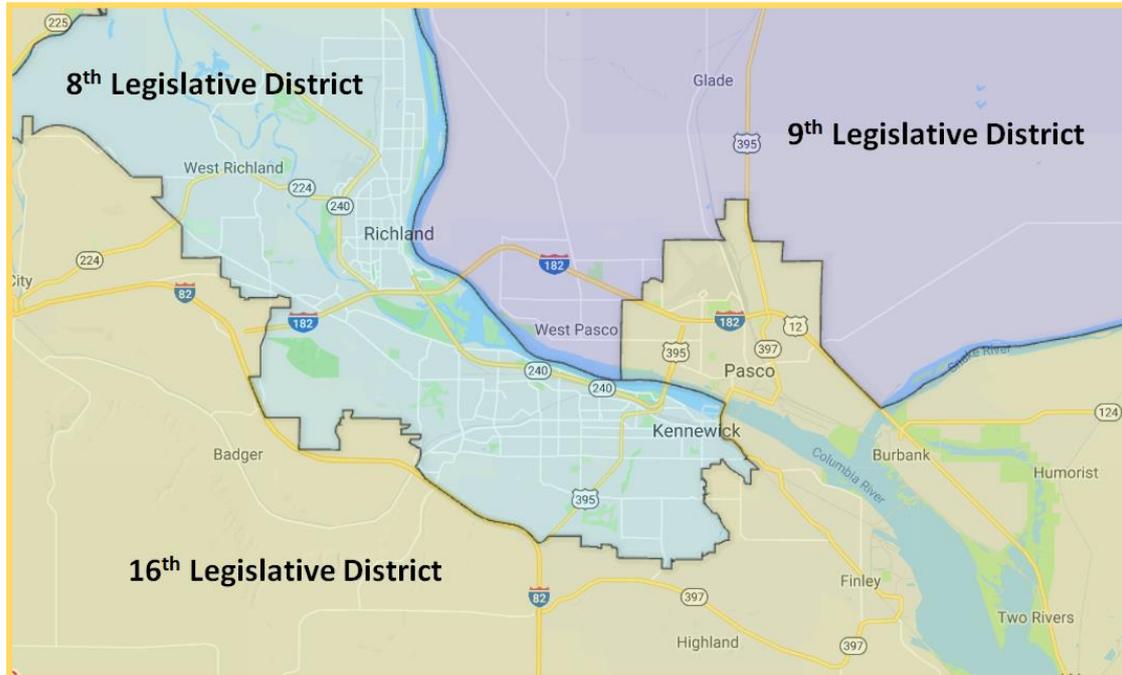


# Indivisible WA-4

## Tri-Cities Voters' Guide

### Primary Election, August 7, 2018



To help promote informed democracy in the Tri-Cities, we are pleased to present this Tri-Cities Voters' Guide, prepared through the efforts of volunteers.

The purpose of this Voters' Guide is to provide the public with a direct comparison of candidates' responses to a series of general and local questions. The questions were developed by Indivisible WA-4 in an effort to reflect the values and concerns facing our community.

The Voters' Guide is meant to augment the information provided in the Benton County and Franklin County Voter Pamphlets, where candidates seldom address the same set of issues currently affecting our communities. Efforts were made to ensure that all candidates were provided with an opportunity to participate in this Voters' Guide, including emailing questionnaires to all candidates and following up with phone calls and reminder emails. Indivisible WA-4 used the email and phone contacts provided by the candidates when they registered to run for office. All candidate responses received by July 11, 2018, are included in this Guide. Candidates' answers have been copied and pasted into this Voters' Guide exactly as provided. Only races in which there were three or more candidates are included, as in the two-person races, both candidates will go on to the General Election.

In addition, a brief job description and list of responsibilities for each office sought by the candidates are included in this Voters' Guide.

Indivisible WA-4, a non-partisan group of Tri-Citizens ensuring constituents are heard, informed and represented at the federal, state and local level, is providing this Voters' Guide as a public service.

We encourage you to vote!

## Positions Up for Election

### State Senator (4-year term, partisan)

A State Senator represents their district in the Washington State Legislature. State Senators create and ratify state laws and regulations. Their work mirrors that of legislators in the U.S. Senate, only on a smaller, state level. State Senators debate, vote on bills and work in committees. There is one State Senator per district.

### State Representative (2-year term, partisan)

A State Representative represents their district in the Washington State Legislature. State Representatives create and ratify state laws and regulations. Their work mirrors that of legislators in the U.S. House of Representatives, only on a smaller, state level. State Representatives debate, vote on bills and work in committees. There are two State Representatives per district.

### Commissioner (4-year term, partisan)

The Commissioner's Office is a catch-all for services and programs that are not the clear responsibility of another elected county official. As administrators, commissioners are responsible for public roads and public works programs, public health services, planning and zoning of unincorporated areas, emergency services or civil defense programs, and county parks and recreation.

