



34th District Democrats State Representative Appointment Questionnaire

Name	Toni Lysen	Phone Number	206.683.4114
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Precinct	Bur 34-1081	Web Page	NA

Present Occupation How Long?	External Affairs Liaison, Office of the Regional Commissioner, The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS), Region 10. I am nearing 5 years at this position.
Current Employer	The Health and Human Services Administration
Union Affiliations	I am currently the Union Steward for the American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE) Local #1923 (100 CMS employees working in the Seattle Regional Office). I am a former member of the American Federation of Teachers (AFT) 1967-72 while I taught in the Highline and Seattle School Districts. Both unions are members of the AFL/CIO.

***PLEASE ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS
(YOU MAY USE A SEPARATE SHEET OF PAPER FOR ANSWERS)***

1. What are the main messages of your campaign?

I am a candidate for the appointment to the House of Representatives, Position #2 because I believe I have the EXPERIENCE and effectiveness in developing and implementing public policy, the COMMITMENT to the Democratic Party and Democratic principles, and the TIME to devote full time to serve the people of the 34th Legislative District.

You can expect me to be a leader in seeking common ground with other lawmakers to forge agreements and avoid stalemates in order to create positive solutions to the important issues facing the 34th Legislative District and the state. I have a broad policy background and solid experience in developing those policies into a reality, proven leadership and negotiation skills, a 40 year involvement with the Democratic Party and commitment to Democratic principles, understand the complexity of the 34th Legislative District, and could retire from my present job in order to work full time on behalf of the 34th District. Through my 25 years of legislative work I know how powerful our government's capacity is to help, and how great that same capacity is to harm. I would work hard to ensure that the Legislature reflects a progressive agenda that brings justice and fairness to our 34th District. It would be an honor to represent you again.

2. What are the three most pressing issues facing our District? How do you propose to address these issues in Olympia?

The three most pressing issues facing our 34th District are:

- 1) Glacier NW's plan to mine millions of tons of sand and gravel on Maury Island,**
- 2) the North Highline Annexation**
- 3) Transportation - especially 1) protecting ferry service for Vashon Island and 2) developing an affordable, viable solution for the viaduct.**

#1 Glacier- I pledge to fight against Glacier NW as hard as any of our legislators have, and as I did in the 2002 session. Then, I noticed a bill (HR 2488) had been introduced that would have forced the state to grant Glacier a mining permit and I alerted the Vashon community and Erik and Joe. Working together we killed the bill. My first priority in the 2008 session would be to work to pass SB 6011



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which was Sen. Poulsen's 2007 bill that would have protected Vashon from Glacier or other legislation of a similar nature that may be introduced. While SB 6011 passed the Senate it, unfortunately, was killed by the House Democratic leadership. I will work with Joe, Eileen, Dow, Preserve Our Island members, other legislators, lobbyists and citizens to advocate against Glacier.

#2 Annexation - The voters in North Highline Unincorporated Area will decide which city will annex their area. The cities of Seattle and Burien are exploring possible annexation of North Highline and Tukwila and SeaTac are also considering annexation of smaller parts of North Highline. If appointed, I will work to ensure that there is a level playing field between any cities that may choose to pursue annexing any portion of the North Highline. Pending and future legislation must not favor one annexing city over another. Annexation of this area this area is very complex because it doesn't just involve the cities, but also impacts the special purpose School, Fire, Water, and Sewer Districts that currently exist in North Highline. I will meet regularly with the North Highline Unincorporated Area Council, the elected officials of the cities that are considering annexation, and the elected board members and commissioners of the special purpose districts. I would work to make sure the annexation process will be fair for all parties, those being annexed and those annexing. Because approximately half of North Highline is in our 34th Legislative District and half is in the 11th Legislative District, I will work with the legislators the 11th Legislative District on any legislation that may affect the annexation of this area.

#3- Transportation:

The Viaduct - While the City of Seattle and the state are still at odds about the project in general, they agree on some major elements for the viaduct replacement: that the south end of the viaduct, where experts say the ground would liquefy in an earthquake, should no longer be at ground level; that there needs to be an interchange to state Route 519 to connect with the port, and that fire-safety improvements could be made on the Battery Street tunnel. Sen. Ed Murray, the former House Transportation Chair, has proposed a measure that would require the state to hire a mediator and urban planners to work with the neighborhoods to come up with a plan for the corridor and, it is my understanding, that the Governor supports the idea in principle. While it is unsure what plan the city and state will decide on or when, I will work for a solution that is practical, affordable, and keeps the traffic from the 110,000 daily viaduct trips moving.

