

46th District Democrats Federal Questionnaire

Candidate Information

Candidate Name: Suzan DelBene

Office sought: U.S. Representative, 1st District

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1. **Have you read the Washington State Democrats 2014 Platform?** Yes , No _____
(See the web link - <http://www.wa-democrats.org/about/documents> - and click "Platform".)

2. **Why are you running for this office?**

On the campaign trail, I've said I'm a workhorse, not a show horse. And I believe that Congress could use a few more workhorses. I'm a strong believer that if you are willing to put in the time to research and understand an issue, people will seek your feedback as they look for solutions to problems.

This is the approach I've taken throughout my career and will continue if reelected to Congress. As for priorities, I believe the top priority of the citizens of the 1st Congressional District and across the country is creating jobs and building a strong economy that works for everyone. I know firsthand what it is like to struggle financially growing up and how much a job can be a source of economic stability and health as well as a source of personal pride. I'll fight every day for policies that help Washingtonians get ahead: better schools, ensuring equal pay for equal work, raising the minimum wage, job creating investments in infrastructure and supporting our seniors by protecting Social Security and Medicare.

Additionally, to grow our economy, reduce our deficit and help millions of working families, we must fix our broken immigration system. Education is also critical for the long-term success of our families and the economy. I will continue my efforts to make college more accessible and affordable, such as lowering student loan interest rates and allowing students to refinance their loans. In addition to the \$200 million I secured in new job-training funds, we must do more to support employee training and expand apprenticeships to ensure we have a trained workforce who can step into the new jobs being created today. I am committed to ensuring that every child has access to a quality education and invest more in early learning and our K-12 schools.

To build the foundation for long-term economic growth, we must craft a responsible and long-term budget that reduces the deficit and focuses on job-creating investments. Budgeting thirty or sixty days at a time is the worst and most expensive way to do it. Finally, we must simplify and reform our tax

code. This means closing unnecessary tax breaks for special interests and ensuring that everyone pays their fair share. We must make smart funding decisions based on what gives us the best return on investment such as in infrastructure, basic research and education – all proven job creating investments.

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

I received my master's degree in business from the University of Washington and a bachelor's degree in biology from Reed College in Portland, Oregon.

I started my career doing medical research in Oregon and then here in Washington at ZymoGenetics. I spent the longest period of my career at Microsoft. I worked there for about 13 years over two periods, most recently serving as Corporate Vice President of the Mobile Communications Business, overseeing worldwide sales, marketing and product management efforts for the business. As part of my job I worked with key industry leaders, including device makers, mobile operators, distributors and retailers. Earlier in my career with Microsoft, I also led customer marketing for Windows 95.

In between my periods with Microsoft I worked as an entrepreneur. I was the founding vice president of marketing and store development at drugstore.com inc., an online drugstore and pharmacy, and helped to take the company public in 1999.

After my time with drugstore.com I served as CEO and President at Nimble Technology Inc., a Seattle-based business integration software company based on technology from the University of Washington. I led the company from the development of its business plan and products through to the company's acquisition.

In November 2010, I was appointed by Governor Gregoire to be Director of the Washington State Department of Revenue. During one of the most difficult budget challenges in state history, I worked to streamline processes and save money. I also travelled the state working with small businesses to develop solutions to simplify the tax code and reduce administrative burdens on taxpayers. I have also been a strategic advisor to Global Partnerships, a non-profit focused on supporting microfinance and sustainable solutions that serve those in poverty in Latin America.

In 2012, I was elected as the U.S. Representative for Washington State's First Congressional District. Throughout my time in Congress, I have showed strong leadership in Washington, DC, and if re-elected, I will continue to fight for our shared values of a strong middle class, a healthy environment, a safe and fair workplace, and equality for all.

I bring a unique voice to the nation's capital, with more than two decades of experience as a successful technology entrepreneur and business leader in the private sector. My depth of experience and focus on achieving concrete results allows me to break through Congressional gridlock and get things done, earning me praise from the Everett Herald, who called me "the most prolific, effective member of her freshman class."

