

46th District Democrats Legislative & Statewide Questionnaire

Candidate Information

Candidate Name: Tina Podlodowski

Office sought: Secretary of State

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Campaign Manager Name: Maddie Foutch

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Have you read the 46th LD Democrats Draft 2016 Platform? Yes , No

Why are you running for this office?

In Washington State, too many disenfranchised voters – youth, seniors on fixed income, military families, recent citizens for whom English is a second language, rural residents and lots more – have barriers to voting that have resulted in 1.5M unregistered (yet eligible) voters, and dismal 38% turnouts in general elections. I believe the job of Secretary of state is to have 100% of eligible citizens registered, and 100% of registered voters voting. I have a 30 year track record of fighting for equality, combined with the technology and management skills necessary to get more voters registered, and fully participating in our elections again.

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

My 30+ years of leadership in technology innovation, management, and government service has saved taxpayers millions of dollars, improved public safety and health, and revolutionized technology. Some of this experience includes:

- a full career at Microsoft after receiving a computer engineering degree,
- a term as a Seattle city councilmember,
- serving as the Executive Director for the Lifelong Aids Alliance and Big Brothers Big Sisters of Puget Sound, and
- co-founding the Washington Alliance for Gun Responsibility.

Do you consider yourself a Democrat? Have you ever been a member of another party? Have you been actively involved with the Democratic Party?

I am a lifelong democrat and current 36th district PCO. I'm a former member of the DNC Women's leadership Council and LGBT Leadership Council. I was the Statewide co-chair for Clinton 1996 until he signed DOMA into law. I served as the first ever LGBT member of the Democratic Platform Committee in 2000, and was also a delegate to the convention as a result. I have raised hundreds of thousands of dollars for democratic candidates over the last 30 years, and I am committed to our party.

What's your plan to win?

Our campaign believes in every voice and every vote. We are currently conducting a tour of all 39 counties to hear from voters and reach out to local stakeholders. We are holding house parties around the state and we have a rapidly growing group of volunteers that help with everything from data entry to phone banking.

We calculate our win number to be 1,500,655 and those votes will come Democrats voting statewide. Based on previous cycles, we know that about 6% of voters "drop-off" as they are filling their ballots out from the Governor's race to Secretary of State. This is one of the reasons Kathleen Drew lost the race in 2012. To combat this drop-off we will target our voter contact to Democrats in high drop-off precincts in our target counties (King, Spokane, Pierce, Snohomish, and Clark).

To execute our voter contact plan we need to raise \$700,000

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?

The most important functions of the Secretary of State's office are the roles of chief elections officer, chief incorporations officer and chief officer of libraries, history and heritage.

My experience throughout my career designing large systems, with multi-million dollar budgets and diverse teams that successfully solve complex problems prepares me to succeed in each of these roles.

For example, on the Seattle City Council, Iversaw all policy and budget responsibilities for the Police and Fire Departments, as well as Municipal Courts, Emergency Services and Seattle's share of the Seattle/King County Department of Public Health. This comprised 2500 employees, hundreds of city initiatives and programs and a total combined budget of \$650 million.

I am very proud that I championed the complete redevelopment and modernization of the City's financial management system, an effort that saved Seattle nearly \$30 million. Brokered a groundbreaking deal between the City and AT&T regarding open access to high-speed Internet services and the introduction of cable-based telephone service for Seattle. Authored consumer protection legislation that serves as a national model, the "Cable Customer Bill of Rights".

If elected what would your top three priorities be?

- Creating an equitable voting system – with performance metrics that move us to 100% registration/100% voter participation.
- Make it easier/cheaper to incorporate and do business in Washington state, particularly for small businesses and women-owned and minority business.
- Preserving our State Libraries and Archives and telling the “untold” and diverse history of the people of Washington State

How will you support women and families’ economic opportunities? Would you support legislation closing the wage gap, funding childcare options, and requiring paid family leave?

I will use the office as a bully pulpit to talk about the importance of comprehensive legislation that supports families, women, and low income communities. I will also walk the walk and run the Secretary of States office in a way that supports working families.

How will you work to address racial equity?

My first act as Secretary of State is to run an equity audit on the voting system. In Washington we don’t have one voting system, we have 39, one for each county. With the data from this audit, I will then know what areas of the state and what communities are under resourced. I am also committed to hiring through the lens of racial equity and bringing on a diverse team.

Describe your stance on Washington’s tax structure. What needs to be changed? What should stay the same?

It’s broken and needs to be fixed – there are lots of ways to do that. I support an income tax, I support sun setting tax breaks and closing tax loopholes, and I support a capital gains tax.

Are there issues that you’ve worked on or are excited to work on that are not receiving much media attention?

The Secretary of State’s office should be aiming for 100% voter participation – that’s the most exciting project about this position. The media generally fails to cover this position in any substantive way.

How will you combat climate change?

Again, I will use the position as a bully-pulpit, but my actual legislative abilities are beholden to the legislature.

Question	Support	Oppose	Qualify, if needed
Do you support or oppose Raise up Washington's initiative to increase the minimum wage?	X		I am gathering signatures on my 39 county tour!
Do you support or oppose access to safe and legal abortion?	X		
Do you support or oppose amending Washington's Constitution to require a two-thirds vote to raise revenue?		X	
Do you support or oppose allowing coal or oil to be exported from Washington State's ports?		X	
Do you support or oppose making two years of community college or technical school tuition-free?	X		
Do you support or oppose requiring paid vacation and sick/safe leave?	X		
Do you support automatic voter registration?	X		I support same day and automatic voter registration, as well as pre-registration for 16 and 17 year olds. Ultimately our licenses will need to comply with the REAL ID Act (by 2018). The law, passed in 2005 but slow to be fully adopted, requires proof of U.S. citizenship or proof of lawful status in the U.S. in order for state-issued ID to be valid for federal use such as airport

			security points or entering federal courthouses and other secure federal facilities. We will likely need a “tiered” license system of some sort to comply and I would work with DOL to implement accurate voter registration while at the same time allowing non-citizens to safely and legally drive.
Do you support or oppose the death penalty?		X	
Do you support or oppose barring employers from asking criminal history questions in job applications?	X		
Do you support or oppose legislation to fix Washington’s “three strikes” law?	X		

Secretary of State

How will you work to increase voter enfranchisement?

My vision is 100% voter participation. We have a lot of work to do to get there and there is not one magic fix but actually many small levers that when implemented together will get us there.

On day one I will do a performance, financial and equity audit to peel back the complex, 39 county election system and gather the data we need to understand what’s working and what isn’t. Using this data, I will employ strategies that are community based. I am committed to forming a department of voter engagement in the which is essentially a team of people working with County Auditors, local organizations, and other stakeholders to register people to vote and engage people in the elections process.

I am also going to use my technology background to bring our voting system into the 21st century! The technology isn’t quite there yet for online voting in a secure way, but let’s send out email reminders, text reminders, and engage folks through the channels they are using the most to communicate.

Finally, I will support legislation that increases enfranchisement like the Washington State Voting Rights Act, Automatic Voter Registration and postage paid ballots.