



MY COMMITMENT TO THE DEMOCRATIC PARTY AND DEMOCRATIC PRINCIPLES

My political interests were stimulated more than 40 years ago when I became active against the Vietnam War and marched the Seattle streets in support of Cesar Chavez and the unionization of farm workers. Then I learned that politics affects everything we do -- from foreign policy to the food we eat, and I began a lifelong activism in the Democratic Party.

SUPPORT FOR DEMOCRATIC ISSUES: WHERE I STAND

Public Funding of Campaigns

- **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 Seattle was the first municipality in the nation to start a public campaign financing program, which was repealed by a 1992 initiative.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 purposely chose to put issue this at the top of the list because** 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.

Tax Reform

- **I will work for a progressive tax system.** Washington State has one of the most regressive tax systems in the country! *We need tax reform.* 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, is vulnerable to the decrease in spending that accompanies a recession, just when the need for state services increases. In 2002 I attended many Washington State Tax Structure Study Commission meetings chaired by the capable Bill Gates' Sr. The commission issued a report in November 2002 that included nine alternative tax systems to replace Washington's dependence on sales and business and occupation taxes (a gross-receipts tax on business). Seven of the proposed plans included an income tax. Washington is one of four states with a sales tax but no personal or corporate income tax and one of seven states with a sales tax but no personal income tax.
- **I will vigorously oppose the Eyman machine.** The Tim Eyman sponsored initiative, I-960, on this November's ballot would make it more difficult for the state legislature to increase revenues through taxes and fees by requiring both a 2/3rds majority in the legislature and a public advisory vote for all increases. By making it overly difficult for the state to raise necessary revenues, I-960 would inhibit the state's ability to provide for the common good. Plus, I 960 would result in added costs to prepare the ten-year cost projections for proposed state tax and fee increases and to conduct advisory votes on tax increases required by the initiative. Due to inflation, growth, and other factors, the state legislature needs to increase revenue to meet the basic needs of our state.

Transportation

- **It's time to fix 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.** Our district relies on our maritime highway which is not made of cement and asphalt. 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.

Environmental Preservation

- ◆ **I pledge to fight against Glacier's reckless mining plan:** One of the most important issues for the 34th District next session is to stop Glacier's plan to mine millions of tons of sand and gravel and barge it across Puget Sound. The risks of Glacier's reckless plan, which threatens Maury Island's only source of drinking water and may go on for 40 years, far outweighs the need for Maury Island sand. It is a shame that Erik Poulsen's bill (SB 6011) which passed in the Senate thanks to his leadership and ability to reach across the aisle was killed in the House by Democratic leadership. Matt Bergman, who was President of Preserve Our Islands, a non-profit political organization fighting Glacier NW's proposal to expand mining work on Maury Island, wrote in the February 20, 2002 *Beachcomber*: "Our newly appointed state representative Toni Lysen first sounded the alarm bells for this bill (HB 2488). Although she had been on the job for less than a week, she understood that the bill represented a pernicious attempt to subvert state environmental standards. Toni put her 30 years of political experience to work, lobbying behind the scenes to stoke the fires of political indignation. Alerted by Lysen, Preserve Our Islands issues an "Action Alert" to the Vashon community. Immediately, the community sprang into action and sent more than 100 letters and emails to Sutherland urging him to oppose this bill." **I pledge to fight against Glacier as hard as any of our legislators have, and as I did in the 2002 session.**
- ◆ **I have a lifelong commitment to environmental preservation.** I hike, camp and ski and have explored the pristine forests on backpacking trips. My sons have purse-seined in Alaska and the Puget Sound to pay for their college tuition. As a family, we believe in the need to protect our environment for future generations. I respect our precious and threatened Sound and mountain ecosystem. If appointed, I will continue tougher vehicle emission standards, green building standards, and progressive environmental policies. Erik's focus and hard work in support of renewable energy sources such as wind, solar and tides, The Puget Sound Partnership, newly created last session, offers new opportunities to restore and protect Puget Sound. It makes no sense for taxpayers to fund this effort while at the same time allowing Glacier to devastate the pristine tideland and wildlife of the Maury Island. I pledge to work for continued funding for the Partnership committee and to support its work to clean up Puget Sound.



With friends on a hike to Cutthroat Pass in the North Cascades.

- **I oppose unchecked development.** Close to home, I recently testified at the City of Burien's Environmental Impact Hearing against proposed plans to build a 200 condominium unit directly next to Seahurst Park in

North Burien. This project has enormous geophysical and environmental impacts to Seahurst Park, let alone its salmon streams and trail structure. Citizens would like Burien to purchase the 7.2 acres and add it to Seahurst Park. Doing so could save the city enormous monies it may have to spend to restore the park and its salmon stream should the development damage them.

