction from a jury verdict, and protected my community as a result,

my greatest accomplishment as a prosecutor came not from these cases, but from a case that I dismissed. In 2007, I was leading a Federal Way case that appeared straight-forward -- a drug dealer selling to an undercover detective. His attorney claimed he was innocent, but the more evidence we got, the guiltier he looked. However, while preparing for trial, I spotted a flaw in way the detective presented the photo montage. This made me seek out a new detective, and drop charges against an accomplice to get to the truth -- that the defendant was wrongfully charged. We have since used this dismissal as a case study to teach prosecutors of the dangers of suggestive identification. I am sad that the process allowed this man to be charged in the first place. However, given the amount of prosecutors who have learned from this experience, including myself, we significantly achieved our goal of doing justice. That makes this case my most proud contribution and reflect the ability to take on the responsibilities of holding the public office I am seeking.

2. As an Assistant Attorney General, I have enjoyed taking on powerful interests that do not play by the rules. I have managed state efforts to combat health care provider fraud, returning over \$30M back to taxpayers from those health care providers knowingly taking money to which they were not entitled. This work has involved managing over 30 people, made up of three teams: criminal prosecutors, civil litigators, and criminal investigators. We prosecuted powerful health care corporations, pharmaceutical companies, and corporate nursing homes, which were putting profits before patients in our 30<sup>th</sup> Legislative District community. We criminally convicted those owning businesses that were intentionally shortchanging vulnerable Medicaid recipients of care. All of which was satisfying to do on behalf of the voiceless Medicaid recipients around Washington. But what I am most proud of is our work in bringing increased functionality within a state government unit that was made up of silos that for years had difficulty working together. Through careful planning and thoughtful collaborative policies, we were able to bring together dedicated and talented public servants who were willing to break down silo walls to efficiently serve the public. We increased criminal filings 600% during this time. The False Claims Act, the legislative authority we relied upon for civil enforcement, came into effect just before I joined the office. Our efforts led to the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Committee recently identifying the False Claims Act as meeting all expectations, increasing civil recoveries by 28% and returning to the state \$3 for every \$1 spent. Through more streamlined business management, we also created daily review for potential criminal mistreatment matters, leading to the Attorney General's Office first felony criminal mistreatment conviction for a health care provider, sending a health care provider to jail who left elderly patients without care at an Auburn care facility. Ultimately, we made government work in a way the public would expect. This increased government efficiency and productivity on behalf of Washingtonians is what I am most proud of in my work at the Attorney General's Office, and demonstrates that I can be productive in the office for which I am running.

3. As an attorney, I am committed to promoting the rule of law and promoting a government that is responsive to all citizens, especially the voiceless among us. I have been involved in lawyer bar activities as a means to ensure that laws are serving these democratic aims. I was elected to serve on the national Board of Governors of the American Bar Association, and served on the Board's Executive Committee. Through this volunteerism, I was on the board of directors of a non-profit organization with offices around the world, over 400,000 members, and nearly 1000 employees. I was appointed by the ABA president to chair the board's Program and Planning Committee to oversee the budget allocation of over \$100M to the various ABA programmatic entities. ABA budget allocations had previously been a contentious process. There was limited transparency in the decision-making process, and there was significant discord and conflict between the Program and Planning Committee and the board's Finance Committee, who were both responsible for determining hundreds of millions of dollars in budget allocations and budget management. Entities who felt aggrieved often filed appeals following the disjointed budget allocation process, resulting in the ABA budgeting routinely going overtime. There was always a rush near the end of the budget process, where those with special interests had greater influence in what entities received what resources. As Program and Planning Committee Chair, I led efforts to bring the two committees together to bring about a more efficient and collaborative process, where our Program and Planning committee oversaw the in-depth review of entities and allocated all monies, and the Finance Committee determined how much total money was to be allocated. In 2013, our new process led to the budget process finishing on-time, under budget, with not a single appeal filed by an entity for the first time in years. As someone who believes that the culture of an organization starts with its leaders, I am proud that this new collaborative and functional approach between the Board committees has continued following my year as chair, and for the third straight year there have been no appeals following budget processes that continue to be completed on-time and under-budget. I am most proud of this continuing legacy that I have left with the ABA, and demonstrates a readiness to work with others to accomplish our current challenging legislative budget objectives unique to the office for which I am running.

