



2018 Legislative candidate survey

Candidate name: Emily Randall Legislative district: 26th

You are a candidate for: House of Representatives Senate

If you are a candidate for the House of Representatives, which position are you running for? Position 1 Position 2

Local government background

Have you ever been elected or appointed to a local government position, or served on a local government board, committee, or as staff? *Local governments include cities, counties, public utility districts, school districts, fire protection districts, port districts, and more.* Yes No

If yes, in what capacity?
Enter text here

1. State-shared local revenues

When the state encounters fiscal problems, legislators often take revenues historically shared with cities, or increase fees on services provided to cities to fill the state's budget deficit. Recently, some shared revenues have been restored. However, during the last recession, the Legislature enacted cuts and diversions, while unfunded mandates and other local government cost drivers remained unaddressed, including the following items:

- Changes in liquor tax and profit distributions resulting in losses of nearly \$200 million in funds that supported essential local services, such as public safety;
- Sweeping and diverting over \$1 billion in local utility taxes, real estate taxes, and project loan repayments from the nationally-acclaimed Public Works Trust Fund (PWTF) that helps keep local infrastructure operating; and
- Requiring cities to pay training fees for officers attending the Basic Law Enforcement Academy (BLEA).

Do you support or oppose the Legislature continuing to use locally-shared revenues or revenues intended for capital projects in order to balance the state's operating budget? Support Oppose

Briefly describe one or more actions that you would take to ensure your views on these issues are accounted for by your caucus and in a final budget.

We need our legislators to budget responsibly without using tricks and gimmicks like diversions and unfunded mandates to hide deficits and cover shortfalls. Taking these revenues is unfair to local governments and puts the critical services that our citizens depend on at risk. If elected I will advocate strongly for an honest budgeting process that avoids gimmicks, pays for our priorities, and ensures we have the revenue we need to fully fund our priorities.

2. Basic infrastructure financing

Cities face many challenges when repairing and updating critical infrastructure such as drinking water and sewer systems. Historically, the Public Works Trust Fund (PWTF), a revolving loan fund, was a significant source for financing infrastructure. As the state wrestled first with a recession and then with the *McCleary* education funding challenges, legislators repeatedly turned to diverting these funds and leaving nothing in their place. Since 2013, nearly all of the tax revenues deposited into the PWTF were diverted to the state's education funding account instead. Those revenues were scheduled to come back to the PWTF in 2019, but the revenue diversions were extended another four years.

Would you support or oppose a budget that diverted more resources from the PWTF to address state general fund obligations? Support Oppose

Do you believe that it is part of the state's obligation to help fund critical local infrastructure, especially when taxes and fees raised to do so in 1985 continue to be levied? Yes No

As a lawmaker, how will you work to secure the revitalization of the PWTF and protect it from future raids?

The Public Works Trust Fund is a critical tool to ensure our state has the resources to complete desperately needed investments in our infrastructure. Delays and underfunding of the PWTF will hurt us for decades into the future. Infrastructure projects create jobs and our cities need these investments to keep up with our region's massive growth. In the legislature, I will demand that we budget honestly and fully-fund the PWTF, because like education, infrastructure is an investment in our state's future and should be a priority just as we have prioritized education funding.

3. Homelessness, affordable housing, and mental health

Across the state, housing costs are rising and affordability issues are impacting homebuyers and renters, as well as exacerbating the already critical homelessness problems in many communities. Mental health services are stretched thin and cities (not normally in the business of providing these particular social services) find themselves increasingly trying to help residents and keep their communities safe and secure. Cities have a strong desire to work together with the state, counties, business, nonprofit, and faith communities to help address these challenges. We continue to seek financing, regulatory, and funding tools to help.

Which of the following are priorities for you? Choose all that apply.