Ferry service for Vashon Island must be fully protected. A recent state audit report suggested there be further cuts in summer service of two hours per day on the Fauntleroy-Vashon-Southworth route with more hours cut in the winter months. Vashon cannot sustain any more cuts in service. The 2007 Transportation budget authorizes many ferry system changes including a 2.5 year price freeze on fares and an exemption from the state sales tax for passenger-only ferries. These provisions were difficult to negotiate. I will work to sustain them and to ensure that those who use the Vashon ferries receive dependable and affordable ferry service. The newly-created King County Ferry District will begin to operate the passenger-only ferries on the Vashon - Seattle run next July 2008. I will work to make sure the state and county continue to support this new service and will encourage the county to offer year round water taxi service.

3. How have you been involved in the local 34th District Democratic Party? Have you contributed financially to any Democratic Organization or Candidate? Have you been a Precinct Committee Officer? When/Where?

I have been involved with Democratic politics in the 34th LD since 1968 when it was the 31st LD and have been the PCO for BU 34-1081 for about 18 years when the long-time former PCO Dorothy Erickson decided not run again. My kids used to help Dorothy distribute campaign literature to the voters in our precinct. The offices I have held in the 34th LD are: Chair (2001), treasurer, KCDCC Representative and Legislation Action Chair.

I donate money to our 34th district, county and state party organizations and many local, state and national Democratic candidates, ballot measures, and causes -probably enough to have put a child though college for a year!

4. Have you ever supported or given money to a candidate from another party in a partisan race? If so, to whom and why? **NEVER!**



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5. What is your involvement in the communities that make up the 34th District that shows you are the best candidate for appointment as our State Representative? What would you like us to know about your past experiences and achievements that make you the best candidate for appointment? What distinguishes you from your opponents?

I have been involved with many organizations located in the 34th LD and involved with many causes arising from the community. I have lived in this area for 40 years and raised 6 children here, was actively involved with my husband's campaigns and work as a 34th LD legislator of 12 years, as well as developed my own interests. Many of these are not the most known organizations in the district but, instead put me in contact with the little guy- the grass roots. Because of my work with the "regular voter" I believe that I understand our district very well. Some of the organizations I have been involved with were/are: the local public and private schools my children attended and the sports leagues they played in, our church - which includes members from Burien and most of the North Highline Unincorporated Area, and the Shorewood Community Club (where I live). I tutored illiterate adults to read, volunteered for an organization named FISH that helped take the sick to doctor appointments or helped them around the house. I have been a member of the Burien NW Planning Council, South End Neighbors for Peace, St. Bernadette School Board, Evergreen Democratic Women's Club (newsletter editor), and Shorewood Garden Club and I volunteer for Habitat for Humanity supporting those who build the houses- many of which are located in the 34th LD. I registered voters for the Democratic Party at most Burien and White Center grocery stores and worked throughout the 34th LD as a volunteer for numerous campaigns for Democratic legislative, county council, state-wide candidates and non-partisan Burien City candidates. Over the years, I have door belled most of the precincts in the 34th LD.

During my 2002 Legislative term I joined and attended regularly the West Seattle and South King County Chambers of Commerce. As a legislator I attended the meetings of and worked with many neighborhood councils, and the community, educational, human service, and business organizations that exist throughout the 34th LD. Because of my over 40 year involvement in so many facets of our vibrant community I believe I know about and understand our legislative district very well and will be most able to represent it.

6. What are your views on spending taxpayer money and fiscal responsibility?

I appreciate the wise use of money for government programs that invest in our society mostly because I have been a single parent and for awhile worked two jobs to support my family. Thus, I understand that the average tax payer is very concerned that his tax dollar goes as far as it can and that most people are feeling the pinch of increased property taxes. As a legislator I did and will work for a progressive tax system.

Washington's absence of a personal income tax and its reliance on sales and property taxes is fundamentally inequitable to low- and middle-income people, unfair to many businesses and subject to sharp fluctuations in revenue. One study found Washington's tax system to be the most regressive in the U.S. Families in the lowest income groups pay a higher percentage of their income in taxes than the top 5% do, and many are having a hard time staying in their homes because of property tax increases. This state's tax system, with its heavy reliance on sales taxes does not work well in today's economy with its greater dependence on the service sector and is vulnerable to the decrease in spending that accompanies a recession, just when the need for state services increases. Since 1929 when Governor Hart appointed the first tax study committee there have been eight (8) other similar reviews, the most recent being the Washington State Tax Structure Study Commission meetings chaired by the capable Bill Gates, Sr. in 2002. I followed those Commission meetings and attended many that year. The commission issued a report in November 2002 that included nine alternative tax systems. Seven of the proposed plans included an income tax.

