

WEBFORM: <https://31stdistrictdemocrats.org/legislative-questionnaire/>

Candidate Info

Candidate Name: Marilyn Strickland

Position Sought: Washington's 10th Congressional District

Are you an incumbent for the position? Non-incumbent

Home legislative district: 29th

Are you a Democrat? Yes. I was proud to serve as a national Obama delegate to the DNC in 2008.

Campaign Info

Campaign Manager or Point of Contact: Andrew Orlebeke

Mailing Address: N/A

Phone: 616-560-3848

Email: andrew@stricklandforwashington.com

Website: <https://stricklandforwashington.com/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/StricklandforWA/>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/StricklandforWA>

Part I: Candidate Background

1. Please briefly describe your qualifications, education, employment, community and civic activity, union affiliation, prior political activity, and other relevant experience.*

I was born in Seoul, South Korea. My father, an African-American man from Georgia joined the military to send money back to his family, fought in two wars, was stationed in South Korea and met my mother. Our family moved to the United States when I was a year and a half old. If I am elected to Congress, I will be the first African-American elected to Congress from the Pacific Northwest, and the first Korean-American woman elected to Congress in its 230-year history.

Growing up in the South Sound in the seventies was not always easy. Early on, I learned how to overcome adversity and how to stand up to bullies. My parents taught me the importance of fighting for what's right, the value of public service, and how to stand up for the underdog.

I am a proud graduate of South Sound public schools. I graduated from Mt. Tahoma High School in Tacoma and have a BA in Sociology from the University of Washington. I also went on to earn an MBA from Clark-

Atlanta University, an Historically Black College and University.

Professionally, I have a long record of service and accomplishment. I am an effective leader with a record of results, deep roots in the community, a broad base of support, and vision of how I will serve the people. My father served in the Army for more than 20 years, so I've also experienced the challenges facing military families and veterans.

I endorsed and campaigned for I-1000, the Washington State Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Act, which sought to restore Affirmative Action in Washington State. I endorsed and supported I-940, the initiative that addressed de-escalation training for police officers and set a new standard for the use of force.

During my tenure, Tacoma attracted over \$1 billion in investment into housing, office, and retail space, and invested over \$500 million in infrastructure for roads, bridges, transportation, and the Port to grow the economy and create thousands of family-wage jobs with benefits.

I led successful efforts to raise the minimum wage and pass paid sick leave, paving the way for statewide action. I implemented the city-wide Climate Action Plan and launched an award-winning summer jobs program for high school students that led to the Tacoma Tideflats Certification Program, creating a pipeline for students to fill high-demand jobs in the maritime and construction trades.

During my tenure, high school graduation rates in Tacoma, a majority-minority school district, increased from 55% to 89%. I also helped develop a framework of actionable and attainable steps to meet its carbon reduction goals--increasing solar energy use by 26%, registering thousands of new electric vehicles, increasing the tree canopy, and reducing water use by 10% in city buildings. As chair of Pierce Transit and Vice Chair of Sound Transit, I worked tirelessly to expand mass transit.

My father was in the military - he fought in WWII and in Korea - so I have the lived experience of the challenges facing military families and veterans.

While I have never been in a union, I understand well the values of a living wage job with good benefits. My cousin and late aunt, both Korean immigrants, were able to earn living wages and secure retirements because of their union jobs. My late aunt was a manufacturing worker with Teamsters Local 305. Before he retired, my cousin was a member of the National Association of Letter Carriers in Federal Way. My husband is also a former member of the Tacoma Education Association.

2. What prompted you to run for this office? What are your campaign's most important themes, issues, or priorities (three to five)?*

I am running for federal office because I believe that I have an obligation to stand up for all people, especially those who do not always have a voice or a seat at the table. Far too many people are not getting their basic needs met. I want to change that. In Congress, I will bring the experience of rebuilding an economy after an economic recession, and continue to be a strong voice for change to ensure that we can help the most vulnerable members of our community and ensure an economy that works for us all. I'm prepared to hit the ground running and do for Washington's 10th District what I was able to accomplish for Tacoma and our region - improve education, make investments in infrastructure and transit, lower health care costs, develop job

training programs, support women and minority owned businesses, promote economic opportunity for all, expand access to affordable housing, address climate change, fight racial injustice, and protect programs so people can retire with dignity.

I am focused on addressing issues which affect people's everyday lives, the first of which is health care. Health care is a right, not a privilege, and COVID-19 has laid bare the inequities in our health system. Even those with insurance are paying sky-high deductibles and copays. The status quo is untenable and affects not only people's health but their economic security. I strongly support a public health care option, which will increase coverage and will lead to better insurance plans from private insurers through increased competition. I am also open to exploring a lowering of the eligibility age for Medicare. I also will fight to strengthen protections for people with pre-existing conditions and end surprise billings. I will take on the pharmaceutical industry and fight for things like patent reform so that generic drugs can come to market more quickly to lower the cost of prescription drugs. COVID-19 has amplified the need for a strong public health infrastructure that is sufficiently funded.

