

## Timm Ormsby - District 3, Representative, Position 2

1. Do you have a personal connection or professional experience with someone who has a developmental disability?

My Cousin and friend, Kimberly, with whom I lived during my first session in 2004, is an active member of the Tacoma area DD community and someone whose knowledge, experience and opinion are very important to me in developing policy and funding decisions on issues that affect her and her Mother's future and quality of life. My friend and campaign volunteer, Misty, is someone with keen insights and advice and on whose judgment I trust and rely. Although we often disagree on political and policy issues, I always look forward to our next encounter and I think she does too.

2. What are your top three legislative priorities?

I firmly believe that helping folks who are disadvantaged beyond their control should be our highest priority. Last year we worked to save critical service programs within DSHS such as the Arc. Given the devastating proposed cuts, I am proud that we were able to salvage the statewide programs that help our neighbors who ask for assistance. Thank you, ARC, for prioritizing maintaining funding for all DSHS programs!

I think the keys to our economic future are employment opportunities, job creation and protection; we need to continue to act in the best interest of all of our fellow workers, especially those who are not able to work or need assistance to find and keep employment due to a mental or physical disadvantage. I pledge to continue to work for the equal rights for all Washingtonians, regardless of race, sexual orientation, gender, creed, disadvantage or any other difference that we might have- differences that can make us strong when we accept and embrace them.

3. What area of expertise, experience or personal interest will you bring to office?

While most folks would identify their public policy experience or other political involvement, which are certainly helpful during committee, on the House floor or during negotiations, I rely on those formative experiences that came from growing up in a large family (eight boys), having children that depended on me, and struggling to pay the monthly bills. The most useful lesson that I can bring to the job is that we have a shared fate; that wherever we're going, we're getting there together; that I am not allowed to succeed or get what I want at the expense of others; that life is a team sport and I'm fortunate to be on the roster. Our parents showed us how critical it was to consider all these things when making decisions that affect others. The time I have enjoyed as a father has also helped remind me about what it means to be useful, not important. Struggling financially keeps me in tune with the day-to-day struggles that my neighbors face. Those are the things I think about and are most valuable to me when making public policy.

4. We have faced continual budget deficits for the last few years. What solutions do you have for ensuring that people with disabilities are able to get the services they need?

It really is a challenge. The budget cuts facing those with developmental disabilities also affect other critical services. While we have stabilized, we will not make progress until we restructure our consumer-based revenue with a more stable income based alternative. While we faced revenue shortfalls of unprecedented amounts, I felt confident in our ability to save the DSHS services in our native 3<sup>rd</sup> District, and across the State. I am encouraged by our last session and the programs we were able to protect, I feel that the majority of the Legislators understand the importance of public health, education and public assistance

programs. I also encourage folks to vote, become informed on the issues facing all of us, and to take an active role in the system that decides the funding and the policy for themselves and our State.

5. If you were to reduce spending or face a revenue shortfall, what specifically would you seek to cut from state government?

Over the last two biennial budgets, we have cut so many services and critical programs that I am not interested in further cutting these vital public services. There are still improvements we can make, but solving the short term budget challenges by cutting services that will cost us far more in the future than we save now makes no sense to me.

6. If you were to increase spending in any area of the budget, what would you increase and how would these increases be funded?

Education, including early learning and intervention, K-12, higher education and employment related skills education; a stable and sustainable social safety net and basic health care access.

7. Would you support the consolidation and/or closure of state institutions that house people with developmental disabilities and instead provide those residents with community alternatives that would still meet their needs, but at less government expense?

Due to budget cutting necessity, we have already closed and reduced institutional care which has not helped improve services to those in the community. The situation requires careful consideration like the affect on the patient (and their families) that only know these settings and consider them and the other people there to be their home and support. Also, I would be concerned about the job loss of those employees who give the residents excellent care and the strain it would place on their families to lose their only employment. I am not convinced that further closing and cutting state facilities would be in all of our best interests.

8. What would you recommend to begin serving the 16,852 individuals who have been waiting (some for years) for community services?

I would apologize first. I am sorry that our system is not as quick or responsive as we would all like to see. It's a huge challenge to balance all of the needs we have, from education, to transportation, public safety workers like the Police and Firemen that serve so gallantly day in and day out. We are working every day to try and find a way to make all services more efficient. I would ask for patience, the large working apparatus that is government takes a lot of consideration to make work the best that it possibly can; I want to assure that we will continue to manage the priorities for everyone's different interests as best we can.