Over the years the legislature has reviewed state tax credits - many of which are outdated and eliminated many. But, we have not come far enough. As a legislator, I would host special meetings through out the district open to all residents and meet with the leaders and key opinion-makers in the public and private sectors for the purpose of educating our 34th residents about our tax system and the



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importance of tax reform to our economy and our communities and to build a consensus for progressive reform.

The good news is Washington State's revenue projections for the 2005-07 and 2007-09 biennia have been increased by a \$484 million (6/07). I support government investment in education, health care, job creation, and savings for a rainy day.

7. How would you balance continued growth with the quality of the environment? What is your strategy for accomplishing this balance as a State Representative?

Future development should encourage economically diverse neighborhoods. Economic diversity is not only color blind it allows people to work where they live. If our neighborhoods were more economically diverse, people would not need to commute nearly as far to work. Because of the way we approach growth today, getting to and from work is taking a tremendous toll on our environment - not to mention the huge transportation woes. The environmental impact of our current policy is one of many reasons the creation of economically diverse communities should be the central pillar of our public policy.

The state should increase incentives for the use of LEEDS standards that use recycled materials, energy efficiency, and conservation. The use of Low Impact Development (LID) standards, including pervious surfaces should be encouraged in all new developments plus there should be incentives to use LID standards in all new storm water projects.

Education is one of the keys. I would bring together people from Tacoma, Seattle and Burien to help create a report that would pinpoint some best practices in both green buildings and Low Impact Development. I would make grant money available to cities to undertake projects that use these principles. This would include new construction as well as rebuilding outmoded storm water facilities.



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8. What role should State government play in providing adequate healthcare to all residents of the State of Washington?

Many of the solutions to the health care crisis facing our nation must involve the federal government. However, until the Democrats control the White House states, like Washington, where the Democrats control the governor's mansion and the legislature may be in the most probable position to work toward an affordable health care system for all of its residents. Supreme Court Justice Louis Brandeis envisioned the state legislatures as "laboratories of democracy" willing to tackle new and innovative approaches in meeting the needs of society. After the Clintons failed attempt to create and pass a complete national system many believe that any change to either a national or state-wide health care system must be incremental.....such as a gradual reduction in age for eligibility for Medicare and/or a gradual increase in age and income eligibility for SCHIP (State Children's Health Insurance Program), or a requirement that employers over a certain size provider affordable health care for their employees or pay into a state health fund that will cover their employees. The number of uninsured in WA state is growing. Every year, our health care infrastructure is absorbing more than \$550 million in costs as a result of uncompensated care, according to a 2006 report from the Office of the Insurance Commissioner. I support the legislative agenda of the Fair Share Health Care coalition, a group of labor, business, health-provider and religious interests working together to expand access to health care coverage in our state. This past session the coalition promoted and the legislature expanded slots in the Basic Health Care Program (which was initially sponsored by Congressman McDermott when he was a State Senator) and increased the income eligibility level for SCHIP so that more children would be eligible for this federal/state funded program. As a former health care aide for Congressman McDermott I had no better teacher on health care policy. And, if appointed, you can count on me to work hard for an affordable universal health care that includes prescription and mental health coverage in this state and nationally.

Another concern is the practice of big employers that shift their health insurance costs onto taxpayer-funded health plans. HB 2094, introduced in the 2007 session, requires employers with more than 1,000 workers to reimburse the state for the costs of their workers on tax-funded health plans like Medicaid and the Basic Health Plan. To protect working people enrolled in these program, the bill would also make it illegal to discriminate against enrollees by, for example, firing them to avoid reimbursing the state. Unfortunately, the bill did not make it out of committee. The final 2007 budget included a proviso directing DSHS to study this bill and alternatives that apply to employers with more than 50 employees. Investing in employee health should be a requirement of doing business in Washington, whether that coverage is provided through the employer or the state. Next session HB 2094 should be a priority of the legislature. If appointed, I will work to pass a measure that prevents employers from shirking their responsibility to their employees by deliberately cost-shifting their health care costs onto taxpayers.