### PUD Commissioner (6-year term, non-partisan)

The PUD is a public utility that provides electricity, water, sewer and broadband communication services to the county. A PUD Commissioner represents one of the above sectors. Position 3 in Benton County, which is up for election this year, is for the commissioner representing the electricity sector.

## Additional Sources of Information

[Washington Secretary of State Elections and Voting information](#)  
[Online Voter Registration](#)

The deadline for online or mail-in registration and address changes for the 2018 General Election is October 8. The deadline for in-person registration for the 2018 General Election is October 29.

[Benton County Auditor Voters' Guide](#)  
[Franklin County Auditor Voters' Guide](#)

### Indivisible WA-4

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## 8<sup>th</sup> Legislative District

### State Senator

Partisan office, 4-year term.

Candidates: Sharon Raye Brown (R), Ryan Cooper (L), Leo Perales (D)

Sharon Raye Brown and Ryan Cooper did not respond to our questions.

#### What motivated you to run?

Leo Perales

Our area needs a change candidate, I believe I represent a significant change and also the future of this district. We have never had a person of color in this position and we all know in this district, it's time for such change. I will put the residents of the 8<sup>th</sup> LD *first*. I will *fight* for the issues that *unite* us, not divide us. I will *fight* for healthcare for all, I will *fight* for investments in our communities to keep them strong, and I will *fight* for an economy that is built from the middle class out. I will *fight* to protect workers' rights and ensure that large corporations play by the same rules as everybody else. I will fight for the many families who are struggling, and I will fight for an education system where higher education is affordable and where our teachers receive fair pay. Most importantly I will *fight* for commonsense policies that benefit *everyone* because politics isn't about left or right, it's about speaking to the concerns of people's lives.

#### What will your priorities be if elected?

Leo Perales

My main priorities will be healthcare, economic development, investment in our crumbling infrastructure, education, criminal justice reform, and engaging youth to participate in our democracy. I have sat on many boards and commissions that have dealt with a multitude of issues, from affordable housing to municipal/county planning. I feel I have a grasp on many issues and the eagerness to learn more to effectively find solutions on behalf of the residents of the 8<sup>th</sup> legislative district.

#### How will you ensure that your constituents feel you are accountable to them?

Leo Perales

I will say it right here, if the voters of the 8<sup>th</sup> legislative district feel that I didn't make good on my campaign platform or address the most pressing issues to our area, I won't seek reelection and I say that because I believe we need accountability when it comes to our elected leaders. I don't talk out of both sides of my mouth nor will I say certain catch phrases to get votes, we've seen too much of that. I will truly represent all the people of the district because at the end of the day that's who I represent.

**What will you do to ensure schools are given adequate funding and where do you believe funding should go?**

Leo Perales

First and foremost, we will need to evaluate how we fund our schools eventually again if we truly want to address the disparities we still will see across the state and in our own district. Obviously the problem is still that we don't have enough funding for the programs will that drive student success, and in order to address the lingering issues after the McCleary decision such as teachers' pay, special education, classroom sizes, and unaffordable higher education. We will have to face the fact that we either need to raise taxes or with a surgical knife look at programs that need to cut so that funding can shift to those other areas. You always hear, we don't have a revenue problem, we have a spending problem and that can be true in many respects, but we also have many corporations who don't pay their fair share in B&O taxes but believe me, the common tax payer pays their fair share. We need to have a real conversation about funding education or we will continue our collective unwillingness to not fund the educational building blocks so that our next generation can fully participate in our society and economy.

**How will you ensure needed infrastructure projects (both new and existing) are funded and which should take priority?**

Leo Perales

As I stated above in the question about education, it will always come down to the T-Word: taxes. It was said that taxes are what we pay for to have a civilized society, so it should come as no surprise that we will need to reevaluate if we are wasting the revenue we take in or is it just simply the fact that we need to raise taxes to get the revenue to keep pace with replacing and creating new infrastructure. I would push for a state infrastructure bank that many Legislators in Olympia have been pushing for years for, as well as seeing more funding in the Public Works Trust Fund. Special fuel and sales taxes may also need to be on the table. I would like to see that our roads and bridges get taken care of first as our agriculture industry uses our state and federal highway systems to transport their goods. We will need improvements to our waste water systems, rail system, school capital facilities, ports, and energy grid. We have seen less investment in our infrastructure in the last 3 decades but at the end of the day we as users of our infrastructure must be willing to pay to maintain it.

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## 8<sup>th</sup> Legislative District

### State Representative, Position 1

Partisan office, 2-year term.