Another key issue is housing. From one end of this district to another, housing affordability is the one issue that I constantly hear about. Everyone deserves to live in a safe, stable, affordable home, and right now this need is not being met. Supply does not meet demand. Local and state governments are doing what they can, but the reality of the affordable housing crisis is that the only entity with the resources to address the problem is the federal government. That is why I will advocate for a massive federal investment in affordable and workforce housing. This will include increasing funding to state housing finance commissions, to help build more affordable housing; more resources directed to local Housing Authorities, which can be used for housing construction and housing vouchers; and a plan to increase flexibility of housing vouchers to give voucher holders more options for places to live. The federal government has abdicated its responsibility to put more resources into building housing for too long. We need a response to the housing crisis that matches the scale of the problem. I will champion this effort in Congress.

A third issue is economic security. From massive income inequality to workers losing the ability to retire with dignity, economic security is a key focus of my campaign. Wage growth has lagged significantly behind GDP in recent years, leaving workers falling behind. I strongly support collective bargaining and the ability of workers to organize. Collective bargaining has led to higher wages and better benefits for all workers, and I will support a federal law banning right-to-work if elected.

3. What steps are you taking to run a successful campaign?*

I am running a focused campaign to communicate with voters across the district, and our [recent polling](#) shows I have a clear path to victory.

Because of my public service, community service experience, profile, and deep roots in the community, I have the support of a diverse cross-section of voters. I was raised in a working-class neighborhood in South Tacoma, have spent most of my life in Pierce County, and was mayor of its largest city for eight years, where I built strong relationships with government leaders, human service providers, non-profit organizations, the building trades and the regional business community. I understand the diverse needs and concerns of voters, and have shown that I can connect with people of all ages and from all walks of life. I am Korean-American, and my candidacy has resonated with the sizable Asian and Pacific Islander population in the district. I am also African-American, and have strong, established relationships and a track record of service with the Black community in the district. For all of these populations, I have a track record of accomplishment and improving

lives, including job creation, gun safety, LGBTQ rights, supporting small business, improving housing, and investing in education. Voters I am an effective leader who gets things done.

I finished in first place, winning a competitive 19-person primary despite being outspent 2:1, and our recent poll shows I have a 21-point lead, including leading among likely Democratic voters. In the general election, I will continue to communicate with voters, raise the resources we need to win, and expand my broad, diverse coalition of local and national leaders and organizations supporting our campaign, including my former primary opponent Kristine Reeves, Congressman Derek Kilmer, Congresswoman Suzan DelBene, former Governor Christine Gregoire, Thurston County Young Democrats, the Congressional Black Caucus PAC, Andrew Yang, and the National Women’s Political Caucus, among many others. [You can view the full list of endorsements here](#). I secured the sole endorsements of the Seattle Times, Tacoma News Tribune and the Seattle Medium.

Part II - Local and State Issues (Yes/No/Qualify Your Response)

1. Do you support Initiative Measure No. 940 (“De-escalate Washington,”) requiring, among other things, that law enforcement officers be required to obtain violence de-escalation and mental health training, so that officers will have greater skills to resolve conflicts without the use of physical or deadly force)?*

Yes

No

Optional: Qualify Your Response to #1: I supported, endorsed, and campaigned for I-940 and would support a similar law in Congress. I also support the George Floyd Justice in Policing Act, and was the first candidate in this race to [publicly express](#) my support for this legislation.

2. Do you support the right of public workers, excluding military, to bargain and strike?*

Yes

No

Optional: Qualify Your Response to #2: Yes. Collective bargaining is a fundamental worker right which has increased wages and improved benefits for all workers. We must protect it. It is no coincidence that the decline of unions has coincided with an increase in income inequality. Part of restoring a strong middle class means restoring unions. If elected, I will support legislation to protect the freedom of public service workers, including teachers, firefighters and sanitation workers, to join together in a union. That includes co-sponsoring the Public Service Freedom to Negotiate Act (H.R. 3463, S. 1970) and the Public Safety Employer-Employee Cooperation Act (H.R. 1154, S. 1394), which would guarantee collective bargaining rights for public employees in every state at every level of government. I will also support efforts to improve the basic OSHA law to cover public sector workers.

3. Would you support a statewide "Ban the Box" law, prohibiting employers from asking about job applicants' criminal history until after an initial screening or interview?*

Yes

No

Optional: Qualify Your Response to #3: As Mayor of Tacoma, I supported “ban the box” legislation to help applicants interested in employment with the City. I support similar legislation at the state level and in Congress I will fight for a national “Ban the Box” law.

