



Questions for Legislative Candidates- The Arc of Washington

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Community Advocacy Coalition for Developmental Disabilities

The Children's Campaign Fund

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?

Being that I'm a History teacher in middle school I see daily the welfare of students in special education programs in passing and know the challenges educators and children face when trying to fulfill their right to be educated as well as the hard work special educators into building those relationships to foster those very individualized plans. I empathize with teachers and Students and I would love to participate in learning more about Special education policy

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'm not too familiarized at the current state of special education legislation in our state but I would love to learn

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

I think a huge aspect is making funding more available and educating school board directors on how to conservatively budget for longterm funding I think the more we teach streamline budget management and adequate ways to invest in successful programs we will see far better successes statewide

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

I would say the staff and families at my middle school also some families and friends I have met along the way in my life

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?

I think listening to the community especially and working to streamline providers, invigorate the private sector to innovate and raise quality or services which in turn should raise the quality of life in.

I think disabilities should not be assumed that quality of life is lost because you're "different" I think a healthy state position is funding and invigorating the aspects of the industry the community needs most.

I think our world is starting to wake up to seeing citizens with disabilities to be cared for in a way they deserve I think it's about meeting the moment and progressing

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

I'd love to meet with the everyday family and folks who walk the walk and enrich the lives of some of the most joyous people. - Reedy Berg