



Many Voices / One Vision



2026 Legislative Candidate Survey

*Questions for Legislative Candidates — The Arc of Washington
The Community Advocacy Coalition for Developmental Disabilities
The Children's Campaign Fund*

Name: Alex Andrade

Position: House

Legislative District: 33rd, Position 2

Email: alexforhouse33@gmail.com

Website: www.alexforhouse.com



1. Do you have a personal connection or professional experience with someone who has an intellectual/developmental disability (IDD)? If yes, would you describe its impact on you and your candidacy? If not, what have you learned about people with intellectual or developmental disabilities and how has it impacted your candidacy?

Yes, I have several personal and community connections to individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities and special needs. Through my partner, I have seen firsthand the responsibilities and challenges that come with caregiving. She was the primary caregiver for her uncle for more than 30 years until his passing two years ago. He required significant support throughout his life and, in many ways, was like a son to her. She is also

raising her adopted daughter, who has special needs and requires ongoing services and support.

My partner also created the special needs program through Discover Burien, which has provided opportunities for inclusion, community participation, and employment. I was previously a board member of Discover Burien before we were together, so I have had the opportunity to see the program's growth and impact over time. Through that work, I have seen how meaningful it is when people are given opportunities to contribute, build relationships, gain employment experience, and participate fully in community life.

In addition, I volunteer with Burien CARES, where I have worked alongside volunteers with disabilities and special needs. That has shown me that everyone has unique strengths and valuable contributions to make when given the opportunity and support to succeed. I have also volunteered at events with the Paralyzed Veterans Association (PVA).

All of these experiences have given me a greater appreciation for the importance of accessible services, family supports, respite care, inclusive programming, employment opportunities, transportation, housing, and community belonging. They have also reinforced my belief that people with intellectual and developmental disabilities deserve the opportunity to live, work, and participate fully in their communities, and that families should not have to navigate complex systems alone.

2. What policies and systems are you aware of that impact the lives of people with IDD and their families? If elected, what responsibility would you have to change those policies or systems?

I am aware that people with IDD and their families often rely on a wide range of supports and services, including special education, Medicaid-funded services, employment supports, transportation, housing assistance, respite care, and long-term caregiving programs. Through the experiences of people in my life, I have also seen how difficult it can be for families to navigate multiple agencies, eligibility requirements, waiting lists, and support systems while trying to care for a loved one.

I have also seen how important transportation and community programs can be in helping people maintain independence and stay connected. My partner's uncle relied on specialized transportation services so he could attend programs and activities independently rather than always depending on family members for rides. He loved his dancing, art, and other programs there and ultimately gave him a greater sense of independence and quality of life. He was also active in Special Olympics.

If elected, I believe my responsibility is to listen to individuals with IDD, their families, caregivers, service providers, educators, and advocates so I can better understand where systems are working and where they are falling short. I also believe it is important to evaluate policies through the lens of accessibility, inclusion, independence, and quality of life.

My goal would be to support policies that help people with IDD live, work, learn, and play! To be able to participate fully in their communities while ensuring families have access to the resources and supports they need. Just as importantly, I'd listen to better understand the barriers people face and look for opportunities to make systems easier to navigate and more responsive to the people they serve.

3. If elected, what are your top three priorities, and how would people with IDD and their families benefit from each priority?

- 1-Public safety & behavioral health
- 2-Housing affordability and accessibility
- 3-Workforce development and economic opportunity

4. When you have questions about how to best support people with IDD and their families, what or who are your trusted resources?

- Individuals around me with IDD and their families
- Caregivers
- Service providers and educators
- Organizations like The Arc, CAC members, Special Olympics, and local disability advocates.

Community programs you've worked with through Discover Burien and Burien CARES.

5. The national trend -- and legal mandate --- supports transitioning individuals with IDD out of institutional settings and into community-based care, which is not only the best practice but also the most cost-effective approach. Studies consistently show that community-based services cost significantly less per person than institutional care while providing greater independence and quality of life. In Washington the cost of care in a Residential Habilitation Center (RHC) is more than double the cost of equivalent services in community settings. Although Washington has made progress, continued efforts are needed to align with best practices, civil rights, federal priorities, and fiscal responsibility. Transitioning more individuals into community-based care will allow the state to reinvest savings into services for much needed community-based services. How do you believe Washington state should approach investment in home and community based services for people with IDD in the next five years?

Expanding community-based services and investing in services that maximize independence, dignity, community participation, and quality of life while supporting families and caregivers. Such as: transportation services, community programs, caregiver support, independent living opportunities, and Special Olympics.

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

My experiences as a caregiver to two brothers with Special IEP's in school, a volunteer working alongside individuals with disabilities, and the parent of a son who's a school psychologist have reinforced my belief that inclusion is about more than services; it's about belonging.

Everyone deserves the opportunity to participate in their community, build relationships, contribute their talents, and live with dignity and independence. If elected, I will continue listening, learning, and working with individuals with IDD, their families, caregivers, and advocates to help ensure their voices are represented in policy discussions and decision-making.