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Respondent

11 Anonymous

45:06

Time to complete

1. Your name *

Becka Johnson Poppe

2. Position you are running for *

King County Council District 4

3. Your zip code *

98117

4. Do you have direct experience with disability? *

- Yes
- No

5. If yes, please explain

While I have not personally experienced developmental disabilities, I did run summer day camp programming specifically for children with developmental disabilities. I also conducted mental health research at Stanford University that included working with individuals with developmental disabilities.

6. How do you define inclusion? *

Inclusion covers many different areas, including:

- Person-Centered Services: I believe in a person-centered approach that recognizes the unique needs, preferences, and strengths of individuals with developmental disabilities. By tailoring services and support to meet their specific requirements, we can enable them to lead fulfilling lives.
- Accessible infrastructure: Inclusive communities are built upon accessible infrastructure. I will advocate for the development of public spaces, transportation, and facilities that accommodate the diverse needs of all individuals, including those with physical or cognitive challenges.
- Equitable employment opportunities: I am committed to fostering an inclusive workforce where individuals with developmental disabilities have equal access to employment opportunities. As part of this, I will work with businesses to adopt inclusive hiring practices and provide workplace accommodations and support when needed.
- Equitable access to education: It's critical that we provide quality education to all children, and integrate children with developmental disabilities into classrooms with appropriate support and accommodation.

7. **FAMILIES:** How would you expand access to child care for children with disabilities?

Context: Quality, reliable child care is good for kids and families. But parents of children with disabilities are three times more likely to experience job disruptions because of problems with child care.

- To improve the quality of child care services, I will work to establish training programs that focus on inclusive practices and disability awareness. By equipping child care providers with the necessary skills and knowledge, we can create an environment that better meets the diverse needs of children with disabilities.
- Further, I will work to expand subsidized child care options and advocate for policies that make child care more affordable for low-income families.
- Collaborating with disability advocacy organizations and experts in the field will be crucial in developing effective strategies to expand access to child care. By working together, we can identify gaps in services and implement targeted solutions.

8. **HOUSING** - How would you help individuals and families with disabilities find and stay housed?

CONTEXT: Most people people in King County's annual homeless count are disabled, but neither Seattle nor King County have specific strategies to address their unique housing challenges.

- People with disabilities face high under- and unemployment, leaving them chronically housing unstable
- Parents who reduce hours to care for disabled loved ones face a lifetime of reduced income
- Many people with significant developmental disabilities live on Supplemental Security Income (SSI) of just \$914 a month – making them too poor to afford even extremely low-income housing.
- Federal housing vouchers help, but the waiting list can be years long and people still struggle to find appropriate and accessible housing

- I will support increased funding and resources to develop affordable housing options specifically targeted at individuals and families with disabilities. This includes creating more accessible units and ensuring that affordable housing programs consider the unique needs of people with disabilities.
- I will advocate for the development of supportive housing programs that offer not only affordable housing, but also access to supportive services tailored to the needs of individuals with disabilities. This would include services like healthcare, counseling, life skills training, and job placement assistance.
- I will actively collaborate with disability organizations and advocacy groups to gain insights into the specific challenges faced by individuals with disabilities in the housing market. Working together, we can develop more effective solutions and advocate for policies that address these issues.

9. **SHELTER:** How would you ensure people with developmental disabilities have a safe place to sleep and stay?

CONTEXT: Homelessness services are often not accessible to people with disabilities.

- They can be too loud and chaotic for Autistic people; they may lack outlets for power chairs, or refrigeration for medication.
- Caregivers can be refused, especially if they are of a different gender; and trans and queer youth report discrimination.
- At the same time, people who live on the street can lose their belongings in sweeps and must contend with "hostile architecture" - that is, benches and alcoves designed to discourage sitting or sleeping.

I've been working to end homelessness as a board members for multiple organizations focused on caring for our unhoused neighbors. In elected office:

- I will support targeted outreach efforts to identify individuals with developmental disabilities experiencing homelessness. Collaborating with disability organizations and service providers will help us connect with those who may require specialized support.
- I will work to expand shelter options that are safe, accessible, and inclusive for people with developmental disabilities. This includes providing facilities with appropriate accommodations, trained staff, and support services tailored to their needs.
- Preventing homelessness is equally important. I will support homelessness prevention programs that specifically target individuals with developmental disabilities at risk of losing their housing. These programs will provide early intervention and resources to help individuals maintain stable housing.

10. **SUPPORTIVE HOUSING:** How would you ensure people significantly impacted by their developmental disabilities are receiving case management and the support needed to escape homelessness?

