



Name: John Zingale

E-Mail: ElectJohnZingale@gmail.com

Website: www.ElectJohnZingale.com

Video Response: <https://youtu.be/kHFCsnuryaA?si=bldY82XiQRdfiCAp>

District 18

Position

Do you have a personal connection or professional experience with someone who has an intellectual/developmental disability? (I/DD) If so would you describe its impact on you? How would it affect you in this job?

Yes, I have had several experiences with people that have an intellectual/developmental disability (IDD). I worked in the grocery retail business from when I was 15 to the age of 31. Over those years I've had several colleagues that have had this type of disability. They were some of the nicest and hardest working people that I had the pleasure of working with. In my current, second career as a teacher, I have also had some students that fall into this category. They taught me to be more compassionate and made me a better teacher. They also inspire me about the future, when I see how they work to learn and push themselves to be the best they can be.

What are your top three priorities and how would you ensure people with developmental disabilities and their families are included in them?

Education and access to top quality education is a top priority for me and my campaign. This includes making sure the children and families of children with intellectual/developmental disabilities have the same access to education that their peers do across the state. While certain areas have funding to ensure this happens, we need to make sure that all kids get the education they deserve. Including increasing the amount of para educators so that students with needs have the extra support to help them be as successful as possible in the classroom.

Housing and infrastructure is another priority. We must make sure that people and families of people with IDDs have access to affordable housing that is appropriate for their needs. They should not have to have an undue burden placed upon them like this. We must make sure that they know their rights and get access to funding so that they don't have to worry about housing as an issue. This will help them focus on their health and other aspects of their life so that they can live happy, successful, and productive lives in our community.

The last issue is affordable healthcare. These costs are the number one cause of bankruptcies and we must work to lower, or even eliminate, these costs. I want people to live without fear of losing what they have because of healthcare costs. That is something that I believe is a human right and all people, especially those living with IDDs deserve to be treated with dignity and respect which includes reducing the health care burden on them and their families.

Washington is 38th in the Nation for per-capita spending for individuals with I/DD. Would improving this statistic be a priority for you, and if so, what would your strategy be?

Yes, this is an issue that would be something that I would work to address at the state level. I don't currently have a strategy for accomplishing this, yet. I would need to learn more about the funding that is currently being provided and what would be the programs and assistance that would be of the greatest assistance to people with I/DD. I would look to groups like yours, Peace NW, and the Developmental Disability Political Action Committee to help me learn more about the issues and the gaps in funding so that I can grow as an advocate and a legislator.

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

Being a public school teacher gives me a unique perspective that I want to bring to Olympia. My job is to teach the children in my classroom regardless of their background or needs. They all deserve my best and the best education. This job has shown me how diverse our communities are and how there are families out there that need more support. I want to help be that voice for change and work to make the lives of our community, and our state, better.