

2022 Legislative Candidate Questionnaire



Name: Dr. Lelach Rave

Legislative District: State District 46

Email Address: lelach@drlelachrave.com

YouTube Video Address: <https://youtube/RLdGrgO5Zl8>

1. Do you have a personal connection or professional experience with someone who has an 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?



My 13 year old nephew has profound developmental disabilities. He has microcephaly and cerebral palsy. He is non-verbal and incontinent. He uses some sign language, pointing/gesturing, and an ipad "talker" to help him communicate. I have watched my sister, her husband and my parents restructure their lives around this lovely child. They have gained access to a whole new world that they never knew existed before - and have struggled to access adequate schooling and childcare. Their local public school system did not have appropriate programs for their son, and after a legal battle, the public school system is now paying for him to attend a nearby private school that works with children with special needs. They work to find summer camps that can provide one-on-one aid for my nephew so he can attend and participate. As a pediatrician, I have treated many children with IDD and their families through the years, but my nephew has given me a whole new level of appreciation for the daily impacts, small and large, that families living with individuals with IDD encounter. There is also the long term stress - what will life look like for this child as he becomes an adult? What will happen to him once we (his parents) are gone? These sorts of questions are on the edges of our minds, which are too full of the day to day dramas and joys to linger there long. But the questions persist.

I believe that each person needs a sense of belonging in their community, environmental safety, and physical, mental, and spiritual health. As an aunt and a pediatrician, I have seen firsthand the barriers in place to these basic needs for many people with intellectual/developmental disabilities. As a legislator, I would like to work to lower these barriers.

I have also worked on IDD issues on the faculty for Great MINDS training of physicians in developmental screenings and established Medicaid payment for developmental screenings for children. Throughout my professional endeavors, I have always prioritized the needs of people with IDD by ensuring that children receive early intervention, which leads to better health and developmental outcomes. Right now, there is inadequate funding for disability resources, and if elected, I will increase this funding as part of my lifelong commitment to foster a community of equality and inclusion. I want people with IDD and their families to be equipped with the tools and support to live fulfilling lives and to know that the person representing them is rooting for them every step of the way.

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

Health and Safety - As the only physician in the legislature, if elected I would prioritize public health and safety through initiatives focused on physical health, emotional security, and community safety. In Olympia, I will advocate to address the health and safety issues facing our district by supporting accessible, affordable quality healthcare, strengthening the system for mental health support, enacting effective gun safety reforms, and increasing disability resources. I will make it my mission to elevate the voices of people with developmental disabilities and consider their wellbeing in every health and safety initiative that I implement.

Housing Affordability - Northeast Seattle is where my family and I have put down roots and found community, but many in Seattle cannot afford to live in the city where they work and would naturally hope to live. Many members of our community also remain unhoused. I'll be a strong advocate for housing and land use policies that protect what we love about our neighborhoods, while ensuring equal housing opportunities. I will push for additional

resources into the Housing Trust Fund to build more affordable housing and investments into services that prevent homelessness and help neighbors living unsheltered get back on their feet, and I will do this while centering the needs of people with developmental disabilities. People with disabilities unfortunately continue to face high rates of housing insecurity, and I will fight for housing policies that reflect the needs of every member in our community. Tax Fairness - Our regressive tax code hits working and lower incomes households in our community the hardest, with those who earn the least paying a disproportionate share of taxes in our state. Just as problematic, this inequitable structure fails to generate the revenue needed to invest in education, health, safety and affordability. In Olympia, I will be a vocal advocate for common sense tax reforms that ensure our businesses and wealthiest households are contributing their fair share. By prioritizing tax fairness, I will ensure that our community receives adequate revenue to increase disability resources.

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?

In a recession, it is important to protect the most vulnerable members of our community, which includes people with IDD and their families. People with disabilities are already more likely to be economically insecure and should not bear the burden of cuts to their essential services. If cuts become necessary, I will do everything in my power to protect the services that people with IDD and their families need and focus on cutting non-essential services.

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

I am running for office to bring my perspective as a pediatrician to the legislature. For over twenty years, I have had the privilege of being there for thousands of patients and families who share their stories and entrust me with their struggles and triumphs. Running for elected office is a natural extension of the work I am already doing. I have long viewed caring for my patients to include advocacy in the policy realm. Kids can't vote. So they count on those of us who care for them to stand up on their behalf.

My goal is to bring each of my patients' families and their stories to Olympia, and give them all a seat at the table to influence policy for our state. It will be an honor to work to end health disparities for kids and families in my community by addressing all of the economic and social conditions that determine the health and well-being of members of our community. I will champion policies to increase the resources, understanding, safety, and wellbeing of individuals with IDD. I look forward to representing you in the legislature and I would be honored to receive your endorsement.

Your Campaign Website: <https://drlelachrave.com/>