

2018 Candidate Questionnaire for Developmental Disabilities

Name: Dave Wilson

District: 6th LD

Position: State Representative Pos. 2

1. If you have a personal connection or professional experience with someone who has a developmental disability, how would you describe its impact on you?

I started and ran a computer training and vocational school (Interface Computer School) for 30 years. Among our first students in 1984 was a young man named Lonnie, who was born with Cerebral Palsy and confined to a wheelchair. Lonnie was almost 30 years old when he enrolled in one of our training programs. He had tried to enroll in a similar program at the Community College, but was told he could not, because the limited use of his hands that would impede his ability to type at an acceptable speed.

Because of Lonnie's typing limitation, he had to spend 2-3 times the amount of time that other students did working in our computer lab, but he did so willingly and without complaint.

Although Lonnie was slow at typing, he did excellent work. Because of his work ethic and his positive attitude, he was looked-up to by all the other students and the staff. Lonnie made such a good impression on all of us that we hired him part-time, after he graduated, to work as a computer lab aide. After working for us two years, Lonnie was hired into a good full-time job at the Spokane Transit Authority (STA) utilizing the skills he learned at our school, and where he has now worked for over 30 years. Lonnie also kept working at Interface part-time for a total of ten years, during which time he inspired hundreds of students,

2. What are your top three legislative priorities and how would you help people with developmental disabilities in them?

1. Education: I want to ensure K-12 education funding is sustainable into the future while turning our focus to making pre-K available to more children, and to make higher education opportunities more affordable to everyone. As part of this effort, I want to make sure these same opportunities are available to people with developmental disabilities.
2. Healthcare for All: Everyone deserves access to quality, affordable healthcare. Too many people with disabilities can't get the treatment or accommodations they need. Healthcare reform must include funding for resources for people with disabilities.
3. Economic Development and Living Wage Jobs: Washington's economy has improved greatly over the last decade, but not everyone has shared in that success. Many people still struggle to get ahead, and people with developmental disabilities face even greater economic challenges. I want to foster an economy that provides opportunities for everyone to succeed, regardless of their cognitive ability.

3. What developmental disability expertise, experience or personal interest will you bring to office?

My campaign is about bringing effective representation to *everyone* in the 6th LD. For too long representatives in the 6th LD have been inaccessible to their constituents while they contribute to gridlock in Olympia. I want to make sure that the diverse communities that make up this district are all represented in the state capitol, especially those whose voices often go unheard. If I am elected people with developmental disabilities and their families will have an advocate in the 6th LD who will work with them to make sure policy directly reflects their input.

4. Is there other information you'd like constituents with developmental disabilities and their family and friends to know?

After college and spending five years in the personal computer industry, I started and ran a technical college, Interface Computer School (later Interface College), for 30 years. During that time, I served in leadership positions for several community and professional workforce training committees and boards (local, state, and national). The experience that I gained from serving in these professional groups has given me a well-rounded background in vocational education and workforce training.

These experiences also gave me the chance to work with educational institutions, businesses, community organizations, and people from all walks of life. I know the 6th LD and the issues concerning its residents because I've spent my entire career engaging in the community.

I am also an experienced candidate. After retiring in 2013, I ran for Congress twice - in 2014 and 2016 - and earned Primary Election endorsements from the Spokesman-Review both years. In this election, I have endorsed by community leaders such as State Senator Andy Billig; State Representative Marcus Riccelli; Spokane city council president Ben Stuckart; and Spokane city council members Candace Mumm, Karen Stratten, Breean Beggs, and Lori Kinnear.