

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
Thomas	B	Pitchford

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

3. Are you the incumbent?       Yes  No

4. How long have you resided in this district/city? 10 years, 11 months

5. How long have you resided in King County? Same as above

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

7. If partisan, please indicate party: Democratic Party

**CAMPAIGN CONTACTS**

Campaign Name: Friends of Thomas Pitchford

Address: P.O. Box 51024

City/State/Zip: Seattle, WA 98115

Campaign Phone: 206-245-9609

Campaign E-mail: thomas@thomaspitchford.com

Campaign Website: thomaspitchford.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)
Precinct Committee Officer	Appointive	Aug 2013 -	

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

Office Title	Year of Run

## 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:

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**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?

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.)

*“There is no greater thing you can do with your life and your work than follow your passions in a way that serves the world and you.” Sir Richard Branson*

To begin, I should first share that leaving home and attending college, even just 45 minutes away, was a truly transformational experience. In high school, I was a socially cautious young person conditioned to be that way from a combination of being bullied on one hand, and seeming invisible on the other.

In contrast, becoming involved on campus helped me find my voice, build self-esteem, and develop friendships. And assuming leadership positions in student government started what has grown into a long term passion for service. Several years later, inspired by my campus experience, I decided to pursue a Master's Degree in Higher Education & Student Affairs at Indiana University. Both my work as a graduate assistant at IU, followed by four years as a Greek community advisor at the University of Maryland, where I provided extensive experience in crisis management, inter-institutional practices and process alongside primary staff roles to provide extensive personal and organizational advising.

After a move to Seattle in 2004 for my husband's legal career, I decided to focus my attention to campaign politics and worked in campaign management, field, or finance for a host of mostly established politicians including Congressman Jay Inslee, Jim McDermott, and others. I also spent several years serving in consulting and professional capacities for Equal Rights Washington, including serving on the organizing committee of the Approve 71 campaign. I have since worked again independently in political consulting and for one year in University Advancement at the University of Washington.

For a number of years, ERW has played a significant, continuing role in working to pass legal protections for thousands of LGBTQ Washington residents. Working alongside so many in our community who were there over and over to fight for equality was an incredibly rewarding experience. It helped not only deepen my commitment to this fight, but also affirmed my dedication to working for the betterment of our community, overall.





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

Open-mindedness – Commitment to teamwork – Directed and focused on working to meet the needs of the 43<sup>rd</sup> District – willing to doing the heavy lifting – welcoming of new ideas or critically constructive feedback. Even in moments of disagreement, we should never make personal insults – Inclusive: I would like to involve as many voices from the 43<sup>rd</sup> as want to be heard. And I want them to help me bring their ideas to Olympia.

Lastly, I am dedicated to fostering a sense of empowerment, ownership, and involvement among the people of the 43<sup>rd</sup> District. The Capitol Building and the work we accomplish in Olympia and across Washington belongs to you, to me, to all of us.

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.

#1 Achieving a Master's Degree in Education from Indiana University: as someone who faced an academic uphill-climb toward admission into one of the nation's oldest and most prestigious higher education programs, I felt an enormous sense of accomplishment. Indiana is consistently ranked in the top 10 best programs in the country. My resume and application to Indiana were not stand-out's; however my convincing of the hiring committee for my assistantship happened because of the opportunities I mentioned in Q1 – socialization that brought out the person who could convince them I was a candidate they would like to have at IU. That happened, and I am proud to say that I graduated from IU's Wright School of Education, and had one of the most significant and defining experiences of my life.

#2 Working to build Equal Rights Washington – our state's LGBTQ advocacy organization. This was not easy by any stretch. There were many moments when I could have just wiped my hands and walked away. But that's not how I do things – I see them through until the end. And I also make sure that the result reflects my own high expectation in terms

o difficult times. We often work non-  
f stop and perform a labor of love because we know what is most important is keeping our dedication to the cause  
in check, regardless of the situation –  
because we know how important the work is. Building ERW over the years was  
often incredible amounts of work. Running the Approve 71 campaign in our office concurrently, all while still

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needing to keep the income generation at ERW moving as well, took some delicate balancing. People tend to slough off advocacy non-profits to the side in times of campaigns. We took that work, gladly, and not only made the organization cash-positive/running in the black, but we also did it with style. We held a breakfast one week after the 2009 A71 vote. Within a week we had the Governor and every dignitary in Seattle there to help us celebrate. And who can beat the Rainbow City band welcoming people at 8am with Michael Jackson's "Thriller?" 🐼🐼

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.

Board positions: 43rd District Democrats, Vice Chair of Recruiting (on leave for the campaign currently) Institute for a Democratic Future (2010-present); Graduate Washington (2012-present); National Campaign Board, Gay & Lesbian Victory Fund (2012 - 1/2016 - recently left board to declare candidacy per board policy); World Arts Access (NGO) 2011-2013); Alumni Interfraternity Council, University of Washington (2006-2011, served as board president 2010-2011); Committees and other memberships: "North of 45th" Committee (campus/neighbor relations), UW; Out in Front (a Seattle-based, LGBTQ leadership organization), Fundraising Committee (2009-2011) ; Equal Rights Washington (founding staff member and Development & Outreach Director 2009-2011); Human Rights Campaign; National LGBTQ Task Force; precinct committee officer, 43<sup>rd</sup> District (2013-present)

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

Bringing resolution to McCleary –

we have a constitutional mandate and obligation to fund basic education, yet we have bypassed that in favor of doing little to nothing to resolve this long-standing problem. This is a challenge in which we all share responsibility. We must work together, including across the aisle, so we can make Washington competitive in the future and for the futures of today's young people. This is the most important legacy we can create for Washington's next generation of leaders.

Working to find solutions to other immediate needs such as the homelessness crisis in our community. Housing is a human right. We must move to a model to that similar to the Canadian town of Medicine Hat, which provides housing for someone within 10 days of learning they are homeless. We have to come together to pool our re

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implement a program that assures everyone a heated safe space, a locking door, and a place to rest. Finding peace and a normal night's sleep or welcoming a person for treatment

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services when they decide it's time are the least we can do to help those around us. But for those needing a place to start from again, as a community, we should be telling them that we are here for them.

Constituent responsiveness and meeting a diversity of needs –

being present for our community, and seeing to their needs, some may be needed more immediately, while others are more longterm planning, such as transportation planning in the future.