I take on a wide range of challenges both in Congress and in the 1st District. When the I-5 Bridge collapsed in May 2013, I fought to secure emergency funding to immediately rebuild the bridge and help ensure that the Skagit Valley stayed open for business. And in the aftermath of the slide in Oso, I worked

to ensure the federal government did everything possible to help victims, their families, and all those affected by one of Washington's worst natural disasters.

I am a strong voice on the House Agriculture Committee for Washington's farmers and growers. I was the only Member of Congress from Washington state on the bipartisan Farm Bill conference committee, which successfully negotiated a 5-year Farm Bill that was good for farmers and ranchers, preserved nutrition benefits for working families and children, and included \$200 million for my legislation to expand job-training opportunities for SNAP recipients. Washington received \$22 million for its job-training pilot. At the start of the 114th Congress, I was named Ranking Member of the Subcommittee on Biotechnology, Horticulture, and Research.

Through my role on the House Judiciary Committee, I am at the forefront of issues relating to technology and privacy, and have become a leading voice in the House calling for greater transparency and oversight of the NSA to restore American's privacy rights, which passed. I am also focused on advancing common-sense immigration reform and was the lead sponsor on H.R. 15, the Border Security, Economic Opportunity and Immigration Modernization Act, a comprehensive immigration reform bill with more than 200 cosponsors last Congress.

I am also a member of Republicans' Select Panel to Attack Women's Health, which was established to investigate Planned Parenthood and other abortion providers after doctored videos were released from a group of anti-choice extremists – who have since been indicted by a grand jury on felony charges. In my role on the Select Panel, I am fighting to protect women's access to healthcare and safeguard the privacy and safety of doctors, patients and medical students across the country.

I was appointed to serve on President Obama's Export Council, the President's advisory committee on international trade. I also serve as co-chair of the New Democrat Coalition's 21st Century Job Skills Working Group, and co-chair of the Women's High Tech Caucus, Internet of Things Caucus, Trademark Caucus, Dairy Caucus, and Aluminum Caucus.

I know what it will take to ensure that our nation and this region lead in creating high-wage 21st century jobs—great educational opportunities for our children and ongoing training for adults; a financial system that is fair, strong, and transparent; incentives that foster research, innovation, and entrepreneurship; and a health care system that works for everyone. I will continue fighting for these priorities in the other Washington.

I was named a Champion of Main Street Businesses by the Washington Retail Foundation, and received the 2014 Distinguished Community Health Advocate Award from the National Association of Community Health Centers (NACHC) for my work to expand access to care for our nation's most vulnerable communities. I was also awarded the President's Award from the NAACP for my work on behalf of veterans and their families.

In terms of service, I have always been an active member of my local community. I am an active member of my church. I ran capital campaigns and served on the board of St. Mark's Cathedral as well as serving as a Stephen's Minister, which is someone who is trained to work one-on-one with people going through difficult times in their lives. I co-chaired part of the search process for a new rector at St. Thomas Medina and I served on the board of a school in Kirkland. I have been involved with the YWCA of King and Snohomish Counties for many years and served on their Eastside Committee which most recently

helped to complete a transitional housing facility in Issaquah. I have 2 children, Becca and Zach, and am married to Kurt DelBene.

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

Yes; No; Yes.

5. What's your plan to win?

I plan to file for reelection during filing week in May. My campaign has received some media attention already and I expect that after the filing deadline there will be more. I will also proactively be seeking endorsements from our local newspapers as the campaign moves forward. Additionally, I plan to spend much of my time travelling throughout the district to meet with local chambers, neighborhood groups, and small business owners, including farmers and education leaders.

It is critically important to get my message out to voters. The campaign is currently designing an aggressive field program that will identify a targeted universe of voters. Generally, we have focused our time on meetings throughout the district to organize support, as well as on fundraising. We know what it takes to raise the kind of money needed for this campaign: an aggressive call time operation, numerous fundraising events, and a strategic low dollar online fundraising operation. We expect that our campaign budget this year will be very similar to that of 2014.