**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.**

Federal Way Human Services Commission (Alternate), 2015-Present

- This service has allowed me to appreciate the significant human services challenges facing the majority of our 30<sup>th</sup> Legislative District, which includes a 150% increase in homelessness in the last year. I have also been able to learn about the efforts of and interact with the non-profit organizations serving South King County.

King County Vulnerable Adult Facility Neglect Working Group, 2013-Present

- This local committee is comprised of senior, disability, ombudsmen, consumer protection, and law enforcement leaders who have helped identify needed reforms in addressing the abuse and neglect of seniors in our community. I have at times chaired this group, and following my leadership of the national \$38M case against a corporate nursing home facility (which included facilities in our community), I have helped guide discussions on how our local police and state laws can better respond to low-staffing and care challenges for our neighbors living in our community's assisted living facilities.

Gonzaga University (Board of Regents), 2011-14

- This service has allowed me to be active in higher education issues, so as to appreciate how to best deliver quality education to a new generation of Washingtonians.

Federal Way Historical Society (Member), 2015-Present

- This involvement has given me a better appreciation of the rich history and growth of our community over the years.

American Bar Association House of Delegates (Delegate), 2004, 2008-Present

- This leadership has allowed me to legislate policy resolutions as a delegate representing our local legal community to the national legislative body.

American Bar Foundation (Life Fellow), 2005-Present

- As a fellow of the Foundation, I have been appointed to a committee seeking creative ways to grow our Foundation, so the work of our Foundation can continue to develop cutting-edge policies to address legal inequities. Since my community is now a majority-minority community, working on these issues has given me a greater appreciation for how our government and its laws can best serve all in our community.

ABA Commission on the Future of Legal Services (Criminal Justice Committee Chair), 2014-Present

- Appointed by ABA President to serve as a commissioner working with national judicial, government, academic and policy leaders to bring innovative reforms for how our members of our community and nation can access affordable and accessible legal services. Chaired the committee looking at national criminal justice reform, which has given me better insight into how to make law more equitable for everyone in my community.

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

Being a good representative of constituents and meeting their needs is the minimum that should be expected of a legislator. Being entrusted with the duty of representing the 30<sup>th</sup> Legislative District, especially when we are facing such serious challenges in our community, requires proactive leadership and a desire to break from the status quo. It has become too easy for politicians to sit back and blame others for government dysfunction. If all legislators chose this route, nothing gets done. As a legislator, one of my top duties is to make sure that I am helping the government work for all of Washington and meeting the unique needs of my constituents. These are complicated issues, but accepting this charge means dedicating every fiber of my being to this effort.

A primary duty of being a legislator next session will be to resolve our long-developing our budget challenges, while ensuring that we remain fiscally responsible, enhancing public safety, responding to homelessness, and meeting our basic social service needs. Too many legislators have chosen the politically easy path and put this paramount duty off for too long. Now is the time to act. There are consequences to all policy paths, but with open and honest communication, a level of trust that can be more easily built among new legislators, and a commitment to meeting our constitutional obligations can be achieved. I look forward to bringing my own experience in combatting government fraud, waste, and abuse, with my budget-making experience, to learn from others and reach our ultimate goal of balancing our budget while meeting our paramount duty.

But we need to be able to walk and chew gun at the same time. As we meet our primary duty to fund education and community services, we need to make sure that constituents are having their needs met and that we are leading on unique issues that will improve the standard of living in our community. Only by accomplishing this challenging task will the public trust government to be responsive to its needs. This needs to be more than just talk, but a duty to ensure that laws can be created that create a more efficient and responsive government – a government that people can again believe in. I look forward to this service.