Candidates: Phillip R. Lemley (R), Brad Klippert (R), Shir Regev (D)

#### What motivated you to run?

Phillip R. Lemley	I have been a Richland City Councilman for the past 8 years. I want to expand my ability to help people and get involved in more issues.
Brad Klippert	Patriotism
Shir Regev	If we are being honest, I am tired of listening to our current bevy of elected officials use the excuse that any kind of change to the status quo locally is an imposition of "West Side values" on the people of Eastern Washington. I was born in Sunnyside and grew up in Kennewick. Don't tell me what my values are or are not. I doubt I am alone in feeling this way.

#### What will your priorities be if elected?

Phillip R. Lemley	My priorities when elected are to fully support working men, women and families of the 8th District and the State of Washington. More efficient government that works for ALL people and works from the middle left or middle right and brings us together rather than divide us is my main priority. We must do what is best for the greater good and the Majority.
Brad Klippert	Public Safety and a reasonable Balanced Budget.
Shir Regev	<p>I want to see mechanisms in place which ensure that, if you work 40 hour week, you are not living on the knife-edge of poverty.</p> <p>Providing after-hours public transportation is crucial. People who cannot afford a car need the means to get to/from work without having to spend a big chunk of wages on Uber because busses stop running early.</p> <p>We have a housing problem. Minimum wage pays well below what's needed to afford even a one bedroom apartment while being able to pay for other living expenses. Finding a way to incentivize developers to create infill and higher density housing rather than cherry pick the easy money projects is key.</p> <p>Nobody should go bankrupt over healthcare. Universal Healthcare can level the playing field. I don't know that it will ever pass in Olympia, but it is a cause I will champion.</p>

As a union Hanford worker I personally know the risks of doing work there. Ensuring clean up continues in a safe and timely manner and workers are protected is a priority. My work will be shaped by the perspective of one who has to live with the consequences in the field, not somebody who sits behind a desk.

**How will you ensure that your constituents feel you are accountable to them?**

Phillip R. Lemley	I will open a local office where I will be available and involved in the work of the people 24/7/365. I will reach out to everyone and ask "how can I help, what do you want me to work for or against"
Brad Klippert	Town Hall Meetings. Open Phone Lines. Open Email Lines. Open ears.
Shir Regev	<p>I will keep my calendar while in session very public. If I am meeting with a lobbyist, you will know. I'll even post it on Facebook. So that takes care of what I do when in session. While back home I will have a robust series of town halls. Ideally they would be monthly, well publicized and held in places where everybody would feel comfortable attending if they want to come.</p> <p>There is nothing to be gained by not being forthright. At the end of the day, if constituents are unhappy with my work and decisions made, they will vote me out.</p>

**What will you do to ensure schools are given adequate funding and where do you believe funding should go?**

Phillip R. Lemley	We must live up to the court mandate and moral obligation of adequate education to all children. Smaller class sizes would be an important way to spend more of the monies.
Brad Klippert	Proper vote on the budget. Ensure the money goes toward educating our children. It is about properly educating our children.
Shir Regev	<p>Honestly, to answer this question you have to sit down and work with the teachers' union and the districts. Depending on who you talk to you get a different answer about the direction of state schools now that the deadlock of McCleary decision is over. At the end of the day each district needs to be funded to the level where educators are paid their worth and we get classroom sizes down. I came up through the public school system in Kennewick and I had the best education possible. I want to ensure children today have the same opportunities I did, but I would be lying if I told you I had a magic solution. Admitting you don't have the answer is the first step to finding one.</p>

**How will you ensure needed infrastructure projects (both new and existing) are funded and which should take priority?**

Phillip R. Lemley	We must make sure that the Public Works Trust Funds are fully funded and available as well as the Local Infrastructure Financing Tool program. These funds must be used as intended rather than raided to support budget shortfalls.
Brad Klippert	Proper votes on the general, transportation and capital budget. Submit requests for high priority capital budget items.
Shir Regev	<p>To turn around our infrastructure situation will require a multi-faceted approach. The first step would be looking at the status of current Federal grants and in cases where the other Washington has been delinquent, work with our elected Federal representatives to get promised funds.</p> <p>I'd look at tightening up TID legislation. If councils vote to impose tab fees on residents and discover that the fee was more than was needed, excess funding would be diverted to support local WA DOT projects. This would ensure councils did not impose higher fees than necessary, but if they do, that funding still stays local.</p> <p>I'd look at less regressive tax solutions to pay for infrastructure based on usage and also benefit. This will be unpopular, but even corporate tax because box stores relying on heavy truck traffic to move merchandise put far more wear and tear on roads than commuters.</p> <p>Regarding priority, I understand why people here feel fed up. It seems most of the resources we have are used for the pass or the I-5 corridor. We can't compete with the population so to make prioritization more equal, the safety record of a road needs to be considered not just daily usage.</p>



## 8<sup>th</sup> Legislative District

### State Representative, Position 2

Partisan office, 2-year term.