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9. What is your position on equal rights for same-sex couples when it comes to benefits, civil unions, marriage and parental rights?

I believe in equal rights for same-sex couples for benefits, civil union, marriage and parental rights. My cousin who is Dutch and who is gay married his partner years ago in Amsterdam with big wedding. I am very pleased that some of my grandchildren are growing up with regular interaction with gay and lesbian couples - their next door neighbors and friends who are parents of two young children. The US is slowly moving, but not fast enough in my opinion, to that point where we acknowledge with our laws and values the same rights for GLTB individuals that are afforded heterosexual individuals. I supported the long sought passage of a bill in 2006 that added sexual orientation to the state's anti-discrimination law and the passage of the Domestic Partnership Registry Bill in 2007. These laws were the first step in the process of securing legal protections for Washington's gay and lesbian families but we have more work to do ahead.

10. What creative solutions within State government can you offer to address the problems of the economically disadvantaged? How do you propose to create quality family-wage jobs within our District?

I would support increase funding for the State Housing Trust Fund so that more of our low and moderate income home buyers qualify to purchase a home. The state now has a "rainy-day" fund for the first time in many years. Maybe some of that surplus money could be used for the HTF. The economically disadvantaged include our public servants - fire, police, and teachers- who work in Seattle. My niece, a 6 year teacher working in the Seattle School District, was unable to qualify to purchase a home in the New Holly Community Area located between Beacon Hill and Rainier Beach in South Seattle. She earns about \$42,000 per year as a 6 yr teacher with a Master's Degree. She grew up in South Seattle, graduated from Franklin HS, and has taught there her first 6 years because she wanted to give back to her community. She hoped to buy a home in New Holly but was disqualified because she did not make enough money nor had enough for a large down payment.

Growing apprenticeship programs are important to enable the development of family wage jobs. I would work to fund both moderate housing programs and more slots in apprenticeship training programs as a way to increase family wage jobs in the 34th District.

11. Given the issues that arose in the 2004 Washington State Gubernatorial election, what changes would you seek in statewide voting and/or election processes? What changes would you make, if any, to State laws regarding restoration of voting rights for ex-felons?

The state must pass legislation so that a voter-verified paper ballot (Durable, scannable, accessible) is produced for every vote cast in an election to ensure that there are fair and democratic elections.

I support legislation that would restore an ex-felon's right to vote once he or she has completed his or her prison term. I believe once a felon is released from prison and back in the community under community supervision that he should be able to vote. This is just one more step to help them become more fully integrated into their community.

12. What have you done to support workers' rights to collectively bargain? Would you co-sponsor a card check neutrality bill as State Representative?

As a union steward for AFGE (American Federation of Government Employees,) Local #1923 I represent 100 federal employees, and I have successfully negotiated resolution of a number of employee-management issues. Increasingly the Bush administration is eliminating federal employee labor benefits. I have held meetings with our regional employees (and sometimes include the Social Security Administration employees who work in the same building) to update them about the progress of union negotiations with CMS management as well as hold trainings about employee rights and benefits.

I was a member of the American Federation of Teachers when I taught school. I walked picket lines when teaching and won the right to use teacher mail boxes in the schools to distribute union material.



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I've participated in marches in support of nurses, nursing home and mental health workers to organize.

Yes, I support the concept of a card check neutrality bill which would allow a union to be certified if a majority of employees show authorization forms instead of choosing to be unionized via an election. Since many employees threaten their employees who want to form a union, a card check neutrality law will assure workers' freedom to make their own choices regarding unionization. The U S House passed the Employer Free Choice Act which was supported by both WA State Senators and all our Democratic House members. It was blocked in the US Senate. Interestingly, Labor laws in five Canadian provinces require union certification upon a showing of authorization forms from a majority of employees, much like the Employee Free Choice Act. I hope the Congress will pass a card neutrality check law. I would do whatever I can in the Legislature to support employees who want to organize a union.

13. What is your position on the Alaskan Way Viaduct? What are the fundamental transportation challenges facing the 34th District and what solutions would you propose or support in Olympia?

While the City of Seattle and the state are still at odds about the project in general, they agree on some major elements for the viaduct replacement: that the south end of the viaduct, where experts say the ground would liquefy in an earthquake, should no longer be at ground level; that there needs to be an interchange to state Route 519 to connect with the port, and that fire-safety improvements could be made on the Battery Street tunnel. Sen. Ed Murray, the former House Transportation Chair has proposed a measure that would require the state to hire a mediator and urban planners to work with the neighborhoods to come up with a plan for the corridor and, it is my understanding, that the Governor supports the idea in principle. While it is unsure what plan the city and state will decide on or when, I will work for a solution that is practical, affordable, and keeps the traffic from the 110,000 daily viaduct trips moving.

