



**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>Ryan Johnson</b>	<b>Candidate for State Representative, District 39, Position 2 (Arlington)</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>Most problems in America today revolve around extremely low wages. When 85% of the economy collapses because it is closed for a week, we have massive societal problems we do not want to admit that we have. Food insecurity, for children and adults, is a by product of extremely low wages. When you are paid so little that you have to choose between food and a place to live, you will always be food insecure. I support a massive increase in the minimum wage, it should be in the high teens or low twenties per hour. I also support expanding SNAP access. We cannot continue to ignore the fact that the vast majority of our problems in America revolve around low wages, and food insecurity is one of them.</p>
<p>If elected, in what areas would you support making investments to overcome racial inequities?</p>	<p>First off, racial/social justice will NOT happen without economic justice. There is no way around this fact. We cannot continue to give a group of people, largely based on skin color, at best, second class jobs, second class schools, second class housing, second class health care, second class government services, and second class policing, and expect them to perform as well as the majority. Im a volunteer for a program called the Snohomish/Island County Council Trade Up program, I teach kids how to get into the trades straight out of high school. These are great, union jobs, they all pay well(some trades better than others), have excellent benefits, and everyone is paid the same, by contract. I will happily help anyone get into any of these jobs. We also need to invest heavily in the BIPOC community, especially when it comes to schools and jobs. We also need to criminally prosecute banks that red line the BIPOC community(yes, this is still going on), and heavily punish employers that pay BIPOC workers less than their majority workers.</p>
<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</p>	<p>I am supportive of a capital gains tax, and I am supportive of the creation of a state bank, which will lower everyone's taxes and allow Washington state to finance projects we need without paying a private bank to do it. While I am not necessarily against a WFTC, I want people paid high enough</p>

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supportive of tax code reform?  
Taxing capital gains in Washington state? And funding the state's Working Families Tax Credit?

that they don't need it. In my opinion, things like the WFTC exist to subsidize workers so the public as a whole pays their salary, instead of the employers.

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

Copied and pasted from my campaign FB page, unfortunately I can't post pics here. As a candidate, I have given views on subjects in many ways that other candidates/politicians haven't. I am going to talk about undocumented immigration in a way that neither party wants to talk about it. If you think that systemic racism doesn't exist in America, our undocumented immigration system is built on it, thrives on it, and would not work without it. The "system" is working as designed. It is time to break the system. These are pics of the Canadian border in Lynden, it's part of the largest unguarded border in the world. Anyone who wants to can walk across the border between Blaine and Sumas, the only pieces that are actually guarded are the border crossings themselves. I am going to tell you why the undocumented workers in Lynden will not cross the border under any circumstance, and why America has a huge number of undocumented workers and Canada has almost none. I will give you a hint, EMPLOYERS want it this way. Every city in America is a "sanctuary city" for EMPLOYERS. Employers can hire as many undocumented workers as they want, abuse them, pay them substandard wages, refuse to pay them, and when the workers speak up, they can call ICE on their OWN workers, have the workers locked up, and start all over again. The employer is NEVER punished. This needs to end. I worked for a now defunct manufacturing company in Monroe from 2002-2013, it was at that absolute dump of a factory that was torn down this spring on the corner of Freyalnds Blvd and Highway 2. This was my first job working with undocumented workers, and where I learned what a horrible system it is. Yes, the vast majority of them were undocumented. The workers didn't hide it, my employer didn't try to hide the fact he was hiring them, he actually preferred them. They worked far cheaper than American citizens, and they were always paid less than the few American citizens that did work in the plant. The workers there were at least paid hourly, they got a ton of overtime, they paid taxes like every other worker in America, they just got paid far less than American citizens. Being paid hourly is

