



Candidate Questionnaire November 2022 Midterm Election

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

Shukri Olow	Candidate for Washington State House District 47
In Washington, 1 in 6 children experience food insecurity. What steps or legislative actions would you take to address child hunger?	In my work at Best Starts for Kids and through Seattle Public Schools, I’ve seen the staggering effects of hunger on the development on our children. I believe that there is no better investment we can make than in the wellbeing of the next generation. By eliminating food inequality, we can break cycles of poverty and create a more egalitarian, dynamic, and healthy society. The most clear and straightforward way of addressing this problem is to fully fund school lunches, making them free for all children. I would look to design a no-barriers, no-paperwork, no-bureaucracy system for free school lunches that ensures no one falls through the cracks. I believe this is policy is very much within reach, and has the potential to dramatically improve outcomes for our youth. I am also interested in legislation that addresses our state’s ‘food deserts,’ using community-driven programs to improve nutrition for our most vulnerable families, especially in BIPOC and immigrant communities, and to address the systemic inequalities that have been holding us back.
If elected, in what areas would you support making investments to overcome structural racism and racial inequities?	Liberation for our BIPOC and immigrant communities is what brought me into public service. As a member of a refugee family who thrived thanks to public housing and other social services, I know the power that governance has to uplift BIPOC communities, and to address the injuries and inequities that have been inflicted upon us. I have also seen how government has failed us, and the trauma this can cause. This division, between the state’s potential for both justice and injustice, is why I believe that the state legislature is the best way for me to give back to my community. I am committed to addressing the economic burdens that have held back Black Liberation, through policies like affordable housing and tenant protects that serve as a bulwark against gentrification. I am committed to providing opportunities in education that ensure that we have the tools we need to thrive. And, I am committed to innovation in our approach to public safety, addressing the biases that have endangered BIPOC communities and keeping our youth out of prison.
Discussion of reforms to public safety and law enforcement are often polarizing but require law enforcement and community working together to focus on	The excesses of our carceral system have done so much damage to our society. I believe we need long-term solutions to public safety, and the evidence has shown, time and time again, that incarceration is a short-term solution. Imprisoning a thief may take them off the streets for a few months, but we know that it

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<p>facts and agree on solutions. If elected, will you commit to working on these issues and what outcomes would you prioritize?</p>	<p>also traps them in a cycle of poverty, makes it harder for them to transition to employment, and increases their chances of committing more crimes in the future. We need to rely on proven diversion strategies - for instance, the Choose 180 program - to create better futures for those caught up in our carceral system. We've also seen this year that our police forces are stretched thin, understaffed, and struggling to provide our communities with the protection we need. One solution I'm excited about is bringing more civilian workers into our police force, whether in the form of logistical support, or by allowing mental health specialists to respond to nonviolent crises, freeing up our police to focus on more serious crimes. Moreover, I believe that we can solve these problems at their root by investing in our communities through housing, education, and health care. Crimes of poverty cannot be solved by throwing our youth in overstuffed prisons; they must be solved by giving them the tools they need to thrive.</p>
<p>What measures will you support that promote equity and fairness in Washington's tax code and create more opportunity for community investment?</p>	<p>Our regressive tax structure in Washington is a moral scandal, and one I am deeply committed to correcting. This regressive tax system has created a complete lack of trust from voters that we will ever create an equitable system of taxation that's fair for everybody. We need to start building trust back with strong audits of corporate tax breaks to ensure every tax break is either creating jobs or building the economy - and if they're not doing so, it's time for those tax breaks to end. Reducing regressive sales taxes in favor of more progressive taxes should be an immediate priority. And, of course, taxes on activities that damage our communities, such as carbon pollution and house flipping, are able to mitigate harm while raising revenue for necessary social programs. This should open the door for bolder policy proposals on tax fairness, and I always believe that every option should be on the table.</p>
<p>If elected, what will you do to alleviate hunger and poverty, and create economic opportunity for Washington state residents?</p>	<p>The pandemic has highlighted fractures in our economy that have been growing for decades: an upside-down tax structure, sclerotic housing policies, massive burdens placed on front-line workers, and a logistics infrastructure that is failing our most vulnerable residents. It's not enough to return to the status quo - we need to create a resilient economy that can handle whatever shocks the future may bring. Housing is a top priority in my political vision. Access to homeownership opportunities throughout the 20th century was created by both explicit government policies such as redlining, the restriction of FHA loans to white households, and exclusionary zoning. Harland Bartholomew, a pioneer of the sort of zoning policies that prevent middle-housing, said the quiet part out loud: his plan was "to prevent movement into finer residential districts by colored people." These practices have widened and calcified our racial wealth gap, draining the pockets of vulnerable communities. Households of color are disproportionately rent-burdened, putting us in the position every month of making</p>

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choices between paying the rent or buying food, paying the rent or visiting the doctor, paying the rent or making the car payment. I will work in Olympia to immediately build up our capacity of affordable housing opportunities in our state, and to give our communities the legal power to build the density they need.

Yes/No Section

Will you commit to support a 1% levy on wealth held in financial assets, such as stocks and bonds for individuals of worth over \$1 billion?

Yes.

Will you support expanding access to school meals at no student cost?

Yes.

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

Yes.

Will you commit to supporting the work of the Food Policy Forum and its recommendations?

Yes.

Will you commit to implementing the recommendations in the Use Food Well Washington plan?

Yes.

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