

King County Democrats

2015 Candidate Questionnaire

State Level

Candidate Name	Jeff Manson	
Position Sought	36th LD - Representative Position 1	
Home Legislative District	36th	
Are you a Democrat? Are you known as a Democrat?	Yes Yes	
Campaign Name	Jeff Manson for the 36th	
Campaign Contact Information	Mailing address: ████████████████████ Seattle, WA 98117	Phone: ██████████ Fax: N/A
	Website: Email: ██████████ Twitter: @ Facebook:	
Campaign manager or point of contact		
Consultant(s)		

Part I – Candidate Background

Please briefly describe your qualifications, education, employment, community and civic activity, union affiliation, and other relevant experience. Attach a resume with more complete history.

I have fought for progressive causes since I co-founded my elementary school's Earth Club after reading a book for kids on the environment. In my college years I joined the Democratic Party, travelled to New Hampshire to volunteer for Bill Bradley, and to Iowa for Howard Dean, and worked for the Congressional Progressive Caucus. In January 2003, I was compelled to drive to DC to march against the impending Iraq War. In 2004, I organized a voter registration drive in central Texas which registered tens of thousands to vote.

I was naturally attracted to the social justice mission of Seattle University's School of Law, where I obtained a law degree with an emphasis in Poverty and Inequality Law and received an award for my academic work on our state's legislative process. I then worked for a legal aid program at Solid Ground representing low-income clients in state public assistance appeals before state Administrative Law Judges.

In 2009 at the age of 28, I was appointed as an Administrative Law Judge to adjudicate hearings involving a wide variety of state agencies and programs. At the time, I was the youngest judicial officer in the state. Six years later, I still serve in this position, now as a Lead where I train and mentor new Judges upon hire and when they transition to new caseloads. As an Administrative Law Judge, I see how state laws and budgets affect the most vulnerable people in our state on a daily basis.

Meanwhile, I have remained a passionate advocate for progressive candidates and causes. Understanding that elections have consequences, I have focused my volunteer time in the Democratic Party, where I am in my fifth year as Chair of the 36th District Democrats.

Now, the 36th has the opportunity to appoint a progressive champion to the legislature. I am ready to bring my legal background, direct understanding of state law, and political acumen to the state legislature and fight for our progressive values.

Describe your history of involvement in Washington state politics. What offices have you previously sought election or appointment to? What campaigns have you worked on?

I have been a PCO since I was 18 years old and a PCO in the 36th the entire time I have lived here. In January 2009, I was elected as Policy Director (formerly called Issues Chair) on the 36th District Democrats Executive Board and have served as Chair of the 36th since January 2011. I have participated in the caucus and convention process every two years and many other Democratic Party functions and efforts. I was also President of the Young Democrats Chapter at Seattle University School of Law.

I have volunteered for several campaigns for progressive candidates and issues over the years; far too many to list here. In particular, I have focused my time on campaign finance reform issues, as I see such reform as a precursor to progressive change in many other areas. I served on the Board of Directors of Washington Public Campaigns (now Fix Democracy First), and on the Steering Committees of the Fair Elections Seattle campaign in 2013 and the Honest Elections Seattle campaign this year. I was part of the three-person team in 2008 that successfully lobbied the legislature to allow municipalities to provide for public financing of campaigns, allowing for the current Honest Elections Seattle effort.

What prompted you to run for this office? What priorities are you seeking to address with your campaign?

I am running to be a progressive champion for the 36th district. Most of my life I have been fighting for economic justice, social justice, and environmental justice, both as a citizen activist and in public service. I would be honored to continue this work in the Washington State House of Representatives.

