



**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](http://foodlifeline.org/advocacy).

<b>Frank Chopp</b>	<b>Candidate for State Representative, District 43, Position 2 (Seattle)</b>
<p>In Washington, 1 in 6 children experience food insecurity. What steps or legislative actions would you take to address child poverty and hunger?</p>	<p>As a result of the COVID pandemic and economic recession, as many as 2.2 million Washingtonians are facing food insecurity. With federal aid up in the air, the legislature must take urgent action next session to provide food assistance. This past March, I helped to allocate \$200 million in emergency COVID relief, including funding for local shelters and non-profit service providers. My top priority is to get providers the resources they need to continue serving our communities, providing food assistance, shelter, healthcare, and other survival services. Beyond the immediate crisis, we need to continue making structural changes to fight poverty and food insecurity. It’s a disgrace that in one of the wealthiest regions in the world, people are suffering on the streets and are denied access to basic services. I am outraged at the grotesque inequality in our country. In response, I have proposed a Public Priorities and Progressive Revenues plan to invest over \$2 billion/year in public health, childcare and early learning, social services, housing and shelter, mental healthcare, and direct cash assistance for working families and undocumented people. These investments will ultimately benefit all Washingtonians – most especially families in poverty. To highlight one investment, greatly increasing funding for childcare and pre-K will help make sure kids get reliable meals and access to early education, which is critical to closing the achievement gap. In addition, my proposal would ensure childcare workers earn a living wage with healthcare benefits. By investing in community-based providers, we build wealth in immigrant and non-white communities, which make up a large portion of childcare workers. I’ve spent many years working to fight poverty in our state; as Executive Director of the Fremont Public Association (now known as Solid Ground), I created many programs to provide food assistance, shelter, housing, healthcare, and other social services to tens of thousands of low-income people every year. In the legislature, I enacted Apple Health for All Kids, providing free healthcare to all low-</p>



	<p>income kids. I co-founded the state’s Housing Trust Fund and invested over \$2.5 billion for low-income housing. I initiated many other anti-poverty programs like the Housing and Essential Needs program and the Home Security Fund to assist the homeless.</p>
<p>If elected, in what areas would you support making investments to overcome racial inequities?</p>	<p>I have dedicated my life to social, economic, and racial justice and equity. As a community organizer, as Director of a major social service agency (the Fremont Public Association, now known as Solid Ground), and as a State Representative and Speaker of the House, I have worked tirelessly for this vision. It begins with fundamental human rights – the right to health care, housing, education, gainful employment, fairness and to an array of civil rights and equal opportunities, free of discrimination and racism. In each of these areas, I have driven progress in the state legislature, advancing social, racial, and economic justice for hundreds of thousands of Washingtonians. One of the best ways to get up and out of poverty is education – especially higher education, which provides so many economic opportunities. With rising tuition costs, student debt is a major barrier for many people. Among those people who do go to college, Black students graduate with twice as much student loan debt as white students, on average. Many other students of color and low-income people don’t attend college at all. In response to this urgent need, I initiated and enacted the Workforce Education Investment Act of 2019. The Act mandates an entitlement to free college and university tuition for all low-income students, half of whom are students of color. It is the best student financial program in the nation! This will help transform the futures of over 120,000 students each year, providing economic opportunity without burdening students with thousands of dollars of student debt. We can still do more. I’m working with a coalition of educators, student leaders, and colleges to expand the Act to cover needed graduate degrees, like mental health professionals and bi-lingual teachers. I’ve also partnered with Senator Bob Hasegawa to advance a form of a public bank, which could provide very low-interest student loans. Beyond education, we must promote equity with universal healthcare, pre-K, and childcare. Healthcare is a fundamental human right. I was proud to enact Apple Health for All Kids, providing free, single-payer health insurance to over 800,000 young people,</p>