Candidates: Gregg McConnell (R), Matt Boehnke (R), Christopher Tracy (D)

#### What motivated you to run?

<p>Gregg McConnell</p>	<p>The passionate pursuit of accountability and transparency were central to my 42-year career in journalism. I believe those same principles should drive the actions, not just the talking points, of our elected officials. This last session the legislature passed a bill to exempt them from the same public records laws to which they hold school boards, city councils, and all other agencies in the state.</p> <p>They also circumvented a provision to put surplus revenue into the "rainy day fund" as prescribed by law. This sleight of hand by career politicians contributed to my decision to run for this open seat.</p> <p>It has been more than a decade since someone with significant business experience has represented this district. With rapid change effecting all business, it is critical for someone with business experience to help ensure these changes bring us more prosperity than turmoil.</p> <p>Finally, I believe voters are weary of today's winner-take-all political climate and the poor policy that results from wide swings in the political pendulum. You deserve someone who doesn't let politics to get in the way of a seat at the table, and participation at all levels resulting in benefits to our region and our quality of life.</p>
<p>Matt Boehnke</p>	<p>I am running, providing the citizens of the Washington State District 8 with a new voice in Olympia. I see no Champion is currently driving the district's vision at this critical time in our history. I will be there for the future, one who will see the current plans from the drawing board to completion. A voice that understands technology and innovation and has the vision to see where these tools can be used for fresh ideas. My three priorities are Education, Energy, and Economy. I feel our highest priorities should be the fiscal health of the 8th District. When elected, I pledge to listen to citizens and business leaders and take appropriate actions to achieve the collective good. Having worked with culturally diverse groups while deployed throughout the world, I have the demonstrated leadership with integrity to get the job done.</p>
<p>Christopher Tracy</p>	<p>Christopher Tracy filed as a Democrat to run for State Representative, 8th District, Position 2. Longtime Washington residents, he and his wife, Jayne, have owned a rental house in Richland for about a decade, but fairly recently moved from Kenmore to Richland, after building a new home. Dedicated to public service, Christopher Tracy was an educator for 40 years (10 years</p>

teaching Air Force dependents and local residents on Guam and 30 years in Washington) and is a past Teacher-Librarian of the Year award recipient from the Washington Library Media Association. His school experience, skilled negotiator background as a table team bargainer for teachers for 20 years, health insurance expertise as a school district Health Benefits Committee member for 25 years and his problem solving abilities are key to serving District 8 residents.

### What will your priorities be if elected?

Gregg McConnell

**Education:** The Washington State University Tri-Cities campus is uniquely positioned to be a destination campus. During my time on the campus advisory council it became obvious that realizing that potential requires legislative support. I will champion that effort. The state needs a comprehensive education strategy that aligns objectives for K-12 and higher education with future workforce needs. That strategy should include paths to success for young people not destined for a traditional college education.

**Business:** With rapid change affecting all business, it is critical that we encourage innovation, expand workforce opportunities to the entire workforce, and widen the tax base to generate more tax dollars. At the government level, we can help by making taxation and regulations more efficient; ensuring state funds are spent with an eye on long term sustainability.

**Mental Health:** The state has poorly managed the system that is charged with protecting some of our most vulnerable citizens. Services are being employed in an inefficient and dangerous manner - and a lack of services is bringing our community visible pain, from a homeless families curbside to public displays and threats of violence. Now more than ever, it is critical to care for our mentally ill while protecting our children and public spaces.

Matt Boehnke

My top three priorities are: Education, Energy, and Economy

**Education:** I support the growth of WSU Tri-Cities and Columbia Basin College to meet the community needs. A robust workforce and education of our young people is an investment in our future. I see a need to increase support of vocational and apprentice education options at the high school level.

**Energy:** I am committed to developing new, and upgrading existing energy facilities and protecting the national power grid from threats. Matt supports research and technologies, unfettered by government regulations that are not supported by sound scientific reason.

**Economy:** Job creation is a key to a healthy economy; therefore, it is imperative that government agencies decrease unnecessary regulations that drive up costs. The 8th district must be open for business and actively recruit and retain businesses and industries. This requires a business climate to successfully compete locally, nationally, and globally.

Christopher Tracy

**Legislative priorities will focus around watching the backs of students, families, workers, veterans, disabled and senior citizens.**

Tracy will improve school safety through legislation and funding for more security for our schools, ongoing intruder training for school staff and additional counseling and social worker staffing for early interventions.

He is determined to reduce tuition for public technical and community colleges and universities. "Tuition costs should not prevent students from attending college or force students or their parents to take on large student loan debt. Also, Washington residents should get priority admission, over out of state applicants."

Tracy will get the most **value** for your tax dollars. "I have experience helping manage large scale budgets in good times and bad, having been a member of the Northshore School District's Health Benefits Committee for 25 years; committee tasks included overseeing the self-insured medical and dental program budgets. As a table team bargainer for teachers for 20 years, I've negotiated complex, large dollar agreements and that experience will be helpful in crafting the state's budget. I'll work to try to avoid extended special legislative sessions and promise not to request per-diem for any special sessions."

