

31st Legislative District Democrats Candidate Questionnaire

1. Your name: **Tom Quinlan**
2. Candidate for: **Pierce County Superior Court, Dept. 17** Party Affiliation: NP
3. Campaign information:

Manager: **Nic van Putten, Kess Smith (Progressive Strategies NW)**

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Tom@TomQuinlanForJudge.com

4. If elected, what positive changes will you champion that will benefit the 31st LD?

I want to bring my 25 years of experience as a courtroom lawyer and legal counselor, my unique leadership skills and training as a Judge Advocate, and my legal education to the Pierce County Superior Court. I was recently honored to receive the *Distinguished Service Award* from the Tacoma-Pierce County Bar Association, which in its preamble states “For years of changing lives for the better....” This sums up my motivation and describes me generally. I believe that I am uniquely qualified to serve in this position.

5. What are the three most critical issues you expect to encounter in the office you are seeking?

In Superior Court criminal cases, I believe the most important current issues surround mental health and the burgeoning need for more efficient competency evaluations, which has been increasingly adversely impacted by the explosion of opiate drug addiction related mental health issues and inadequate public mental health services. In the realm of civil cases, I believe the current most important issue is the delivery of legal services in a cost effective manner so as to ameliorate the disparate cost of access to justice.

As a Judge, I will recognize and readily accept the responsibility of ensuring every person’s accessibility to the courts. I will work to remove both real and perceived barriers to access to our courts, including physical barriers that impose a hardship on those with disabilities. I will strive to remove language barriers by ensuring access to interpreters, and making Volunteer Legal Services and lawyer referral information available to all who come in contact with the court.

Equally important is that as a lawyer in private practice, I am mindful of the significant expense related to involvement with the legal system and will remain mindful of that expense so as to ensure I am well prepared, efficient of the parties (and lawyers) time, and decisive, while remaining fair and impartial. As Judge, I will uphold the dignity of the office. Each case before me as Judge will be treated with undivided attention, patience and impartiality. In addition, it is important to treat all participants with respect and dignity.

6. Please give us an example of when you had to make a critical decision that, due to its impact on others, was difficult. Tell us why you made your decision and what, if any, actions you took to mitigate any negative results.

While a direct supervisor of Judge Advocate officers in the Army Reserve, I received an early morning out of state phone call from a despondent female junior officer that was expressing an intent to harm herself. She had been the victim of sexual harassment and an inappropriate senior-subordinate interpersonal relationship at the hands of a Colonel, who was our unit Commander. The Colonel was known to be slated to be promoted to General and Command of the US Army Reserve Legal Command, the organization under which I serve.

I took immediate steps to adhere to Army suicide prevention protocols and obtain an in person wellness check by local authorities of my subordinate. Later, I coordinated victims' assistance and wellness programs for her recovery and well-being.

The circumstances were severe, criminal in nature and career threatening to the Colonel, who happened to be the senior person responsible for reviewing me for a then pending promotion. Notwithstanding the risk to my promotion in having to report, I did so and willingly undertook the responsibility of assuring the proper documentation of the allegations and compliance with Army Sexual Harassment and Assault Prevention guidelines.

7. What methods will you employ to communicate with your constituency on a regular basis?

I would (as I have as pro tem judge and arbitrator) provide the detailed reasons for my decisions. In my view, a publicly elected judiciary presupposes that what occurs in a public proceeding is worthy of public judgment. Second, I would, when given the opportunity outside of the bench, inform the public about the court system and its programs.

8. What other information would you like us to consider?

I have had a depth and balance of experience in both civil and criminal law, which makes me the best candidate for this position. As stated by Associate Chief Justice Charles Johnson of the WA Supreme Court in his endorsement of me, "Tom has the distinction of having had a diverse law practice, with exceptional practical experience in all matters that are routinely addressed by the Superior Court. He has a broad base of knowledge of the law and rules of evidence and procedure. These experiences make him uniquely qualified to serve the community as a Superior Court Judge."

I have been rated "Exceptionally Well Qualified" to serve by the Tacoma-Pierce County Bar Association and the Minority Bar Association – their highest rating.

I have served as pro tem judge and am a Superior Court Commissioner pro tem. My breadth of experience includes both civil and criminal law in every area handled by the Superior Court. Beyond my civilian career, I am a Lieutenant Colonel in the US Army Reserve where I have prosecuted domestic violence and assault cases.

Lastly, I regularly represent other lawyers, and have represented judges and their family members. This trust from other attorneys and members of the judiciary shows their confidence that I have the required temperament to be Judge.

I have also included a current list of endorsements:

**Hon. Charles Johnson, Assoc. Chief Justice WA Supreme Court
Hon. Vicky Hogan
Hon. Jack F. Nevin
Hon. James Orlando
Hon. Daniel Berschauer (ret.)
Hon. John A. Miller
David Kenworthy (ret.)
Hon. Patrick O'Malley (ret.)
Hon. Kevin G. Ringus
Hon. Thomas McPhee (ret.)
Hon. Ronald Heslop
Hon. Charles J. DeLaurenti II
Hon. Thomas Ellington**

**Rick Talbert (D), Pierce County Council Member
Derek Young (D), Pierce County Council Member
Doug Richardson (R), Pierce County Council Chair
Joyce McDonald (R), Pierce County Council Member
Dick Muri (R), 28th LD Representative
Don Anderson, Mayor of Lakewood
Matthew Jolibois, Mayor of Fircrest
Marie Barth, Lakewood City Council
Conor McCarthy, Tacoma City Council
Ron Lucas, Mayor of Steilacoom
Mike Court, Mayor of DuPont
Brian Sonntag (D), former WA State Auditor
Larry Seaquist (D), former 26th LD Representative
Joe Stortini (D), former Pierce County Executive
Stan Flemming, former Pierce County Council Member
David Viafore, former Mayor of Fircrest
Karen Vialle, former Mayor of Tacoma**

And 191 attorneys to date.

I declare under penalty of perjury the foregoing is true and correct.

Signed at Tacoma, Washington.

Signature

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tom Quinlan', written in a cursive style.

Tom Quinlan

Please return to:

Mark Boswell, Chair
31st District Democrats
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Sumner, WA. 98390

Or email to: webmaster@31stdistrictdemocrats.org