



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.

John Stafford	Candidate for State Representative, District 37, Position 1 (Seattle)
<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>I support several steps to address food insecurity. First, it is imperative to avoid taking an austerity approach (i.e., cutting social programs) in the upcoming legislative session. In the aftermath of the Great Recession, an austerity approach was taken, with devastating impacts on low-income and minority communities. Second, I support a number of efforts to improve economic prospects for lower-income community, including: increased funding for affordable housing and homelessness, ongoing inflation-based increases in the minimum wage, subsidized day care, etc. Third, during the pandemic-driven recession, I support increased government aid for food banks and food distribution centers.</p>
<p>If elected, in what areas would you support making investments to overcome racial inequities?</p>	<p>In the aftermath of the George Floyd killing and the Black Lives Matter protests, it is important to restructure police departments and to utilize funds released from this process to support social programs in minority communities. It is also important to make reforms to the criminal justice system. These should focus on the use of diversion courts to enable individuals convicted of low-level drug infractions to avoid incarceration and instead receive social service support, an increased emphasis on rehabilitation and re-entry programs, etc. However, in addition to police and criminal justice reform changes, it is imperative to deal with the underlying societal inequities that give rise to them. For example, in Seattle Public Schools, 83% of Black students are on free-and-reduced lunch price programs, whereas the figure is just 9% for White students. These types of disparities must be addressed. In the area of K-12 education, I support the creation of Community Investment Schools, whereby schools with a high percentage of students on free and reduced lunches receive higher per-pupil funding than schools that don't. This increased funding would be used for four purposes: higher compensation for teachers and administrators, lower class sizes, an increase in wraparound services (e.g., counseling) and the introduction of Advanced</p>

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10/15/20



<p>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?</p>	<p>Placement and/or International Baccalaureate programs.</p> <p>Tax reform is one of the four priorities of my campaign. It is imperative to institute new progressive taxation in Washington State in the 2021 Legislative Session. This will achieve two things -- it will help address the pending budget deficit in Olympia without resorting to significant cuts in social programs (austerity), and it will help address the problem of our state's regressive tax system (the worst in the nation). Specifically, I support the Frank Chopp three pronged proposal, which calls for a capital gains tax, a tax on high income earners, and a payroll tax. I also support the state's Working Families Tax Credit.</p>
<p>Please describe policies and investments you would support to improve farm worker rights and living conditions, if you are elected?</p>	<p>It is imperative that the Trump administration comes to an end in the upcoming election for myriad reasons, including the fact that it represents a threat to multiple categories of workers, including farm workers. I support the establishment and enforcement of stringent health protections for farm workers during the era of the pandemic, as Covid-19 contagion rates are extremely high in Yakima and other farm worker communities. I also support Governor Inslee's recently created fund to support the economic and public health needs of undocumented immigrants, which will support certain segments of farm workers.</p>
<p>If elected, what will you do to alleviate hunger and poverty, and create economic opportunity for Washington state residents?</p>	<p>I support the maintenance of a strong social safety net during the era of the pandemic in order to provide support for lower-income communities. I also support tenant protections for lower-income communities -- rent relief, utility subsidies, moratoriums on evictions, etc. However, it is also critical to support individuals in their pursuit of meaningful employment. I support extended unemployment benefits, job training, the state's Shared Work program (whereby the state works with companies to share the cost of employee compensation to allow workers to keep their jobs during the recession), ongoing increases (based on inflation) to the minimum wage, subsidized day care, and the establishment of the internet as a public utility (which will help lower-income communities as they have a higher propensity to not have internet access).</p>
<p>Yes/No Section</p>	
<p>If elected, will you insist proposed</p>	<p>Yes</p>

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laws, bills, policies, and practices be evaluated for racial justice and equity?	
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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