I'm pleased to have received early endorsements from the SnoCo Dems and the King County Young Dems. Our proactive endorsement effort is just now beginning and will be sharply ramping up as the cycle moves forward. I was proud to build a strong, diverse list of endorsers and supporters in my 2014 campaign and I plan to put forth the same effort this year.

6. 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?

I believe our government needs to be more open and responsive to the public. One way we can do this is by utilizing technology to improve government transparency. Also, legislators need to be good stewards of policy. That is, to regularly review, evaluate and update policy instead of just passing a law and then putting it on a shelf for thirty years. I am committed to ensuring that my actions and activities as a lawmaker are transparent to my constituents. In addition, I often say, I have the honor of representing one of the most diverse districts in the country. And I hear from people on nearly every side of the issues. I believe we benefit when our elected leaders have to consider a wide range of opinions and perspectives as we tackle challenges facing our country. I will continue to listen to all of my constituents, and fight for their priorities in Congress.

7. If elected what would your top three priorities be?

1. Creating Jobs and Building an Economy that works for everyone: Jobs and the economy are the most pressing concerns of people in the 1st Congressional District and across the country. I know firsthand what it is like to struggle financially growing up and how much a job can be a source of economic stability and health as well as a source of personal pride. I'll fight every day for policies that help Washingtonians get ahead: better schools, ensuring equal pay for equal work, raising the minimum wage, job creating investments in infrastructure, and I'll support our seniors by protecting Social

Security and Medicare. Additionally, to grow our economy, reduce our deficit and help millions of working families, we must fix our broken immigration system.

2. Education: Education is critical for the long-term success of our families and the economy. I will continue my efforts to make college more affordable such as stopping the doubling of student loan interest rates last year. In addition to the \$200 million I secured in new job-training funds, we must do more to support employee training and expand apprenticeships to ensure we have a trained workforce who can step into the new jobs being created today and in the future. I am committed to ensuring that every child has access to a quality education and boosting investments in early learning and our K-12 schools.

3. Passing a Responsible, Long-term Budget: Budgeting thirty or sixty days at a time is the worst and most expensive way to do it. To build the foundation for long-term economic growth, we must craft a responsible and long-term budget that reduces the deficit and focuses on job-creating investments. We must simplify and reform our tax code. This means closing unnecessary tax breaks for special interests and ensuring that everyone pays their fair share. We must make smart funding decisions based on what gives us the best return on investment such as in infrastructure, basic research and education – all proven job creating investments. By spending a little money now, often we can save a lot of money in the long run while benefiting our country as a whole.

8. What are your ideas for combating climate change?

I know firsthand that what makes living in the 1st Congressional District so special is the natural environment that surrounds us. We are home to some of our nation's most beautiful forests, mountains and waterways, and I understand how important it is that we preserve these natural resources for future generations to enjoy. I believe strongly that climate change is not just a challenge we must tackle to avert disaster, but that it is an opportunity to build a new clean energy economy and preserve our quality of life. The 1st Congressional District can be a leader in this new economy creating thousands of good paying jobs in the green economy.

For our economy to fully recover, we need to take control of our country's energy future. This means investing in clean, renewable energy. Doing so will help develop a new sector in our economy, and address the security challenges we face because of our dependence on fossil fuels. It's urgent that we take meaningful steps now to begin the transformation to an economy based on clean and renewable energy sources. I was proud to be an original cosponsor of legislation (H. Res. 637) to establish a national goal of more than 50 percent clean and carbon free electricity by 2030.

I also strongly support efforts to combat the impacts of climate change, such as the Paris climate agreement and the Clean Power Plan. In addition, I have cosponsored legislation to permanently authorize the LWCF, legislation to close loopholes in fracking regulations, and have sponsored, cosponsored, and passed into law legislation to expand wilderness, wild and scenic rivers, and public lands protections, such as the Alpine Lakes Wilderness expansion. My focus will continue to be expanding outdoor recreation opportunities through protected public lands, working to address climate change, as well as defending the environment from constant attacks in Congress on NEPA, ESA, Clean Air and Clean Water Act, or denying the social cost of carbon.

9. 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?