CONTEXT: People with developmental disabilities often lack access supportive housing options, which show the best results in reducing chronic homelessness.

- Supportive housing for adults is available to clients of the state's Aging and Long-Term Services Administration, but NOT the state Developmental Disabilities Administration.
- Adult family homes may be available, but most cater to aging residents. They also don't accommodate families.
- While there are community residential services through DDA that help individuals live independently, slots are capped and statewide only about 4,500 people are served.

-- I firmly believe in the Housing First approach, which prioritizes providing stable and supportive housing as a first step towards addressing homelessness. I will work to ensure that individuals significantly impacted by their developmental disabilities have access to housing options with appropriate accommodations and support.
 -- Further, I will work to identify and remove barriers that prevent individuals with significant developmental disabilities from accessing necessary support services. This can involve streamlining administrative processes and ensuring that services are inclusive and readily available.
 -- Homelessness is often the result of multiple interconnected challenges. I will advocate for holistic support services that address both housing needs and other factors contributing to homelessness, such as healthcare, mental health, substance abuse treatment, and job training.

11. **JUSTICE:** Would you support cross-training among professionals in the courtroom, police departments, victim assistance agencies and schools to prepare the justice community for situations involving people with intellectual and other developmental disabilities so they can receive equal justice?

CONTEXT: People with disabilities face fear, prejudice, and a lack of understanding when they become entangled in the criminal justice system.

- Research estimates 30 to 50 percent of people killed by law enforcement in the U.S. are disabled, and people with developmental disabilities are over-represented in juvenile facilities, jails and prisons.
- Nationally, youth of various disabilities make up 65 percent to 70 percent of people involved in the juvenile justice system.
- At the same time, people intellectual disabilities have a 4 to 10 times higher risk of becoming victims.

Yes

No

12. **JOBS:** What would you do to increase job prospects for people with developmental disabilities?

CONTEXT: Developmental disability isn't tracked in employment rates, but most people with developmental disabilities would qualify as having a cognitive, ambulatory, or independent living disability.

- Washington's employment rate for people with a cognitive disability is 31 percent;
- For an ambulatory disability it is 30 percent
- For an independent living disability it is just 21 percent.
- The employment rate for non-disabled people in Washington is 80 percent.

-- I will work with local businesses and employers to promote inclusive hiring practices. This would involve providing incentives for companies that actively recruit and hire individuals with developmental disabilities and raising awareness about the benefits of diverse and inclusive workplaces.
 -- I will support and collaborate with vocational training programs that offer skill-building and job readiness training specifically tailored to the needs of people with developmental disabilities. These programs can equip individuals with the necessary skills and confidence to enter the workforce successfully.
 -- I will work to ensure that employers are aware of the various accommodations that can be made to support employees with developmental disabilities. This includes providing assistive technology, flexible work arrangements, or modifications to the work environment.

13. **MOBILITY:** How will you ensure our streets, sidewalks and intersections are safe and accessible to everyone?

CONTEXT: People who use wheelchairs or ambulatory devices struggle to move around safely.

- Sidewalk construction and maintenance and funding for curb ramps and accessible pedestrian signals is limited.
- Bike shares take up sidewalk space
- Autos often block intersections.

In my day job, at King County, where I oversee half of the County's \$16 billion budget, I have already worked to to accelerate and enhance ADA pedestrian improvements. In elected office:
 -- I will work to allocate funding for infrastructure improvements that prioritize accessibility. This includes repairing and maintaining sidewalks, crosswalks, and streets to meet accessibility standards, such as providing curb ramps, textured surfaces, and audible signals.
 -- I will actively engage with community members, including individuals with disabilities, to gather feedback on areas that need improvement. I will prioritize community input in planning and decision-making processes related to street design and accessibility.
 -- I will work with local transportation authorities to identify and prioritize high-risk areas for pedestrians and individuals with disabilities. By targeting these areas for improvements, we can enhance safety and accessibility where it's most needed.

14. Do you have other ideas on ways to make our community more accessible and inclusive for people with disabilities?

-- Improving accessibility in public transportation is crucial for individuals with disabilities to participate fully in community life. This involves ensuring that buses, trains, and stations are equipped with ramps, elevators, and other features that facilitate easy boarding and travel.
 -- Making parks and recreational facilities accessible to everyone is essential for promoting physical and social inclusion. Adding accessible trails, playgrounds, and sports facilities can create opportunities for individuals with disabilities to engage in recreational activities.
 -- Ensuring that voting processes are accessible for individuals with disabilities is crucial for upholding their right to participate in elections. This involves providing accessible voting machines and assistance as needed.