

46th District Democrats Judicial Questionnaire

Candidate Information

Candidate Name Lisa Paglisotti

Office sought King County District Court-West Division, Position 1

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Have you read the 46th LD Democrats Draft 2016 Platform? Yes , No
(Go to http://www.46dems.org/2016_ld_caucus and click "Draft Platform")

Why are you running for this office?

I have over 30 years of experience and a demonstrated commitment to serving members of this community in the justice system. I believe that I have the knowledge, skills, and temperament to be a fair judge, and would like to continue to serve this community in a new capacity. I was appointed by the King County Council on May 9, 2016 to fill a vacancy on the District Court bench and am now running to retain the seat as required by law.

Please briefly describe your qualifications for this office and your personal and professional background.

I have served the members of this community for the past 22+ years as a public defender. I have represented King County's indigent population in criminal cases ranging from driving while license suspended to murder. I have represented parents and children entangled in the foster care system, as well as individuals who have faced contempt of court for failing to pay child support.

However, my experience in the justice system extends beyond the courtroom. Prior to becoming a lawyer, I served the youth of this community as a juvenile corrections officer and a juvenile probation counselor. I was also a program coordinator for a statewide law-related education program sponsored by the Metrocenter YMCA.

I have a demonstrated background as a leader in the labor movement. I served as a member of the executive board of A.F.S.C.M.E. Local 2084 while working as a corrections officer and am currently a steward for S.E.I.U. Local 925. I was instrumental in organizing a union as a public defender.

I believe my breadth of experience in various roles in the justice system makes me uniquely qualified to be a judge. I have dealt with INaccess to justice issues on a daily basis and believe I am in the best position to open the doors to access to justice, while holding individuals accountable for their behavior.

What's your plan to win?

I have been preparing for appointment to a vacant position on the King County District Court bench for about 7 months, securing ratings from the various Bar organizations, gathering letters of recommendation, etc. I have been rated "*Exceptionally Well Qualified*" by four of these groups so far. While the County Council has experienced an extensive delay in filling this vacancy, and the process has dragged on a bit, I have not delayed in developing a strong campaign. I hired a professional judicial campaign manager and consultant in November, 2015, and gathering endorsements for some time. I have been regularly attending Democratic LD meetings and connecting with other groups who will help me win. As soon as the Council's appointment process is completed, I will launch my fundraising effort and expect to be able to raise at least \$50,000. Our campaign plan includes mailing to likely voters and continued voter outreach.

Ultimately, I believe that I am exactly the type of judicial candidate voters feel comfortable connecting with because of the nature of my experience in the justice system. I am able to connect with people by telling stories of real life experiences in our courts. I have represented ordinary working people, the disadvantaged and overlooked in our community, and those who have been challenged by their social and economic circumstances. I believe Seattle voters will want to hear my observations about what we need to do to make our justice system not only more accessible, but more fair.

What do you see as the most important functions of the position you are running for? What qualities do you possess that make you the candidate best suited to this role?

A judge is one member of the justice team. A good judge must be a good listener and must have the courage to make difficult decisions. A good judge must have a passion for people and a passion for justice. A good judge must be able to distinguish the *behavior* of an individual from that individual. A good judge must be aware of the implicit biases in our system, and must have the courage to call out implicit biases. A good judge must be aware of barriers to access to justice and must work to break down those barriers. A good judge must be cognizant of not only financial costs inherent in administering justice, but also the social costs which are often ignored. I believe that I have all of the above qualities, and my experience and service demonstrates my commitment.

Have you engaged in pro-bono work in recent years? If so, please describe that activity and if/how that was meaningful to you.

As a public defender with a high volume caseload, my work hours regularly extend well beyond the standard 40 hour work week. I have had the opportunity to speak at the Youth and Law Forum, and was invited to develop and present a training program for volunteer Court Appointed Special Advocates, educating them on criminal law issues as they related to dependency issues. I have also trained a number of volunteer interns over the years.

It has often been said that it is the duty of legislatures to pass laws and the duty of courts to enforce them. However, courts at all levels have invoked principles of interpretation to adapt legislation and constitutional provisions to a myriad of controversies. Two such principles are "public interest" and

"original intent". Please now respond to the following questions based on your legal and personal experience. Include specific examples to illustrate your answers where possible.

When reviewing cases, how do you define what is in the "public interest"?

As a judicial candidate, I am limited in my ability to comment on personal opinions as to issues of public interest. As a neutral decision maker, I will apply the law to the individual cases before me, taking into consideration the arguments of all parties, the individual facts of the case, and the applicable law.

With special regard to our state constitution, should the "original intent" of the document be considered when addressing modern legal disputes? If so, how do you balance it against arguments that the constitution is a "living", not static, document?

Our state constitution affords greater protections to individual privacy interests than the federal constitution. The justices of our State Supreme Court continually define and interpret the meaning of various provisions of our constitution. As a district court judge, I will be bound and guided by those interpretations as they apply to cases before me.