**How will you ensure that your constituents feel you are accountable to them?**

Gregg McConnell

I intend to create a community advisory team representative of our diverse district to solicit input on legislative issues and provide a channel for dialogue with various interest groups. Monthly virtual town hall meetings will be held, but will not replace in person participation at community and political events, ensuring every constituent has access and a voice. I will be accessible to, and candid with, members of the Tri- Cities media.

Matt Boehnke

Communication, listening, and preparation. Communication is the key to every discussion and listening to every citizen is critical to being prepared before any leader makes decisions impacting our district. I will leverage technology to ensure that everyone has access to my office and his or her voice is heard. We can disagree, but I want active debates of the issues, not the person. We need to bring respect back to our society. No matter your view, everyone matters. I welcome email, web access to data and information, online live events such as debates, town halls, and online remote social media interaction that connect individuals with their representative. This ensures continued transparency, understanding and education of the issues and allows me as the representative better preparation before I vote on any issue. The more communication the better.

Christopher Tracy

"As a moderate Democrat, I'm also a good listener. Often there are some good points on all sides and I will listen and help craft legislation, including the budget, after carefully listening to citizens of the 8th Legislative District. I'll report back, hold town-halls, and

promote communication with citizens. After all, it's my job to watch the backs of the residents of the 8th District!"

**What will you do to ensure schools are given adequate funding and where do you believe funding should go?**

Gregg McConnell	<p>While the legislature appears to have fulfilled the requirements of the McCleary decision I will work hard to make sure education funding continues to meet the requirements of our state constitution. Moving forward, however, I will work to earmark funds for programs targeting students with language challenges and students of poverty very early in their education. I will also look for funds to be allocated towards K-12 programs that provide paths to success in technical and trades fields.</p> <p>Finally, I think school safety and mental health resources have not been adequately addressed, and will work towards a pragmatic approach towards effective solutions and how they should be funded.</p>
Matt Boehnke	<p>I believe we need to fund our schools and continue to fund our schools. Our priority is to support our teachers and focus on keeping good teachers that impact our kids and the next generation.</p>
Christopher Tracy	<p>"The state constitution says providing K-12 education is the paramount duty of the legislature. Immediate priorities include implementing best practices for school safety; schools need to be both welcoming and secure. (See answer to question 2.) We need to continue spending that provides smaller class sizes so students get the most individual attention. Early intervention programs likely need to be expanded. Teacher and school staff need to be paid adequately to retain employees. Curriculum needs to be up-to-date and staff should always be trained to best implement it. Special education funding needs to be reexamined, as the funding in the last budget is uneven and sometimes not fair to some school districts. High school students need to be ready for their next step and schools should provide students with the necessary background for the step beyond high school. The state legislature is moving all school employees to state operated health plans in 2020 and my background with self-insured medical and dental plans will be an asset in overseeing the legislature's role with this new program."</p>

**How will you ensure needed infrastructure projects (both new and existing) are funded and which should take priority?**

Gregg McConnell	<p>As a freshman legislator my first priority would be to understand what drives the high costs of infrastructure maintenance and replacement. Are we optimizing the tax- payer's investment? Are we managing projects and the bond-debt supporting those projects efficiently? Are we in fact using the tax revenues in areas where they were intended or have taxes earmarked for infrastructure been</p>
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	<p>redirected? These are the most critical infrastructure issues to address.</p> <p>At the same time, I will work hard to defend the transportation projects already approved for this district as well as those currently being considered. I will work to make sure their position on the list of investment priorities is retained or advanced.</p> <p>I will also seek a seat at the table as discussions are made on how to fund future infrastructure projects as gas tax revenues decline from lower consumption. Ensuring we have a voice to support future critical infrastructure improvements while protecting our privacy, addressing the regressive nature of per gallon or per mile taxes, and investing in the future of transportation.</p>
Matt Boehnke	I believe in bringing back the Public Works Trust fund. This fund was establish to ensure Washington State roads and the its infrastructure continued to meet our current needs and future requirements.
Christopher Tracy	<p>"In the education business we sometimes say this about some students...He/She plays well with others. I play well with others. In the legislature I will work with both parties to achieve goals.</p> <p>Transportation projects are an infrastructure item that deserves to be a high priority; a good transportation network promotes business and job growth in our state, plus supports our citizens. Building housing to support low-income elderly citizens and veterans is an important priority and I have some experience with private/public partnerships in these areas. The state funding mechanism for school construction needs to be reexamined, too. I'll look at <b>value</b> as the primary component in determining infrastructure priorities."</p>



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## 16<sup>th</sup> Legislative District

### State Representative, Position 2

Partisan office, 2-year term.

