

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
Keith		Smith

2. Office sought (include office, jurisdiction, position/district number): State Representative Pos. 1 32nd District

3. Are you the incumbent? Yes X No

4. How long have you resided in this district/city? 3 years in District, 15 years in the Lynnwood/Brier/Edmonds area.

5. How long have you resided in King County? N/A

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

7. If partisan, please indicate party: Independent

CAMPAIGN CONTACTS

Campaign Name: Washingtonians for Keith Smith

Address: 20406 Cypress Way

City/State/Zip: Lynnwood WA 98036

Campaign Phone: 425 974 0228

Campaign E-mail: Keithsmithrep2016@gmail.com

Campaign Website: _____

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)

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:

- **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 this position because I believe that Washington can be more effective in the way that it runs its government. We currently have the resources to run an effective and productive government, but we still seem to have solvable problems. For example, we have patients walking off of the campus at Western State Hospital on a semi-regular basis, and no one seems to be asking why. Snohomish County recently implemented a new 911 system that is causing delays in dispatch and could result in deaths, and Bellevue also had the same problem, but no one has been brought before our representatives and asked what happened, or how it could be fixed. The legislature needs to be holding people accountable for their failings in administrative positions. Basically, our government is not broken, but it does need a tune-up.

I also feel like our political system is becoming more divisive, and we need individuals who are willing and able to find innovative solutions that will bridge the political divide so that Washington can move forward in a direction that will allow for growth while also allowing for individual and business freedoms. My time spent as a Volunteer Guardian-ad-Litem (VGAL) with the Snohomish County Juvenile Court has taught me how to balance different points of view while also advocating for a "constituency". While I was a VGAL I was tasked with being an advocate for children who have been removed from their homes by child protective services. However, it was rare that all sides would agree to an appropriate plan that would facilitate a return home for the children. Generally, the Department of Social and Health Services would want a very restrictive plan, while the parents wanted to make no changes whatsoever. I would usually enter into that situation and attempt to find a place that both of those parties could agree to, while also knowing what I needed to happen so that I could feel good about returning the children. This skill set is directly transferable to the legislature, as I would be working with individuals who may have very different views on an issue. By being flexible, while also fighting for what I believe in, I can help broker compromise that will allow Washington to keep growing economically while preserving everyone's rights.

Lastly, I want to run for this position because I have lived here my whole life and I believe that we are getting away from Washington's values. There are calls for a so-called "bathroom bill" similar to the one in North Carolina. Mukilteo has had a string of anti-Islamic backlash over the last few months. Washington State is beginning to look like Washington D.C. and I believe that I am the candidate that is in the best position to preserve the ideas and values that have made me proud to call this state my home for my entire life.

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

When I am tasked with a problem I am a tenacious researcher and thinker about that problem. When I was getting my Bachelor's from Central Washington University I had to do a research project as part of a class. I dove headlong into my research. So much so, that I was asked to present it at a school wide symposium and I was adjudged to be in the top 10% of researchers. It was a topic about which I had no prior knowledge, just a theory, and I went all the way with it. I do that with every question I am asked. As a VGAL I would not take someone at their word about anything, I would always look for the evidence to back up what they said. This trait allows me to always know exactly what the issue is before me, and how to best answer the questions that I need to answer.

I also love to debate. Which means that I am willing to hear everyone's point of view on an issue before weighing in with my own opinion, and willing to work with others to find compromise wherever it is possible.

Lastly, I am very good at listening to, and remembering what, is told to me. That allows me to find inconsistencies in arguments when I am debating a person, and it also allows me to forge connections with people so that we can have healthy, and productive, working relationships.

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.

The accomplishment of which I am most proud is graduating from college. I am the first member of my immediate family to graduate. I worked during my entire college career, which meant that it took me longer, but also allowed me to support myself during that time. I come from humble beginnings. I was the child of a single mother, and we were essentially homeless for a short time while I was in middle school. I know that I beat the odds, and I was only able to do so because I have tenacity and grit. Two traits that you need when you are going up against people who may be so stubborn that they will never see your point of view.

My second proudest accomplishment was getting a child placed with a loving adoptive family while I was a VGAL. I took on a case that was late in the process, so I had little time to get up to date on what was happening. I had to use my time wisely, and I had to wade through lies and misinformation from almost every party. In the end I had to make a tough decision, and that was to recommend that the child not return to her parents. It was heart wrenching, but I believe that I did the right thing. While I hope to never be tasked with such a difficult decision in Olympia, I know that I am capable of handling tough choices, on a short time frame, and with spare reliable information.

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.

I have mentioned my time as a VGAL during the entire year of 2016, and what skills I gained from doing that work. I was also a volunteer at the Progressive Animal Welfare Society in 2009. That time taught me the importance of animal welfare measures. They, and children, are two groups that cannot speak for themselves. Therefore they need strong voices to advocate for what they need. I am also a foster parent for Old Dog Heaven, and have been for over a year now.

My friends and family know me as a very reliable person. I will drop anything to help a friend in need. It is about compassion. No matter what side of the political aisle you are on, you need to be compassionate to those around you.

In addition to those things, I have worked since I was 16. That has taught me the importance of supporting yourself, and working hard to get what you want.

Lastly, I have been a member of the greater Lynnwood community for most of my life. I have been a good community member during that time. I am the first to "say something" if I "see something". In other words, I believe in community policing, and I try to work with the police to keep my home and work a place that everyone can enjoy and feel safe when they are there.

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

As a State Rep. I will be tasked with researching topics for committee hearings, asking questions of witnesses, making statements on the floor of the house in an attempt to persuade others, network so that I can get knowledgeable people to testify at hearings, communicate with my constituency so that I can represent their needs, and vote on bills that brought to the house floor.

All of these are extremely important duties. However, the most important part is obviously going to be communicating with, and representing, my constituency. Democracy does not work if I do not do that. It is the bedrock of what we do in America. The next most important duties are researching topics, asking questions, then presenting the finding to the full house. That is the manner in which I am able to represent my constituency, so I need to be effective in those areas.