There is a lot of work to be done, and there are far too many necessary legislative changes than can be listed in this questionnaire, but here are a few of my priorities:

- **Robust, progressive funding of government:** Our government is grossly underfunded, most obviously in K-12 education., but also in Pre-K and higher education, social services, our justice system, and investment in public infrastructure. State government requires additional resources, which need to be raised in a far more progressive structure, including an income tax and capital gains tax.
- **Comprehensive *Public Education*:** We must fund K-12 education beyond the mandates of *McCleary*, not only to provide the quality and quantity of class time children need, but also provide the social and medical support necessary for learning. Public funds must be immediately repatriated from the failed charter school experiment and the disturbing increase in standardized testing must be reversed.
- **Setting a price on Carbon:** Climate change is the greatest single threat to our environment, our economy, and our way of life. We must use every tool at our disposal to reduce carbon emissions as quickly as possible and transition to a zero-emissions economy.
- **Reforming our Justice System:** As an Administrative Law Judge, I have seen first-hand how our judicial system falls short on so many levels. People with disabilities, single mothers, and recent immigrants are denied access to justice due to technicalities with paperwork. County court systems are operating on shoe-string budgets and forced to impose unreasonable filing fees which exclude an entire economic class. We have an opportunity to lead the nation on sentencing reform, ending the war on drugs, and fostering law enforcement agencies that prioritize de-escalation techniques over use of force.

If appointed, I will not only be a "safe vote" on progressive bills, I will be a champion for progressive change in state government. I will look for opportunities to push the needle, to change the conversation, to keep the right-wing on defense. It will require coalition-building, public education, grassroots support, and maybe some patience. I'm willing to dive in and get to work. With your help, we can realize this change.

List the notable endorsements you have received to date. Who are you planning to ask for an endorsement?

I was honored to receive an early sole endorsement from Councilmember Mike O'Brien, with whom I have worked on election reform issues.

I am also proud to have the endorsement of several long-serving leaders in the 36th, including Alice Woldt, Clayton Evans, Pete Mills, Liz Campbell, Joseph Peha, and many others.

While I will seek the endorsements of additional elected officials, I will be focusing my time earning the support of our PCOs.

Describe the progress of your campaign and campaign goals. For instance, how many doors have you knocked on? What earned media has your campaign received? How much money have you raised?

My goal is to sit down for a one-on-one conversation with every voting PCO who is interested in hearing about my goals for serving in the legislature; I am on track to meet that goal. Because the electorate is only around 200 people, my monetary expenditures will be minimal and I do not expect fundraising to be a focus of my campaign.

Have you ever been a member of any other political party? If so, what party? Have you ever given money to a candidate from another party in a partisan race? If so, to whom and when?

I joined the Democratic Party at age 18 and have never belonged to any other political party. In 2000, I briefly was interested in Ralph Nader's presidential campaign but I do not believe I donated.

Please answer the following questions.

		Yes*	No
1	Have you ever failed to pay any taxes or court ordered judgments?		X
2	Have you ever been found in violation of a Public Disclosure Commission, Federal Election Commission or Seattle Ethics and Elections Commission regulation?		X

* If you answered "Yes" to any of the above, please explain your answer:

Part II – Local and State Issues

#	Question	Yes	No	Qualify your response
1	Do you support amending the U.S. Constitution to lessen the influence of money in politics, and declare that corporations do	X		

	not have the rights of natural persons?			
2	Do you support the right of public workers, excluding military, to bargain and strike?	X		
3	Do you support increasing the state minimum wage to \$12/hr or higher?	X		
4	Do you support the Reproductive Health Act?	X		
5	Do you support amending Washington's Constitution to require a two-thirds vote to raise revenue, as demanded by Tim Eyman?		X	
6	Do you support the lawsuit filed by teachers & parents to overturn I-1240 (charter schools)?	X		
7	Do you support authorizing new revenue for Sound Transit so it can bring a Sound Transit 3 proposal before Puget Sound voters?	X		
8	Do you support legislation to fix Washington's broken "three strikes" law?	X		
9	Do you support allowing coal or oil to be exported from Washington State's ports?		X	
10	Do you support Governor Jay Inslee's proposal to levy a capital gains tax?	X		
11	Do you support requiring tax exemptions to be listed as expenditures in the state budget, and sunseting existing tax exemptions that are not benefiting the public interest?	X		
12	Do you oppose the privatization of workers' compensation?	X		
13	Do you support requiring paid vacation and sick + safe leave for Washington's workers?	X		
14	Do you support Tim Eyman's I-747, which artificially limits property tax increases to 1% per year, regardless of population growth, inflation, and need?		X	
15	Once elected, will you work to get diverse candidates elected to office?	X		
16	Do you support women's right to reproductive freedom?	X		

Part III – Free Response Questions

Please review the 2014 King County Democratic Platform, approved by the delegates to the King County Convention and available from KCDCC's website. List which planks, if any, you disagree with, and why.

