



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.

Marko Liias	Candidate for Lieutenant Governor
<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>This pandemic has proven to be particularly difficult on children, many of whom rely on school for their meals. I applaud the work school districts have put in in many areas of our state to continue to provide meal service during the summer and in hard times such as this, but we need to make more structural changes to provide every child with access to a comfortable life out of poverty and a nutritious meal. Part of that involves fixing our upside-down tax system, to give working families as many resources as possible to succeed. That means shifting our tax burden to the wealthiest in our state through methods like a capital gains tax, and extending the working families tax credit, so families get some relief from their yearly bill. The state has made some improvements to how schools handle feeding students, like expanding access to breakfast for many students, but school meals are a critical resource for students and should be better invested in. It makes no moral sense that a child who is hungry at school can hold a debt for their lunch. This practice is archaic and only goes on to belittle children's self-esteem and leaves them underfed, inhibiting their ability to learn.</p>
<p>If elected, in what areas would you support making investments to overcome racial inequities?</p>	<p>Never has it been more apparent that we need to make targeted investments in marginalized communities across our state and this country, to lift up those who have been left behind for generations to have a fighting chance of success. More specifically, we need to redirect funds from mass incarceration and over-policing into the minority communities that are impacted the most. These include investing in community based supports around mental health and social services, affordable housing in minority communities - especially those under threat of gentrification, and ensuring that the schools in disenfranchised neighborhoods are fully funded.</p>
<p>How will you address the role of government and taxes during your campaign and address this issue in</p>	<p>I have been a longtime supporter of more equitable tax structures and I voted for every single progressive tax structure change that the legislature put forward when we</p>

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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?

crafted our finance package in 2019. In that package, we closed loopholes on corporate taxes, we lowered real estate taxes for low and middle income families while raising it for the multibillion dollar corporations building skyscrapers in Seattle, and many other progressive changes. While we did not get every win on moving us towards a more balanced tax structure, it has set a precedent that I hope we are able to continue with so we can get smart, progressive revenue sources like a capital gains tax, while also lifting up families with an expanded Working Families Tax Credit. This progress is more important than ever as we recover from COVID-19. We cannot go back to the austerity measures of the Gregoire era that harmed our most vulnerable, and must instead raise new, progressive revenue so we can bounce back faster and stronger.

Please describe policies and investments you would support to improve farm worker rights and living conditions, if you are elected?

As we progress through COVID-19, the farm workers who are keeping our supply chains running and grocery shelves stocked are without a question being left behind. I applaud the work of Familias Unidas por la Justicia and WSLC in supporting the workers at 6 Yakima area farms to go on strike to achieve better treatment both during this pandemic and after. We must encourage their employers to provide hazard pay, safe housing options, and access to quality, affordable healthcare for these workers that are seeing disproportionate rates of COVID-19. As we move into legislative session again, I am committed to expanding our paid family leave legislation to be as inclusive as possible to provide necessary relief for workers who have job that are not currently covered. Additionally, I am supportive of a Washington Worker Relief Fund that would provide a pathway for supportive funding for immigrant families and mixed status families that were not eligible for federal relief money.

If elected, what will you do to alleviate hunger and poverty, and create economic opportunity for Washington state residents?

I believe that the single best strategy to raise wages and build wealth is through collective bargaining. When workers speak with one voice, big corporations are forced to listen and to bargain. Throughout my time in the Legislature, I have supported numerous measures to extend and strengthen collective bargaining rights. In the absence of strong worker voices, I have supported legislative efforts to raise the minimum wage, expand health care access and benefits, and encourage retirement options. We have also shown here in Washington that rising wages and stronger worker

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protections don't weaken our economy, they have strengthened it. Greater labor support must also be coupled with workforce training and improved state safety nets for those without work. I am glad that the legislature has been investing more in workforce education and training, like Career Connect Washington – but we need to keep innovating to create more family wage jobs across the state, particularly in rural areas which are seeing jobs and people increasingly leave for the urban core. COVID-19 has shown our safety net to be in tatters. Going forward we need to fully fund our public systems with progressive new revenue, so when people find themselves struggling the state can give support and lift folks into success, not just keep them afloat.

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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