- Help to end homelessness
- Ensure adequate mental health services for those in need
- Provide tools to help control the spiraling cost of housing

Would you support or oppose a proposal for the state to override local zoning or density decisions to promote more affordability in housing construction? Support Oppose

Please elaborate on what you suggest doing to address one or more of these issues:

My neighbors are struggling to afford the rising cost of living here on the Kitsap Peninsula, and we need to take action. I've been in conversation with agencies like Housing Kitsap and Bremerton Housing Authority, as well as community collaborations like Homes for All, homelessness activists, and community allies to think about solutions that are right for our community. Each person's situation is different, and we need a multitude of solutions to fix our housing crisis. This year was full of legislative victories – from a budget that included \$106.8 million for the Housing Trust Fund, to banning source of income discrimination, and increasing investment in programs to end homelessness. But we have more and more to do. We need to incentivize the construction of low-income and workforce housing, increase emergency shelter beds and permanent supportive housing options. We know that providing *Housing First* is a model that not only helps fight homelessness, but helps those struggling with a cycle of mental health and substance abuse issues, and those dealing with other healthcare crisis – though it does not solve every problem. While we are investing in real housing solutions, we need to ensure that each and every member of our community has access to high-quality, comprehensive healthcare, in addition to growing the number of living wage jobs in our community, and building pathways to those jobs – especially for our hardest hit neighbors.

4. Economic development

Economic development opportunities vary greatly across the state. Some communities have deteriorating commercial or industrial areas or lack the needed infrastructure for critical development, and others lack access to adequate broadband services. AWC supports expansion of current programs and funding, including expansion of state Local Revitalization Financing (LRF) and Local Infrastructure Financing Tool (LIFT) programs as options to incentivize economic development and support job creation.

Would you support or oppose legislation that expands the financing options available to local governments for economic development? Support Oppose

What other ideas do you have for bolstering the state's economic development opportunities?

Our community is still struggling to bounce back from the recession. The 26th district contains parts of both Pierce and Kitsap County and includes the cities of Gig Harbor, Bremerton, and Port Orchard, as well as the rural communities of Key Peninsula and Olalla. Due to the large geographic area covered in the 26th District there are a diverse set of economies and conditions. In much of the district, people must commute to Seattle and Tacoma for work battling traffic and riding ferries every day. Some of our more rural areas struggle to attract industries due to a lack of critical infrastructure. In many parts of our district, small businesses are struggling to keep their doors open. We must make infrastructure investments and secure local educational opportunities like apprenticeship programs and vocational and technical programs so we can attract jobs closer to home. Furthermore, the 26th district would greatly benefit from investments in green energy and the resulting jobs the industry can bring to the area.

5. Local control

Cities succeed when they can respond to local residents' unique needs and desired outcomes through exercising local control. The State Constitution and state statutes provide cities with wide discretion in serving their communities. However, the Legislature sometimes considers preempting cities from enacting local ordinances or engaging in certain activities. We believe that the relationship between the state and cities functions best as a partnership, where the state gives careful consideration to the varied conditions of local governments, and appreciates the importance of retaining local flexibility.

Do you believe that local control is important to ensuring responsive local government? Yes No

If you disagree that local control should be preserved, please describe one or more specific issue areas or situations in which the state should preempt local control.

OR

If you agree that local control should be respected, please describe how you would argue for the protection of local control to colleagues who want to preempt local governments.

In a state as diverse geographically and economically as Washington, local control is essential to ensuring that each city and region can meet the particular needs of their citizens. Policies that succeed in Seattle or Tacoma are often unworkable in cities like Bremerton or Gig Harbor. At the same time, efforts to preempt local governments can limit the ability of cities to creatively confront unique challenges or leverage available opportunities. Local governments are closest to the people they serve, and have a deep understanding of local needs and interests. We should ensure our legislature has a vital interest to protect before it intervenes between citizens that their democratic will.

If you have any questions, please contact Regina Adams, AWC Government Relations Coordinator, at 360-753-4137 or ReginaA@awcnet.org. Please return your survey **by the end of the day on Wednesday, July 4** by:

- Email to ReginaA@awcnet.org;
- Fax to (360) 753-0149; or
- U.S. mail to AWC Candidate Survey, 1076 Franklin Street SE, Olympia, WA 98501-1346.

Thank you for your participation!