North Highline 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.

"The House needs someone with Toni's legislative and policy experience. In the 2002 session, Toni asked me to advise a group of legislators concerned about post-9-11 state legislation that would have given local and state police broad powers to take away citizen's privacy rights. She understands how to develop resources and find information to create solutions."

— Former State Supreme Court Justice and 34th District State Senator Phil Talmadge

Affordable Housing

- **Working families should be able to buy a home.** It is bad policy on many levels when working families can no longer afford to live in Seattle, even if they rent. My niece's story is but one example of a teacher who can't afford to buy a home in the city. We need to preserve and increase the diminishing pool of affordable housing. I have lobbied to prevent the Lora Lake Apartments in Burien from being totally demolished and have encouraged the Burien City Council members and King County to support Rep. Uptegrove's mediation offer about Lora Lake.

Health Care

- **I will work for universal health care:** I worked for 20 years on behalf of the people of the 7th Congressional District as a staff member for Congressman Jim McDermott and Congressman Mike Lowry before that. I know the 7th CD and the 34th LD, and I know how both the federal and state legislative processes work — including budget and appropriations. I specialized in health care issues and entitlements, including Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, and welfare. There has been no better teacher on health care policy than Jim McDermott, and if I am appointed, you can **count on me to carry the banner for affordable universal health care.**
- **I oppose letting employers cost-shift their employee's health care costs onto taxpayers.** An issue that blends health care and tax reform 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. This should be a critical 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.
- **I support expanding the State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP):** The Federal legislation to reauthorize and expand SCHIP was vetoed by President Bush. Also, recently the Bush administration im-

posed restrictions that will make it more difficult for Washington to ensure that more children receive health coverage by increasing the annual income level for families to become eligible for the program. Governor Grequire responded by joining 29 other governors in suing the federal government to regain the state's authority. I support the Governor and will work for expanded health care coverage for Washington's children and all our citizens.

Public Education

- **I'm a former teacher who believes in a strong public education system.** I have taught in the Seattle and Highline School Districts and put six children through public and private schools. Four grandchildren currently attend public school in Seattle and Lake Washington school districts. One of my sisters is an elementary school principal. Other family members and friends who are teachers and administrators tell me how underfunded our educational system is and how unappreciated our teachers are. It's a shame teaching is not a more attractive profession today. My niece Sarah has taught 6 years in the Seattle School system and cannot afford to buy a house in Seattle. Recently, Washington State was listed as 46th in the nation in class size, 42nd in the nation in spending per student, and near last in teacher compensation.



My family— 6 children and 8 grandchildren!

- **I voted to eliminate the 60% requirement for special education levies.** I voted to eliminate this requirement in the 2002 Legislative session but it failed in the House by one vote. Finally, after years of coming close, a similar measure passed this past session with a requirement that it be sent to the voters for approval. It will be on the ballot in November as Proposition 1. I hope those who consider the measure only as a tax increase will be few and it will be approved.
- **Let's reevaluate the WASL.** An instrument is needed to measure student competency. However, it must be culturally relevant. Also, school districts need support to design incentives to keep high school students who received good WASL scores while sophomores, motivated to learn and excel the last two years of high school.

Worker Rights

- **I have been a union member and steward.** I have a strong belief in the rights of workers and the value of unions to preserve them. I currently represent nearly 100 federal employees in Seattle for the American Federation of Government Employees Local #1923. 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. I've participated in marches in support of nurses, nursing home and mental health workers to organize. I understand the complexity of employee-management interaction and have been able to mediate and negotiate employee concerns with managers. I will use those negotiation skills in Olympia.

Peace and Social Justice

- **I work with the South End Neighbors for Peace.** I marched against the Vietnam War in Seattle and remember one march in the late 1960's with so many protesters that we shut down the I-5 freeway for a few hours. I have continued my activism with the South End Neighbors for Peace and have held banners against the US involvement in Iraq on the corner of 1st Avenue and 148th in Burien as well as demonstrated in support of Lt. Watada during his court martial last February.
- I also **volunteer for Habitat for Humanity.** Supporting those who build the houses— a project with a relatively short time span from start to finish when a deserving family moves in — is a wonderful activity where one can actually see a completed project doing some good.
- Peace and justice issues are most important to me and provide the focus for the way I try to live my life, the issues and causes I support, and the policy I work to develop. These ideals will guide my work in the legislature, if appointed.