Strong economic growth can only be achieved when *all* Americans have the opportunity to succeed. Unfortunately, there are still too many barriers facing middle-class Americans, particularly women and families. In Congress, I'm supporting legislation that increases the federal minimum wage, ensures equal pay for equal work, provides workers with paid sick leave, and expands access to affordable, quality childcare. I also support paid family leave programs that help workers and don't unduly impact small businesses. In the coming years, alongside my federal colleagues and in close coordination with state and local leaders, I will continue to focus on how Congress and the federal government can best support pro-family policies to expand access to paid leave across the country. Our economy thrives when working families are both healthy and financially stable, because when women succeed, America succeeds.

In addition, I introduced the Women's Small Business Ownership Act (H.R. 4027), which would improve access to lending and increase business counseling and training services for women entrepreneurs, and give women-owned businesses the same level of access to federal contracts as other disadvantaged groups.

10. How will you work to address racial equity?

As lawmakers, I believe we in Congress have a responsibility to address systemic racism, especially in the criminal justice system. That's why I helped introduce the Sentencing Reform Act (H.R. 3713), which reduces mandatory minimums for drug offenses, reduces the three-strike mandatory life sentence to 25 years and provides judges with greater discretion in determining appropriate sentences. I will continue to work with my colleagues on the Judiciary Committee to address other areas where we can make a significant impact, from prison reform to improving access to mental health services.

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

As another election nears, the need for campaign finance reform is stronger than ever. The U.S. Supreme Court's *Citizens United* decision was a devastating blow to our democratic electoral system. The 2010 ruling struck down restrictions that had barred corporations from spending unlimited amounts of money in elections.

Since the decision, nearly a half-billion dollars in undisclosed money was spent during the last two election cycles, and 2016 will no doubt see at least that much "dark money." It is clear that reform is needed to restore Americans' confidence in our democracy.

I believe voters have the right to know where election money goes and who it's from. That's why I am continuing the fight for campaign finance reform in Congress. I support a constitutional amendment to overturn *Citizens United* and ban corporations from using their general funds in elections. I am also a cosponsor of the DISCLOSE Act, a bill that greatly enhances the public reporting of campaign-related activities by corporations and outside special interest groups. I will keep fighting for these reforms because it's unfair for corporate special interests to have more of a say in elections than voters.

In addition, I am also proud to have introduced a bill to boost national landslide programs and ensure the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) and communities have the latest in mapping technology.

In the wake of the tragic Oso landslide, we learned many lessons, including that lawmakers need to do more to ensure we fund resources and research efforts to prevent future natural disasters from becoming national tragedies. Every state in the country faces some amount of landslide risk, a risk that has not been well identified or addressed when compared to earthquakes, hurricanes, or floods. Substantial work needs to be done to gain better knowledge of landslides and their potential impacts in order to reduce losses of life and property. It is time that landslide hazards are addressed properly and in a collaborative fashion. My bill will allow significant progress to be made in landslide science and will allow communities to be better prepared for when landslides do occur.”

My bill, the National Landslide Loss Reduction Act (H.R. 4776), would establish the National Landslide Hazards Reduction Program through USGS as well as two competitive grant programs. These programs will establish a national program to identify hazards and reduce losses through better assessment, coordination and increased community education. In addition, the two grant programs will focus on supporting mapping, assessment and research, both locally, with higher education and through the private sector.

12. What are the United States’ essential security interests and needed outcomes in the Middle East? How will you decide what should be pursued with force and which left to diplomacy?

I believe the United States should always utilize peaceful solutions and focus on diplomatic efforts as the primary means to resolve international conflicts. I also believe religious and cultural freedom is an essential human right, and everyone should be able to live out their beliefs openly and without fear of intimidation and incarceration.

Everyone’s shared goal is to prevent a nuclear-armed Iran, and without the Iran nuclear deal – which I supported - Iran could have had nuclear capabilities in a matter of months. This deal was our best opportunity to prevent Iran from developing a nuclear weapon.