4. Do you support legislation that reimburses the cost of reproductive health care services, such as SB 6105, the Reproductive Health Access for All Act?*

Yes

No

Optional: Qualify Your Response to #4: I am proud to be the sole endorsed candidate by the National Women's Political Caucus, which supports pro-choice women candidates for elected and appointed offices at all levels of government, and am committed to fighting attempts to restrict access to birth control and women's reproductive healthcare in Congress. We must protect women's reproductive health rights so they can make the choices they need for themselves and their families.

Abortion should be safe, legal, accessible, affordable and culturally competent. Access to free birth control and to safe, legal, affordable abortions is a fundamental part of comprehensive health care, regardless of income. But these core principles and women's reproductive rights are under assault by the Trump Administration and Republicans in Congress.

In Congress, I will protect funding for organizations like Planned Parenthood that provide vital health care services and access to birth control, and I will fiercely oppose attempts to overturn Roe v. Wade. I will also vote to repeal the misguided and hurtful Hyde Amendment, which penalizes Medicaid enrollees seeking an abortion and thus has a disproportional impact on people with low incomes, people of color, young people, and our immigrant neighbors.

5. Would you support an automatic voter registration act such as HB 2595 (Automatic Voter Registration Act of 2018), streamlining procedures in order to automatically register citizens to vote?*

Yes

No

Optional: Qualify Your Response to #5: We have a responsibility to knock down barriers to the ballot box for all Americans. Automatic voter registration is a long-overdue step that I would support in Congress. I also support steps to promote civic engagement through automatic voter registration of newly naturalized citizens, a policy included in the New Deal for New Americans Act, which I would vote for.

6. Would you support a bill that would enable the state of WA to create a single health financing entity to provide health care financing for all Washington residents, independent from employment, such as the WA Apple Care Trust?*

Yes

No

Optional: Qualify Your Response to #6: Health care is a right, not a privilege. Even those with insurance are paying sky-high deductibles and copays. The status quo is untenable and affects people's health and economic security. I strongly support the goal of universal health care, and I support having a public option as a choice available to Washington State residents. I also support federal action adding a public health care option to the Affordable Care Act. This will improve coverage, drive down prices, and will lead to better insurance plans from private insurers through increased competition. I would also support legislation to expand Medicaid. I am also open to exploring a lowering of the eligibility age for Medicare. I also will fight to strengthen protections for people with preexisting conditions and end surprise billings, and hold the pharmaceutical industry accountable for patent reform so generic drugs can come to market more quickly, to lower the cost of prescription drugs.

Part III - Free Response

1. Why are you running as a Democrat? What aspects of the Democratic platform most resonate with you?*

I am a proud, lifelong Democrat and I am running as a Democrat because of our shared values: I believe in the common good, and I believe government - and all of us - have a duty to provide the dignity that every person deserves: A high quality education, access to opportunity, fair wages, access to homes that are actually affordable for them and their family, a path for our children that is even better, urgent action to address climate change, and a secure retirement. These are the values that are central to the Democratic Party and that resonate most with me, and guide my approach to policy making.

We Democrats know we are bound to one another. And that's why through my entire life - thanks to the lessons and values instilled in me by my parents - I've always worked to stand up for the underdog and provide a voice for the unheard.

2. In the past, many Democrat-sponsored bills have died in the Republican-controlled Senate. Please list three failed bills from the past legislative session that you will champion when elected.*

HR 1, For the People Act: In 2019, leaders in the House voted along bipartisan lines to pass HR 1, the For the People Act, which includes a suite of election security, campaign finance reform, and anti-corruption measures. Yet Mitch McConnell and the Senate Republicans have refused to act on this legislation. If elected, I will continue to champion legislative action to combat corruption and protect Americans' rights at the ballot box.

HR 6800, Health and Economic Recovery Omnibus Emergency Solutions Act (HEROES) Act: Nearly four months ago, Congress passed the \$3-trillion HEROES Act to provide additional financial relief to states and cities to address the budget crises states face due to COVID-19 and can continue to fully fund vital services, but the Senate continues to refuse a floor vote on the legislation. In Congress, I would vote for additional action to provide states these resources, such as the HEROES Act.

HR 2, The Moving Forward Act: On July 1, the House passed HR 2, The Moving Forward Act, which took bold action to rebuild our nation's infrastructure while addressing key injustices in America that have been laid bare by the COVID-19 crisis. I am disappointed that Leader McConnell and the Senate have not acted on the legislation, and if elected, I would continue to advocate for and support national investments in our infrastructure.