I support the King County Democratic Platform.

As an elected leader, what will you do to promote increased awareness of the climate crisis, and what public policy would you endorse to reduce emissions and penalize producers of pollutants? Do you support

Governor Inslee's Pollution Accountability Act, which would impose a cap and trade system?

The climate crisis is the greatest threat to society and mitigating it will be one of my top priorities in the legislature. First and foremost, we must put a price on carbon emissions. There are various ways to do so, none of which are perfect, but this crisis is too urgent for us to let perfection stand in the way of meaningful steps forward. I would have supported the Governor's Pollution Accountability Act during this year's session and would have made it a priority as part of budget negotiations.

Describe your vision for tax reform and tax fairness. What changes to the state's tax system would you ask the Legislature to make? If you were in charge of putting together a budget proposal for your city or district, what would it look like? Would you be willing to raise revenue to avoid harmful cuts to public services?

Our government and public services are grossly under-funded, while the funding that exists is collected in an unconscionably regressive manner. We must find new progressive sources of revenue, including an income tax and capital gains tax, and close unjustifiable tax exemptions. Additionally, we should find opportunities to ease the burden of sales, property, and B&O taxes, and limit unreasonably high fees for public services.

With additional revenue, in particular we must fund K-12 education beyond the constitutional mandates of *McCleary*, increase funding for early learning and higher education, restore cuts to social services and expand those services proven to be most effective, and invest in public infrastructure. All of these investments will pay for themselves in the long run through greater economic growth and lower criminal justice expenses.

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?

So many aspects of public policy are distorted by big money from special interests in our campaign process. Whether we consider taxes, education, the environment, corporate regulation, health care, criminal justice, or social services, corporations and wealthy interests have an exaggerated influence on policy outcomes.

This is why I have focused my time on campaign finance reform more than any other issue, because it is a necessary precursor to a lot of the progressive change we want to see. A good first step is Seattle's I-122, Honest Elections Seattle, which would provide all Seattleites the opportunity to donate up to \$100 of public money to candidates who show a broad base of support through collecting hundreds of low-dollar donations. If adopted, this could serve as a model for other municipalities, the state, and possibly the nation, for counteracting big money in an era dominated by *Citizens United*. I will be a champion for campaign reform in the legislature, starting with our State Supreme Court.

Second, I have spent the bulk of my volunteer time supporting and leading the Democratic Party in the 36th district. The 36th does very important work that often gets overlooked by the media, although has been recognized by many elected officials. During my time as Chair, the 36th has regularly had the highest number of registered voters, the highest turnout, and turned out more votes for President Obama in 2012 than any other legislative district in the state. This is partially due to the demographics of the district, but is greatly augmented by our robust and active PCO and volunteer operation. Additionally, our endorsement process is considered the "gold standard" among party activists in the region for its rigor and transparency. We conduct videotaped interviews of candidates and post the videos on our website. We have clear rules for our endorsement decisions which instill confidence in both the process and the result.

I am proud of my role building the Party and will continue to do so as a member of the legislature.

Do you support legislation/policies that will address the disproportionate application of school discipline on at-risk students? If so, how will you show your active support?

Yes, we must halt the school to prison pipeline. To do so, schools must limit exclusionary discipline (suspensions and expulsions), rethink "zero tolerance" policies, and instead focus on counseling and supportive services. The legislature took a big step in this direction in 2013 by placing limits on discipline and requiring data collection on disciplinary practices and demographic info of students who are disciplined. As these data come in it will surely show that more must be done to change school policies and fund alternative remedies.