Candidates: Skyler Rude (R), Rebecca Francik (D), Dan Mildon (R)

Skyler Rude did not to respond to our questions.

#### What motivated you to run?

Rebecca Francik

As an educator, former Pasco City Council Member, mother of seven, and daughter of a farmer, serving others is who I am. I have seen politicians, time and time again, take too long to address critical funding in our schools, healthcare systems and infrastructure. I want to re-engage our communities and bring honest and open conversations to government. I am running for office to do better than just the status quo, and my experience will allow me to fight for everyone.

Dan Mildon

A number of friends asked if I would be interested to run once the incumbent announced that he would not be running for reelection. I have been extensively involved in many community service efforts involved in education, community health, sports, emergency response, and church. Now that I am retired I could take on a more full time commitment in serving the community.

#### What will your priorities be if elected?

Rebecca Francik

While there are a number of local and statewide issues I want to tackle, education, health care and infrastructure will be the focal point of my time in office.

Education. Education is the single best return on our tax dollars and it is the paramount responsibility of government – yet despite citizen initiatives and court sanctions, the legislature is not responsibly funding education.

Healthcare. Our current healthcare system is physically and financially inaccessible for many. Understaffed jails and local safety officials are asked to serve the needs of the mentally ill who aren't getting the services they need. The system's flawed structure is costing the taxpayer more than necessary even though a properly managed and funded healthcare system is within our reach.

Infrastructure. Cities and counties are charged with providing basic services, but the state is enforcing new regulations and removing financial streams of support. City infrastructure systems need reliable, adequate revenue to provide taxpayers with the access and opportunity they pay for and deserve.

Dan Mildon

My priorities will be to ensure individual freedoms and rights are protected, that the education system is one that we can be proud of and that it supports the parents in educating their children, that we protect and make wise use of our water resources, and that we ensure the integrity of our election system. Having served on the Kennewick School District Board of Directors for 16 years demonstrates that I have a passion for education; a passion that I will carry to the legislature. I firmly believe that giving students and parents more delivery options to select from can improve the educational experience and success. In Kennewick we supported a number of alternative programs to custom fit a students needs. As a result the KSD Board of Directors was awarded the State School Board of the Year, and received 2 national school board awards for innovative programs during my tenure. I believe the State of Washington needs to ensure more alternative programs are available for students to select from.

**How will you ensure that your constituents feel you are accountable to them?**

Rebecca Francik

My deeply-rooted involvement in my community allows me to understand just how we rely on our political officials. When elected, I will have an open-door policy and will remain actively involved in my constituents' communities. I don't want to be like every other official, where once they're elected, you never see them again. It is important to me as a person and my personal values that I live up to my responsibilities and do everything I can for my community.

Dan Mildon

By making regular reports on legislative actions, hearings, and particular bills of interest to my constituency. In addition, I would make sure to be available to community meetings away from Olympia for face to face information sessions.

**What will you do to ensure schools are given adequate funding and where do you believe funding should go?**

Rebecca Francik

Education is the single best investment we can make in our state's future. In order to achieve the best outcomes we need to improve teacher salaries to attract the best and the brightest, we need to double and triple down on healthcare and mental health services so students are in a position to fully utilize the education available to them. We need to continue to diversify our educational options so all students regardless of their learning styles can succeed. This is how we build future wealth and our ability to compete globally. I will fight everyday to ensure our children and future leaders get the education they deserve. We can begin paying for these education necessities by closing government loopholes through big-business tax breaks. When elected, I will make sure the taxpayer is getting what they pay for.

Dan Mildon

Nationally there is not a direct correlation between funding and

student performance. In fact, several states with the lowest funding per student rank in the highest levels of student academic performance. I believe the best indicator of student academic performance is the involvement of parents, parents who value education and set expectations for their children. Those students with supportive parents and those schools who enjoy their attendance are by and large successful regardless of the funding level. Those schools who do not receive the same level of parental support struggle regardless of funding level. As a state we need to examine those programs that undermine parents and families and eliminate them, and identify those programs that help parents and families and nurture and encourage those to the benefit of the students, the schools and our state.

**How will you ensure needed infrastructure projects (both new and existing) are funded and which should take priority?**

Rebecca Francik

Infrastructure is one of the biggest issues facing Washington, whether it's the Puget Sound area or in towns and cities like Pasco. The average worker's livelihood is threatened by the lack of funding for infrastructure across the state, and I will fight everyday to change this. We must first finish existing projects, while planning ahead for the future. I want to work with everyone in our government, both Democrat and Republican, as well as advocacy groups, professional organizations and unions to find solutions for future infrastructure projects. It is important that we consult with everyone impacted by infrastructure to ensure efficient and growth-promoting projects.