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including undocumented kids. Ensuring all kids have adequate healthcare is critical to closing the achievement gap between white students and students of color. I'm currently working to expand Apple Health to cover young adults to age 26, many of whom are students or are just starting their careers and can't afford the cost of health insurance. Universal pre-K and affordable childcare are also crucial to advancing racial equity and supporting working families. Our childcare system is in crisis, with nearly 20% of childcare settings having closed this year. I have proposed a 3-fold increase in state funding for childcare, paid for by a progressive tax on larger corporations who depend on thousands of working parents. Right now, childcare is a burden for families. With my plan, childcare would be much more affordable, and childcare workers would be paid a living wage with healthcare benefits. I've also provided leadership to invest over \$2.5 billion in affordable housing, which has clearly assisted people of color across Washington state. I co-founded the state's Housing Trust Fund which, along with other programs, helped finance over 300 rent-controlled low-income apartment buildings that house thousands of people in Seattle. Currently, I'm organizing with non-profit housing agencies to purchase several hotels in King County to house homeless folks in safe, socially distanced environments. I'm also working with Home and Home, a program I started, to develop 20 major sites into affordable housing. One of my priorities for next session is to empower doctors to prescribe housing vouchers for patients in need of stable housing. You can see my full housing agenda here: <https://frankchopp.com/the-issues/> We must also address systemic racism in policing and the criminal justice system. We must pursue specific strategies to ensure law enforcement is held accountable, that there is oversight and transparency, and that training is tailored to address longstanding biases in police departments. Working with the Initiative 940 coalition, which includes the families of victims of police violence, I have publicly supported a number of specific reforms, which you can see at my website: <https://frankchopp.com/state-representative-frank-chopp-calls-for-action-on-law-enforcement-reforms/> . Many issues related to poverty are inappropriately addressed through the criminal justice system. I advocate for a comprehensive view of public safety, understanding that addressing poverty can improve the safety and well-being of the whole community.

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How will you address the role of government and taxes during your campaign and address this issue in the legislature should you be elected? Specifically, are you supportive of tax code reform? Taxing capital gains in Washington state? And funding the state's Working Families Tax Credit?

In the legislature, I've fought for investments in affordable housing, free healthcare for kids, public transit service, public education, and other social services that have helped millions of Washingtonians. I'm optimistic we can pass significant legislation next session, but fixing our broken criminal justice system will be an ongoing process. I'm committed to supporting reforms to get justice and equal treatment for all.

Our regressive tax system must continue to be overhauled. As we fight back against austerity budget cuts, I am committed to introducing, sponsoring, and organizing support for new progressive revenue. Washington's upside-down tax code amplifies social and economic inequities. To advance equity, opportunity, and economic recovery in Washington state, I have proposed a Public Priorities and Progressive Revenues plan. It would raise \$2 billion from a capital gains tax, a progressive payroll tax on larger corporations, and a tax on corporate compensation exceeding \$500,000 per year to invest in much-needed public services. Critically, my proposal funds the Working Families Tax Credit and an Undocumented Worker Relief Fund. By giving cash assistance to low-income people, we can immediately address the unequal burden of other regressive taxes while we keep working on tax overhaul. You can see the full plan on my website: <https://frankchopp.com/public-priorities-and-progressive-revenues-plan/> For many years, I have fought for progressive tax reform. I started the Economic Opportunity Institute (EOI) to actively research and advocate for progressive policies. In 2010, the EOI sponsored a state-wide Initiative for a progressive income tax, which unfortunately was defeated by the voters by 2 to 1. Despite that setback, I kept pushing for more progressive revenue. With my leadership as House Speaker, the House Democratic Caucus enacted many progressive revenue sources, to fund key public services. A few examples: • Workforce Education Investment Act, including an entitlement for Free College and University Tuition for all low-income students and reduced tuition for the middle class, including undocumented students. A very large percentage of these students are people of color. My leadership ensured that it was funded by a progressive tax on larger professional service corporations, including Amazon and Microsoft, to bring in \$1 billion over four years to start. It is the best student financial package in