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14. Do you have any ideas on how State government can advance civil rights and expand opportunity for all people regardless of race, gender, age, or religious views?

The State must continue to uphold and expand civil rights and opportunity for all residents. The state must continue to be proactive to eliminate and prevent discrimination, as it has been recently, to: 1) ensure immigrant rights for our state residents which have been restricted by the federal government in terms of eligibility for government programs, 2) to protect a patient's right to receive prescriptions despite the moral/religious belief of the pharmacist, 3) by the legislature's passage of the Domestic Partnership registry. I support the expansion of the State Human Rights Commission so it can increase the number of public forums /community meetings it hosts to every community around the state for the purposes of 1) hearing from the general public, human and civil rights groups, tribes, local governments, educators, community leaders, activists, and others, 2) to form partnerships with those communities, 3) and to educate them about current civil rights issues so it can continue to prevent and eliminate discrimination in the State.

15. By most measures, our children are way behind other industrialized countries in academic test scores and generating high-quality graduates that are ready for the workforce. How should the legislature best address this?

Last session the Legislature increased funding to increase teacher's pay, reduce class size, pay for full-day kindergarten to begin in the state's most impoverished schools, and increase enrollments in community college and 4-year universities and financial aid. This will help move our state from its ranking as one of the lowest states for quality of education. The state must continue to increase its investment in education as it did this session. The Legislature must carefully look to fund strategies that arise out of the Governor's Washington Learns initiative. As a former teacher and thankful parent whose 6 children worked hard to obtain their college degrees, I support more investment to strengthen Washington state's higher-education systems so our children and our state will be competitive in a global economy.

16. Where do you stand on public financing of campaigns in Washington?

Public financing of campaigns is essential to free elected officials from the ever increasing power of lobbyists. The current Arizona governor and 80% of the Maine state legislators were elected using publicly-financed campaign monies. Seattle was the first municipality in the nation to start a public campaign financing program, which was repealed by a 1992 initiative. Three bills with different aspects of public campaign finance were introduced during the last legislative session but none reached the floor. Joe McDermott's bill (HB 1436) would have removed the ban on public financing of local campaigns. I support his bill and would make public financing of campaigns a priority for my legislative agenda. I believe publicly-financed campaigns are the essential building block that must be enacted in order to free legislators to develop progressive, people-focused public policy — to help bring government back to the agenda of the people.

17. What specific proposals do you have to improve our criminal justice system in this State? What can the legislature do to address domestic violence? More generally, what policy initiatives would you support to reduce gun violence?

To improve our state's criminal justice system and reduce domestic violence I support increased investments in domestic violence education, mental health and drug treatment programs and funding to increase the number of special mental health and drug courts. Seattle District Court has successfully implemented a Mental Health Court program and there are fewer than 12 such courts nationwide. In these courts the key issue is whether the alleged criminal activity is related to or caused by mental illness. This program includes mental health treatment and intense monitoring.

In 2002 Speaker Chopp appointed me to serve on the WA State Domestic Violence Task Force which worked to establish a Washington State Domestic Violence Hotline - a state-wide toll free number a



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number to provide crisis assistance and information about shelters, legal advocacy, health care centers, and counseling. I am pleased that this program was funded by the Legislature and is functioning today in WA State. Along with increased funding for education about domestic violence the state should increase funding for counseling programs that specialize in caring for the perpetrator as well as the victim.

I support a ban on assault weapons and closing gun show loopholes. You would think with recent tragedies such as the recent murder of Rebecca Griego, the shooting at the Jewish Federation, and the massacre on Capitol Hill and Virginia Tech that legislation to pass restrictions on gun usage would at least pass the state legislature. Not so. A "Gun Show Loophole" bill died in the state legislature this past session. Originally introduced in 1999, the bill would have required background checks and waiting periods for buyers and sellers at state gun shows. There is a real difference in culture on our state between urban and rural legislators and their voters. Proponents are discussing reintroducing a less restrictive bill. If appointed, I would work to support background checks for gun buyers and explore the laws of other states such as Oregon, Colorado and Massachusetts to determine how design legislation that will pass in our legislature. We must work to reduce access to guns and gun violence.

Signature		Date	
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Please attach your resume.