3. What important state and local issues have you worked on (or taken an interest in) that you feel aren't getting enough attention from elected leaders and the media?*

As a member of the Tacoma City Council for two years and then as Mayor of Tacoma for eight years, and working with our region's employers as the CEO of the Seattle Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce, I have worked extensively on a host of state and local issues. Issues I am both interested and invested in that I wish received more focused attention from policy makers and the media include:

Universal Basic Income Pilot Programs: Many people and their families face challenges meeting their basic needs. I strongly support universal basic income pilot programs to help develop a national strategy that will provide financial stability for people. In Congress, I will advocate for a pilot program to test its effectiveness at addressing people's basic needs.

Addressing Our National Housing Crisis: Everyone deserves to live in a safe, stable, affordable home, and we have a housing supply shortage and a national housing crisis. Local and state governments are doing what they can, but the reality of the affordable housing crisis is that the only entity with the resources to address the problem is the federal government. That is why I will advocate for a massive federal investment in affordable housing. This will include increasing funding to state housing finance commissions, to help build more affordable housing; more resources directed to local Housing Authorities, which can be used for housing construction and housing vouchers; and a plan to increase flexibility of housing vouchers to give voucher holders more options for places to live. We need a response to the affordable housing crisis that matches the scale of the problem, and I will champion this effort in Congress.

Registered Apprenticeships: Labor apprenticeship programs are one of the best avenues to a well-paid, successful career in high-demand fields. These programs need to be protected and expanded, and I will work with the Department of Labor and House Appropriations Committee to increase grant funding for Registered Apprenticeship programs. The Registered Apprenticeship model is effective. We must protect and continue investing in it.

4. Do you think Washington public schools are adequately funded? If not, what minimum requirements should be met in an adequately funded public school system? What specific forms of taxation would you support to attain that funding?*

The Federal government must help provide sufficient educational resources for all students, regardless of race, ethnicity, disability or economic status, so they can be successful. In short, it must protect the civil right of all children to have access to a free, high quality education. The government should also hold schools to a standard of equity, achievement and transparency.

I am a proud product of public schools and believe our public education system can build opportunity and equity. As Mayor of Tacoma, Washington, I made community-wide investment in public schools a civic priority and brought together business leaders, parents, non-profits, and community groups to invest in our children. The high school graduation rates in Tacoma, a majority-minority school district, went from 55% in 2010 to 89% in 2017. I also launched a summer jobs program, which provided paid internships, credits toward graduation and financial literacy training for high school students.

In Congress, I would propose to improve our public education system by fighting for universal pre-k, so more children can come to kindergarten ready to learn, and for free nutritious lunch for all public school students, regardless of family income. I support increasing Title 1 funding for schools to improve equity, and support the expansion of vocational-technical training and apprenticeship programs in our public high schools.

5. What are some obstacles inherent in proposed legislative solutions to climate change? How would you approach those obstacles in order to best overcome or minimize any negative effects?*

Climate change is the defining challenge of our time, impacting and shaping racial equity, environmental and

economic justice, public health, migration patterns, and our national security. I strongly support efforts to reduce CO2 emissions, including cap and trade legislation, and making investments that will incentivize us as consumers and users of transportation to make choices that reduce our carbon footprint. I look forward to working with my colleagues to do just that in Congress. We must also be mindful that this is a global phenomenon and will require all nations to participate in effective ways to lower carbon emissions.

We need impactful plans to address climate change that are attainable and effective to reduce carbon emissions, while creating and maintaining family-wage jobs, and ensure a just and equitable transition to clean energy sources. An excellent example of this is the recent report released by the House Select Committee on the Climate Crisis, which has a large list of actionable policies. I look forward to working with labor, environmental groups, Tribal nations, businesses of all sizes, communities of color and other stakeholders to develop plans that will protect our environment and the livelihoods of workers.

6. What are some obstacles inherent in proposed approaches to tax reform in Washington State? How would you approach those obstacles in order to best overcome or minimize any negative effects?*

Both in Washington State and across our country, real wages among working families are largely flat, the income gap continues to widen, and our middle class continues to shrink. The lack of a personal income tax makes truly progressive taxation extremely challenging. It would likely require a change to the Washington State Constitution to withstand a legal challenge, and income taxes have repeatedly been rejected when put to a vote of the people.

In Congress, I will fight for efforts to make our federal tax system more progressive and equitable, including voting for legislation to increase income taxes on the highest earners and on capital gains. I also support a tax on day trading, and I will oppose efforts to phase-out or repeal the estate tax and the alternative minimum tax. In addition, I will support tax relief for small businesses with low margins, and using tax-exempt municipal bonds for local infrastructure projects that address transportation and utility needs and create family wage jobs..

7. Do you support the voter-approved call for a Constitutional Amendment to overturn the Citizens United Supreme Court decision (I-735), and if so, how do you propose to work toward that goal?*

Yes. Citizens United opened the floodgates for billions of dollars of dark money to pour into elections, and that is exactly what has happened. I strongly support H.J. Res. 2, the Democracy for All amendment, as well as H.R. 1, the For the People Act, and would vote for them if elected to Congress.

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