

# 2022 Legislative Candidate Questionnaire



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Position Representative

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1. Do you have a personal connection or professional experience with someone who has a intellectual/developmental disability (IDD), and if so, would you describe its impact on you? If not, what impact do you want to have for people with IDD and their families?

I am personally affected. I a Disabled Veteran who suffered a stroke in 2008 with cognitive & physical loss of function, I have two nephews with autism, both of which have been institutionalized throughout their life where I believe understanding and assistance could have made a difference. I know first hand how difficult it is to navigate the cumbersome systems, mounds of paperwork, years of frustration, and lack of progress in helping those who need help the most.

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

My number one priority is enshrining the rights of parents and guardians to be the primary stakeholders in their child's life. This ensures that those parents are free to make the decisions necessary to provide for their parents on all levels.

Second I intend to pass legislation that provides for funding that follows the student and not institutions. In Washington State we spend a staggering \$18175 per student. A parent or guardian of anyone with special needs should have access to that funding to put their child in a home, charter, private, or public program. This would allow those who know the child the best to choose the most appropriate education based on their individual needs. I intend to pass legislation that provides for funding that follows the Student and not institutions.

Third, we are suffering through the worst food crisis of our lifetimes. I intend to fund and incentivize gardening on all levels of participation. My own personal experience in returning to rural farm life and its rehabilitating affect on me has driven me to encourage others to grow something even on their back patios. Every head of lettuce, tomato, carrot, or potato grown is one less that has to be brought in by truck. People of all capacities can participate in the joy of producing food, fruits, vegetables, or small scale livestock. The joy of helping to provide a service needed by all turns everyone into an essential part of society and provides a personal feeling of value.

3. If cuts became necessary due to a recession or economic downturn, how would you protect services that people with IDD and their families need?

Traditionally mental health and healthcare for people with disabilities becomes the first casualty of budget cuts and the last to be re-funded. When you elect me, I am committed to announce every cut and reduction publicly and seek comment from the people. For too long average everyday citizens have taken a back seat to companies and organizations that dominate our legislators. I will ensure that every bill that comes before me has an opportunity to be vetted by the people and they will advise me on whether to vote for it or not. The people have the right and responsibility to let me know if they want amendments to any legislation as well. I intend to restore representation to the people and the people will be the ones that assist in these difficult decisions.

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

The main thing that I would like you all to remember about me is that I am a man of the people. I have been standing for our Nations Founding Values for most of my life in one form or another. I am a Disabled Veteran who will always continue to strive to overcome my own disabilities as well as those I serve. I believe in empowering people to live the life that they are given. I don't believe in disabilities, only challenges. Every one of us has ability in some capacity or another and each one of us has challenges that diminish that which we want to be able to do. Empowering people to be all that they can be, that is what each piece of legislation that is ever passed should strive to do.

Your Campaign Website

<https://LonnyRayWilliams.com/>