What would you do to address social justice issues?

I believe "social justice" encompasses many aspects of the relationship between government and the people. In particular, I believe it concerns equal opportunity to participate in the economy and civil society. Historically and currently, we see unequal treatment of individuals on many bases, including economic class, gender, race, and sexual orientation and identity. Here are just a few ideas to help achieve social justice in Washington State:

Economic class: Accelerating inequality is a threat not only to economic security, but also to the stability of our democracy. Addressing it within Washington State requires increased investments in education and human services; collecting public revenue in a more progressive manner; and adopting policies to support workers, including adopting a \$12/hr minimum wage (or higher), protecting collective bargaining rights, and instituting or expanding paid vacation, parental, and sick and safe leave.

Gender: It is unacceptable that women have lagged behind in wages and access to economic opportunity. First, we must ensure equal pay for equal work regardless of gender. Second, state law should require parental leave policies, in addition to vacation and sick and safe leave. Third, we must protect a woman's right to choose and ensure access to family planning services. Fourth, public services available to single mothers are terribly underfunded and outdated and must be reformed and supported. Additionally, huge disparities exist among women of color and we must recognize that the gender equality conversation must include discussions of institutional racism as well.

Race: Recent tragic events have raised the issue of racial equality in the national consciousness in a way that provides an opportunity for policy change. I support the #BlackLivesMatter movement and bringing an end to police brutality. We must also end mass incarceration and address inherent bias in the judicial process. I support the Voting Rights Act, universal voter registration, public financing of campaigns, and other reforms that will make government more representative of our population.

Sexual Orientation and Identity: Washington was the first state where the people affirmatively voted for marriage equality and it is amazing how quickly that became universal across the country. However, there is still work to do and LGBTQ individuals must still be protected from discrimination in employment, housing, government, and as consumers. In particular, there is a lot of work to be done with respect to the rights, responsibilities, and protections provided for transgender individuals.

Do you believe that transportation funding bills should require funding for accessible sidewalks, safe intersections, and public transportation accommodations for the disabled?

Yes. We must follow both the letter and spirit of the Americans with Disabilities Act and Washington Law Against Discrimination.

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What will you do to protect and expand voting rights for all eligible citizens?

First, we must pass the Washington State Voting Rights Act so minority populations can have an equal opportunity to meaningful representation in municipal government.

Second, we must have policies that lower barriers to registering to vote and to voting, including universal registration (such as Oregon's opt-out system), additional ballot drop locations, materials in additional languages, and additional accessible voting centers.

I affirm that all the information provided in response to this questionnaire is true, complete and correct, to the best of my ability, and that no relevant matter has been omitted.

Signature	<i>Jeffrey Manson</i> (signed)	Date: 9/15/2015
Printed Name	Jeff Manson	

Supplemental Question to the King County Democrats Questionnaire

#	Question	Yes	No	Qualify your response
17	Do you pledge to respect the democratic will of the Elected and Appointed PCOs and support their first choice for the appointment to the King County Council and not lobby, nor encourage others to lobby, the Council to support anyone but the Elected and Appointed PCOs' first choice?	X		

JEFF MANSON

♦ Seattle, WA 98117

EDUCATION **Seattle University School of Law**, Seattle, Washington

Juris Doctor, *cum laude*, May 2008

- *Presidential Law Scholar*
- *Recipient of Public Interest Law Foundation (PILF) Grant*
- *Inequality & Poverty Law Focus*
- *CALI Award (top of class), Legislative Seminar*

The University of Texas, Austin, Texas

Bachelor of Arts in Economics, minor in Mathematics, May 2004

Rénmín University, Beijing, China

Indiana University Chinese Summer Law Program, Summer 2006

Institute for a Democratic Future, Seattle, WA

2010 Fellow

LEGAL **Office of Administrative Hearings**, Olympia, WA and Seattle, WA

EXPERIENCE *Administrative Law Judge, September 2009 – Present*

- Held fair and independent hearings and issued orders regarding appeals of several state agencies (including Dept. of Early Learning, Dept. of Social & Health Services, Employment Security Dept., Gambling Commission, Health Care Authority, Liquor & Cannabis Board, Labor & Industries, and Lottery Commission).
- Since 2013, served as Lead ALJ training and mentoring ALJs on social and health services caseloads.

