

2022 Legislative Candidate Questionnaire



Name: Tarra Simmons

District Number: 23

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?

Yes, I grew up with my cousin who has an intellectual disability. He is able to live independently, but has been on SSDI his entire life. I have seen the ways people have taken advantage of him and his SSDI (other family members and employers where he worked for subminimum wages). I have had to advocate for his basic human rights and it has had a profound impact on my life to know how our vulnerable populations are not looked after in society.

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

Healthcare access and affordability, Housing and Criminal Justice Reform. I generally work with organizations like Disability Rights Washington and the Developmental Disability Council on issues. I seek out their input on legislation, and also listen to people directly impacted.

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?

I would advocate by sharing the truth about how underfunded services for people with IDD already is. The legislature can find other ways to cut costs.

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

I was a Registered Nurse for 11 years and now I'm a lawyer. In both professions, I have advocated for people with all forms of disabilities. People in prisons and jails are disproportionately people with IDD and mental health issues. I seek to find the ability to increase resources and create trauma-informed systems that care for society's most vulnerable populations.

Your Campaign Website

<https://electtarrasimmons.com>