Dan Mildon

Obviously our road system should be one of the best in the nation and our road improvements should be the best in the country given our almost highest in the nation gas taxes; and we need to support alternative transportation systems. I would like every government agency to identify outcomes that can be measured and then those departments be held accountable for using taxpayer dollars wisely. The state road department can prepare metrics for the cost per mile for road improvements and identify those issues that could be improved to reduce improvement costs.



## Franklin County

### Commissioner, District 3

Partisan office, 4-year term.

Candidates: Zahra Roach (D), Rick R. Miller (R), Rodney (Dobie) Burns (I), Clint Didier (R)

Rodney (Dobie) Burns did not to respond to our questions.

#### What are your plans for the county budget?

Zahra Roach	When it comes to budgeting, I view myself as more fiscally conservative. I don't like to spend money unless there is a good reason to do so, and that reason can be explained to the public. On the board of directors for the Children's Development Center, it is my job to oversee the monthly budget, to make sure there isn't excess spending, that projects are planned economically, and that there is always cash available in case of a rainy day. As County Commissioner I intend to adopt the same approach when dealing with the county budget. I will keep a keen eye out for waste and opportunities for efficiencies.
Rick R. Miller	Fiscal responsibility is the foundation of how I approach budgeting and spending. The Board has balanced the budget and increased the county's reserves over time, while maintaining a number of our county services and expanding others. I will continue to make conservative decisions, and secure state funding. My most important job in the months ahead is to do all I can to transform county government into a leaner, more efficient organization that can get the best return for the public.
Clint Didier	My Plans for Franklin County budget would be: Evaluate the budget and look for areas that can be cut so that we can stop the tax increases in the county. 90 million a year for Franklin County seems high. I will Identify priorities on a short and longer term basis.

#### How will you improve communication with the public?

Zahra Roach	Many community members feel shut out of County dialogue and decision making. I will address this gap head-on. I will first work with Charter Cable, which offers free broadcasting of meetings within the city, to broadcast county meetings. Secondly, I will work to have videos of county meetings uploaded to the Franklin County website. I will also work to institute a practice of live streaming meetings. Thirdly, I will work to produce more detailed minutes of our meetings and have them published to the county website as well. And finally, I will publish my schedule, so community members have visibility and accountability in how I'm representing county interests.
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Rick R. Miller

Franklin County has done a good job of ensuring data is available to all residents. We continually update our website to ensure easier access and availability of data, meeting agendas, meeting minutes, Franklin County codes, and information regarding the growth management process. The County Commissioner meetings are also available through a link on the website for citizens to listen to. I am always looking for way to continually improve communications. For example, holding weekly meetings by rotating between days and nights, or live TV broadcasts. Costs would have to be considered for both of these. My goal is to continue to engage with my constituents both in North Franklin County and in the City of Pasco with face-to-face forthright conversations.

Clint Didier

I would improve communication by having an open door policy, listening to the publics concerns, evaluating the situation and making a decision. My interaction with the commissioners the past couple years, as well as the other patrons that were in the room at the commissioner meetings, felt as if our concerns fell on deaf ears. I will make myself available to anyone outside of the commissioner meetings.

**How will you take the public's opinions into consideration?**

Zahra Roach

I will start by making sure that the other commissioners and I are promoting a welcoming atmosphere to the public. When a member of the community comes to a county meeting, they should feel invited to voice concerns and heard when they do. We can accomplish this first by holding our meetings at a time where more people can attend. The regular meeting time of nine in the morning on a weekday is simply not realistic for working people to attend. We can also accomplish a welcoming atmosphere by making a greater effort to be transparent with the public, as outlined in my answer to the previous question.

I will also address the public's opinions and concerns by holding regular office hours where they can communicate with me directly on the issues that affect them. In my opinion, accessibility and trust are key to public service. If the public feels that I am unwilling to meet them, how can they trust that I will work for them? I plan to work very hard at earning the trust and confidence of those I hope to serve.

Rick R. Miller

I have always taken the public's opinion into consideration prior to making any decisions for the entire county, especially if it is a controversial topic. I seek individuals out that the decision may affect, to obtain a better understanding of their ideas, suggestions, and opinions, but I also have to make decisions that are fiscally responsible. I receive many phone calls from constituents, and because I was raised in North Franklin County I know many of the farm families; I also meet the farmers in the mornings for coffee and/or group meetings. I also meet once a week with my constituents in Pasco.

Clint Didier

I will take the public's opinions into consideration by listening to them and then investigating to see if they are legitimate concerns that need to be dealt with by the county commissioners. In order to hear the public you have to have an avenue. That's why we need to have workshops, town halls and the county commissioner meetings, which are recorded, need to be available to the public for evaluation.