Access to Justice Board, Impediments Committee, Seattle, WA

Justice Programs Attorney, May – August 2009

- Wrote a guide for ALJs on providing access for people with disabilities.

Solid Ground, Family Assistance Program, Seattle, WA

Benefits Attorney, September 2008 – May 2009

Legal Intern, May 2007 – February 2008

- Represented clients with public assistance appeals before the Office of Administrative Hearings.
- Successfully overturned Final Order in DSHS overpayment case in King County Superior Court.
- Nominated for the 2008 “Justice in the Community” Award at the 1st Annual Celebration of Social Justice at Seattle University School of Law in recognition of this advocacy.

Ronald A. Peterson Law Clinic, Seattle University School of Law, Seattle, Washington

Administrative Law Intern, January – May 2007

- Represented client in Medicaid appeal before the Office of Administrative Hearings.

Trusts and Estates Intern, August – December 2006

- Drafted end-of-life documents, including a will that protects client’s Indian trust lands under the American Indian Probate Reform Act of 2004.

Housing Justice Project, King County Bar Association, Seattle, Washington

Volunteer Legal Assistant, September 2006 – May 2007

- Conducted client intake and summarized potential defenses for volunteer attorneys.

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POLITICAL EXPERIENCE **36th District Democrats, Seattle, WA**

Chair, January 2011 – Present

Policy Director, Executive Board, January 2009 – January 2011

Precinct Committee Officer, August 2007 – Present

- Knocked on doors to get out the Democratic vote in every election.
- Chaired monthly meetings of the membership and Executive Board.
- Facilitated a robust endorsement process considered the gold standard among local Democratic groups.
- Organized volunteers to support Democratic candidates in swing districts, including Maureen Judge, Nathan Schlicher, Matt Isenhower, and Carol Gregory.
- Organized PCOs to boost voter registration, turnout, and votes for Democratic candidates and progressive causes. The 36th has regularly had the highest voter registration, the highest turnout, and delivered more votes for President Obama in 2012 than any other legislative district.

Washington Public Campaigns (now Fix Democracy First),

Board of Directors, May 2009 – January 2011

Legal Extern, January – May 2008

Volunteer, June 2007 - Present

- In 2008, successfully advocated for legislation to allow municipalities to provide public funding for campaigns.
- Researched legislative precedent, built community coalitions, and lobbied legislators.
- Steering Committee, Fair Elections Seattle, a 2013 effort to establish a public financing program for Seattle campaigns. The proposal failed by less than 1% of the vote.
- Steering Committee, Honest Elections Seattle, a 2015 effort to establish public financing and other reforms in Seattle. (Currently on the ballot in November 2015.)

Travis County Democratic Party, Austin, Texas

Director of 2004 Voter Registration Drive, August – November 2004

- Organized over 200 volunteers to register tens of thousands of voters, bringing the county voter registration to an unprecedented 94.5% of eligible voters.
- Led volunteer team to register 12,000 voters in less than 24 hours in high-profile media event on last day of registration before the 2004 national election.

Congressional Progressive Caucus, U.S. House of Representatives, Washington, DC

Congressional Intern, May 2001 – August 2001

- Assisted with policy research, progressive advocacy, and events organizing.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT **Washington State Bar Association - Administrative Law Section**

Secretary, September 2010 - September 2014

- Presented "Working With Pro Se Litigants & Other Ethical Issues" at Administrative Law Continuing Legal Education (CLE) course, October 2012
- Presented "Access to Justice: Pro Se Litigants, Services and GR33" at Network of Adjudicatory Agencies CLE, October 2013

Pike Market Child Care and Preschool

Board of Directors, January 2008 – January 2011

- Served on Fundraising Committee

INTERESTS Playing piano, international travel, and researching my family's genealogy.