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a luxury many undocumented workers don't get. The Washington Farm Bureau admits that at least HALF of the workers they are hiring are undocumented, the Washington Restaurant Association admits that at least 10% of their employees are undocumented. What this also means is that these groups are self admitting to hiring illegally, and they just don't give a damn. These are generally the same groups who want the undocumented workers to "follow the law," but clearly admit they have no intention of doing so themselves. Yet only the workers end up in the NWDC in Tacoma, for literally going to work. It has never ceased to amaze me that Americans will demonize the undocumented workers all over the country, and give a free pass to those bringing the workers into this country. The employers ALWAYS get a free pass, both legally and societally. The employers want these workers above all else, and they know the public will blame everyone but them. The employer laughs all the way to the bank, and then has the audacity to point their fingers at the workers they hired, and paid substandard wages to, for being poor. The game needs to end. The reason I posted pics of the Canadian border is because it clearly shows how easy this problem is to solve. For all the "build the wall" chants many Americans do, the wall is NOT designed to work. There are a ton of undocumented workers working literal inches from the Canadian border that they could literally step over and be in Canada, the workers refuse to. No American is going to walk into Canada and get a job, no undocumented worker is going to walk across the border in Sumas and get a job in Canada, either. The reason Canada doesn't need a wall and has zero undocumented workers crossing into Canada is because Canada arrests employers for hiring illegally, and America doesn't. Until we start doing so, the system will continue to work as it is now, and it is working as designed. Again, it is time to break the system. Our current system is rife with abuses of undocumented workers, which nearly guarantees them substandard housing, pay, and working conditions. Covid has decimated our undocumented working population, few of which have health insurance, because employers refuse to pay for that, and because so many of these jobs cannot be socially distanced to begin with. The employers refused to give them any PPE(many still refuse), put them in jobs that can't be socially distanced, and don't care one bit when they get sick or die. I am really tired of seeing any

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group of people being used as sacrificial lambs so a business who has hired them can make a buck no matter what the cost to the workers or society as a whole. How do we solve the problem? This is an easy one. We make employers have just as much skin in the game as the workers. When so many undocumented workers literally risk their freedom daily by going to work, and ICE can lock them up at any time for who knows how long before they are deported, their employers risk literally nothing. Until employers are treated like the workers they hire, nothing is going to change. As a legislator, I will do everything in my power to make sure that if you are an employer who is hiring undocumented workers, the workers go to jail for working illegally, the employer and the boards of directors go to jail with their workers. Yes, we are going to take your business from you as well, because when a worker goes to jail for working for you, they lose everything, and the employer should as well. Employers should not have it all ways on this issue. They can't say on one hand "I didn't know they were undocumented" while admitting 10-50% of their labor force is undocumented, and while refusing to use E Verify as a condition of hiring. They cannot say to the public "I didn't know they were undocumented" when the public as a whole knows for a fact that the employer is hiring only the undocumented. They can't say they are smart, well rounded business owners, and that the government and the public should give them the "freedom" to run their business, when everyone knows they are breaking basic employment laws everyday by hiring undocumented workers, and saying the rest of us, including the workers, should "follow the law" when the employers clearly aren't. For those of you who say "America would not eat without undocumented workers," you are 100% correct. By locking up employers, you are now beginning to see the beauty of my plan. There is NO giant force of American citizens waiting to come and do the jobs most undocumented workers do, this experiment has been run many times, there aren't enough Americans willing to do these jobs for the pay, or any amount of pay. I have done a fair amount of field work in my life, and it is not fun nor easy, nor is it well paid. The fact that many of our jobs in America run on a system that at best guarantees many people living in America are guaranteed second class status at because their wages are so low needs to end. Agricultural workers are FLSA exempt, there is no guarantee of minimum wage, and

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	<p>certainly no overtime. This is absolutely a second class pay system for a group based largely on race, and certainly because of legal status. There should be no dual wage system with an "undocumented worker" wage and a documented worker wage, which is what we have today. This is what we have today because employers, the Farm Bureaus, the Restaurant Bureaus, the Building Associations, and the Chambers of Commerce want it that way. Until we start making employers as responsible as the undocumented workers they knowingly hire, nothing will change. When we do start making employers responsible for the undocumented workers they hire, things will change IMMEDIATELY. When employers have to risk their business and livelihoods like their employees do, they will not stand for it. We will have a good, humane, and well paid guest worker program for immigrant workers that will literally be passed by Congress overnight, and including legal status for those who have already been here working. When we start locking up employers like we do employees, employers will magically start to be their workers biggest asset, and demand that their employees be protected like the business owners want to be protected. The horrible H2A program that exists today, which is at BEST indentured servitude, and in many cases outright slavery, will be abolished and replaced with something that gives the workers rights, dignity, and treats the undocumented as human beings. We cannot continue to let this system exist. The system lets employers abuse the undocumented in any way they want, and never face any reprisals for doing so. When employers start going to jail with their workers, this system will change. Time to break the system.</p>
<p>If elected, what will you do to alleviate hunger and poverty, and create economic opportunity for Washington state residents?</p>	<p>See my first answer about raising wages. Nothing will change about food insecurity, poverty rates, or ALICE rates until wages are raised.</p>
<p><b>Yes/No Section</b></p>	
<p>If elected, will you insist proposed laws, bills, policies, and practices be evaluated for racial justice and equity?</p>	<p>Yes</p>
<p>Will you commit to implementing</p>	<p>Yes</p>

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