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	<p>the nation. It will help transform our society towards social, racial, and economic justice for years to come. • Education Legacy Trust Fund, funded by a tax on the estates of wealthy people to increase funding for education, which brought in \$400 million this year alone. • Paid Family and Medical Leave, an important component of the social safety net, funded by insurance premiums paid by business and employees. It has been hailed as the best of its kind in the nation. • Home Security Fund, providing direct support for homeless people, funded by a document recording fee on real estate transactions. • Tax surcharges on major banks and other large corporations to support the state General Fund for various state services. • Model Toxics Control Act, greatly expanding the clean-up of toxic sites, funded by additional taxes on oil companies. • And other examples.</p>
<p>Please describe policies and investments you would support to improve farm worker rights and living conditions, if you are elected?</p>	<p>Working with farm worker unions and community organizations, I support specific programs to ensure that workers have access to PPE, healthcare, safe housing, and safe working conditions. Many farm workers are migrants, who travel through Washington to work on different farms. It's critical that we support these workers. My immediate priority is to provide PPE to all farm workers. I have heard from farm worker unions that some companies have refused to provide adequate PPE or COVID-19 testing. That is absolutely unacceptable, and my Progressive Revenues proposal would directly address those issues. For example, I propose creating a non-profit, state-funded factory to produce PPE in Washington State. By producing protective equipment in state, we can provide PPE directly to farm workers, at no cost to the workers. Over the past several years, I worked with advocates at OneAmerica to protect migrant and seasonal workers. Taking on large corporations, I provided legislative leadership to reverse a previous legislative decision to reduce unemployment benefits for seasonal workers, including farm workers. Working with legislators like Phyllis Guiterez-Kenney, I led the effort to allocate over \$50 million in the State Housing Trust Fund, to provide decent housing for farm workers across the state. I am very proud that Washington State is rated the best state in the nation for our safety net for workers, according to a recent independent report by Oxfam, an international, anti-poverty organization. More recently, I have also advocated for an Undocumented</p>

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	<p>Worker Relief Fund in meetings with Gov. Inslee, which would benefit thousands of farm workers. I was so pleased that Gov. Inslee listened and appropriated \$40 million. Next session, I'll work to fund the \$100 million requested by advocates of undocumented workers. Going forward, I will work with farm workers to address more of their specific needs. As a legislator who came up through the ranks as a community organizer, I always write policy with the folks who will be most impacted.</p>
<p>If elected, what will you do to alleviate hunger and poverty, and create economic opportunity for Washington state residents?</p>	<p>For months now, Washington state Republicans have been calling for an all-cuts state budget. With the looming state budget shortfall, austerity budget cuts would be catastrophic – and would slow the economic recovery and threaten the hard-won investments we've enacted over the years. Funding for food assistance, mental health treatment, social service programs, emergency shelters, social housing and much more – they're all at risk if we don't take action. In response, I've proposed my Public Priorities and Progressive Revenues plan, which would help prevent austerity budget cuts, re-balance our regressive tax code and invest in an equitable recovery. Through programs to invest in public health, rescue our state's childcare system, expand early learning, provide direct cash assistance to working families, and build affordable housing, we can lift thousands of people out of poverty. To be clear, my plan doesn't just cover budget shortfalls – it expands critical social services and makes investments that will benefit Washingtonians during and after the pandemic. For example, I propose creating a non-profit, state-funded factory to produce PPE in Washington State. By producing protective equipment in state, we can ensure healthcare workers aren't left vulnerable. I've been helping lead coalitions of community advocates, social service providers, labor unions, and leaders from impacted communities to write this plan and advocate for votes in the legislature. I discussed my proposals with Gov. Inslee, and I've been working with my colleagues in the legislature to build support. You can see the full plan at <a href="https://frankchopp.com/public-priorities-and-progressive-revenues-plan/">https://frankchopp.com/public-priorities-and-progressive-revenues-plan/</a> I will continue to advance a broad anti-poverty agenda, as I have done for many years. As Speaker, I kept the House Democratic majority for many years, while the State Senate was controlled by Republicans for 7 of the</p>

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previous 9 years. I provided leadership to reject Republican-proposed cuts to food assistance, shelter, and other social services. I passed many anti-poverty programs to promote economic opportunity for millions of Washingtonians, including: \* Free and affordable college and university tuition for all low-income students (120,000 students every year, including undocumented students). \* Billions of new dollars for basic education in our public schools, including targeted investments in special education and additional support for low-income students. \* Over \$2.5 billion for affordable low-income housing. \* Apple Health, free single-payer healthcare for all kids, and Cascade Care, the public option available to all Washington residents. \* The 100% Clean Electricity Mandate, which funds energy assistance and home weatherization for low-income households, helping reduce air pollution that disproportionately impacts low-income people communities. \* Major reforms to criminal sentencing to reduce mass incarceration. \* And many more progressive accomplishments.

**Yes/No Section**

If elected, will you insist proposed laws, bills, policies, and practices be evaluated for racial justice and equity?

Yes

Will you commit to implementing the state Food Policy Forum's recommendations to mitigate the agricultural symptoms of climate change and to help farmers adapt?

Yes

Will you commit to supporting efforts to reduce wasted food if you are elected?

Yes

Do you believe that every human being deserves physical, social, and economic access to sufficient, safe, and nutritious food that meets their food preferences and dietary needs for an active and healthy life?

Yes

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