



Candidate Questionnaire October 2018

Food Lifeline’s goal is to elevate the issue of hunger with candidates during the election cycle. Each candidate for state and federal office received our questionnaire. For every candidate that replied, their original responses are presented as submitted. See results at foodlifeline.org/advocacy.

James Thomas	Candidate for Washington State House of Representatives, District 35, Position 1 (Shelton)
If elected, what will you do to end hunger, alleviate poverty, and create opportunity in Washington state?	The theme of my campaign is Jobs and Prosperity for Today, Education and Opportunity for Tomorrow, and Good Stewardship of our Environment as our most important legacy. The first and arguably most important step I'd take is to replace regressive taxes such as the sales and gasoline taxes with an income tax. While our Constitution does not allow an income tax as progressive as I might like it does allow for what amounts to a "flat tax" on income. While not ideal, it is a great start while we pass a Constitutional amendment to allow an even more progressive tax.
In Washington, 1 in 5 children experience food insecurity. What steps or legislative actions would you take to address child poverty and hunger?	Child poverty can't be addressed without addressing adult poverty and this is a problem with a thousand fathers: lack of skills, drug abuse, alcoholism, gambling addiction ... the list is endless. These are problems we will have to whittle away at because there are no silver bullets of which I am aware. Child hunger is a much easier nut to crack through enhanced meal programs. I would also support means-tested vouchers for school supplies, school-appropriate clothing, etc.
Food insecurity is a major contributor to poor health and higher healthcare costs, what steps or legislative actions would you take to help food insecure people with chronic diseases, like diabetes, have access to nutritious food?	Food deserts in urban areas are relatively easy to attack, specifically because they're in easily defined geographies. Food deserts in rural areas are more difficult and I honestly don't have a good answer for how we solve that. I'm certainly receptive to any ideas that might be offered.

Please note that Food Lifeline is a nonprofit, nonpartisan 501(c)(3) organization and is prohibited from participating or intervening in any political campaign on behalf of, or in opposition to, any candidate for public office.