In addition, the United States and Israel have always had a unique and strong bond that can never be broken. I believe that the relationship between the United States and Israel is founded on a mutual commitment to democratic values and a desire for peace in the Middle East. Israel remains one of our most important allies in an unstable region and a strong relationship with Israel is critical to our national security interests. It is essential for the United States to work with the international community to help the Israelis and Palestinians negotiate a lasting two-state solution so that both sides may live peacefully alongside each other. I will continue to work with both parties in Congress and the administration to realize this goal.

In Iraq and Syria, recent escalations in violence make it clear that the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) poses a growing threat to American interests, allies, and citizens, one that will require a comprehensive strategy led by a broad coalition of international forces to defeat. I believe this Congress needs to have a voice and not rely on authorizations that are many years old. I support enacting a narrowly-tailored authorization for use of military force (AUMF) that demonstrates our unified commitment to addressing this threat, provides the President with the authority he needs to defeat ISIL, and asserts congressional oversight over the use of military force -- while making clear that our nation

does not benefit from deploying Americans into a sustained ground combat role. I have also called on President Obama to convene international negotiations to stop the civil war in Syria, stabilize the country, and provide for political change toward a popularly-supported, accountable Syrian leadership.

13. Congress has huge responsibility on many, many issues. How will you prioritize between those most important to you? For example, how will you prioritize funding for mental health services, veteran affairs, education, healthcare, transportation and infrastructure, homelessness, etc.?

I believe we should be focusing on policies that are community driven. This means addressing critical issues as they arise, such as lead in drinking water, the Zika health crisis, protecting law abiding Americans' privacy, and addressing those experiencing homelessness.

However, we should also be working in a bipartisan fashion to achieve results as much as possible. I was proud to work across the aisle as the only Member of Congress from Washington state to negotiate the 2014 Farm Bill. In addition, I worked with Rep. Dave Reichert to pass an expansion of the Alpine Lakes Wilderness. Most recently, I co-founded the bipartisan Women's High Tech Coalition to promote STEM education and the Internet of Things (IoT) Caucus, which focuses on educating policymakers about IoT innovations to inform well-crafted public policy. I joined with Republicans Susan Brooks (R-Indiana) and Darrell Issa (R-CA), respectively, to form these organizations.

Question	Support	Oppose	Qualify, if needed
Do you support or oppose adopting Pres. Obama's proposal for raising the national minimum wage to \$10.50?	X		
Do you support or oppose access to safe and legal abortion?	X		
Do you support or oppose requiring 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?			I support efforts to ensure we have a thorough and comprehensive environmental review process at the local, state and federal level for proposals to export commodities through Washington ports, and have opposed efforts to undermine these reviews. Only once all the facts are known can we make an informed decision. Specifically at Cherry Point, the Army Corps of Engineers released their findings just days ago that the proposed terminal would impact the treaty rights of the Lummi Nation and the permit cannot be approved. For any future projects, it's important to get all of the facts on the table so we can evaluate objectively all of the impacts and opportunities that come with such large projects.
Do you support or oppose making	X		

two years of community college or technical school tuition-free?			
Do you support or oppose requiring paid vacation and sick/safe leave?			Workers should not be forced to choose between caring for their health and keeping their paychecks. That's why in 2015, I helped reintroduce the Healthy Families Act (H.R. 932) to ensure workers in all 50 states have access to paid sick leave. This important legislation would allow workers to earn up to 7 paid sick days per year to recover from short-term illnesses, care for a sick family member, access routine medical care, or seek assistance related to domestic violence. I also support paid family leave programs that help workers and don't unduly impact small businesses. In the coming years, alongside my federal colleagues and in close coordination with state and local leaders, I will continue to focus on how Congress and the federal government can best support pro-family policies to expand access to paid leave across the country.
Do you support automatic voter registration?	X		
Do you support or oppose the death penalty?		X	
Do you support or oppose barring employers from asking criminal history questions in job applications?			I generally support efforts to prevent employers from asking unnecessary criminal history questions in job applications. However, background checks are necessary for certain types of jobs, depending on their responsibilities, and I believe any legislation should take that into account.
Do you support or oppose legislation to fix "three strikes" law?	X		