**What efforts would you sponsor to promote/manage local growth?**

Zahra Roach

The key to effectively managing and promoting local growth is first identifying the drivers of the local economy and including everyone in discussions about our shared economic future. As the Chair of the Pasco Planning Commission, much of my job is analyzing the needs of my city and reviewing city development plans that can meet the city's needs in a sustainable way. Applying my planning commission experience to Franklin County as a whole, I would first acknowledge that Franklin County has some of the richest farm soil in Eastern Washington, and it is a big driver for our community, the state, and our national economy. I would also remember that our workforce is dependent on farming and our community is dependent upon it for fresh, local produce. With that in mind, I would sponsor growth projects that allow producers to have what they need to sustain and grow their farms, while at the same time protecting the rights of Agricultural workers, and rural residents.

Rick R. Miller

The county has begun their periodic Comprehensive Plan update process in 2017 and we expect to complete the update this year. With Franklin County being one of the fastest growing counties in the U.S., it is imperative that we develop growth over the next 20 years responsibly in accordance with the Growth Management Act, while also protecting our agricultural land. As we grow we also need to promote economic development that will support our families with jobs and other infrastructures.

Clint Didier

Concerning the promotion and management of local growth. Quit promoting growth with taxpayer money ie. TRAC facility that has lost money in every year of its existence. Growth should be on its own merit. If we want a thriving community we will allow the businesses and farmers to keep more of their money (less taxation) which in turn allows them to hire and give wage increases so that we can be a continually growing area.

**How do you plan to resolve the issue with the Pasco school district concerning the collection of fees from new homes?**

Zahra Roach

The answer to this question is simple, I would push the commission to collect impact fees as mandated by law. Currently, the commission chooses not to collect impact fees and defends its decision by referring to the impact fees as a "tax" and through a series of

	<p>convoluted legal arguments that could result in a costly legal challenge. My response to this issue is that we should collect the impact fees in question and turn those funds over to the Pasco School District. A County Commissioner shouldn't be in the business of deciding which laws to follow, if elected I will uphold the law and maintain public trust in our county. It is the right thing to do, to support our children and our teachers. Good schools are a service that our community provides. It is as important to have good schools as it is to have local businesses and low crime rates. Franklin County has a lot of young families and schools matter to them.</p>
Rick R. Miller	<p>What is truly equitable? The impact fees are an inequity to certain groups of people. The impact fee process needs to be reviewed -- there should be a cap on the fees, and the constituents should have a voice and a vote on this issue. I support our schools, but there have been bonds passed, and the McLeary Act is another example of money going to levies and operations. The schools were supposed to get the money from the Washington State Lottery for early education, work study, and need grants, but the state redirected the funds.</p>
Clint Didier	<p>The fees collected on new houses is a perfect example of putting a burden/tax on new families or relocating families to the Tri City area. This hinders the growth of our community. I am pro economic growth and pro education.</p>



## Benton County PUD

### Commissioner, Position 3

Non-partisan office, 6-year term.

Candidates: Tyson Fellman, Barry Bush, Bob Bertsch

Bob Bertsch did not respond to our questions.

#### What motivated you to run?

Tyson Fellman	The reason I am running for Benton PUD Commissioner is due to finding out that our electric rates have been based on flawed analysis that lacks supports from expert economists and also has been rejected by Washington State Utilities and Transportation Commission. Public Utility Districts should put the public interest first, but too often they put their own special interests ahead of what is good for the public. I will put the public interest first and that is why I am running to be Benton PUD Commissioner.
Barry Bush	I became involved in public power in 2005 when I was hired at Energy Northwest. I was responsible for the sales of new energy projects to public power entities in the Northwest and California. While in the position I was fortunate to travel the Northwest, where I met with commissioners, senior management and other industry professionals. In 2011 I was elected to the Benton PUD board, where I am currently the board President.

#### What will your priorities be if elected?

Tyson Fellman	My priorities will be to allocate costs between different rate classes fairly and to utilize modern technology to create a more efficient electric grid. Residential customers should not be subsidizing large commercial customers and using smart rate design we can save all customers money by using energy more efficiently.
Barry Bush	My main priorities are the safety of our customers and employees, keeping rates low, and maintaining a world class infrastructure. I would also like to add that I am very proud of our low debt ratio and I will continue to spend your money in a fiscally responsible manner.

#### How will you take the public's opinions into consideration?

Tyson Fellman	The opinions of the public are important. As a PUD customer I have been frustrated by my concerns being ignored. All public opinions should be adequately addressed.
Barry Bush	I have an open door, phone and email policy. I am always willing to

meet with any person that has a recommendation or issue. I am also available at our twice monthly public meetings and encourage all people in our district to join us at one of your PUD meetings.

**As Benton County grows, how do you see the county adapting to future energy needs?**

Tyson Fellman

Currently the Pacific Northwest has an oversupply of energy. With our county growing this puts us in a favorable position to take advantage of low energy rates on the wholesale market. Also, there are a lot of opportunities such as energy efficiency and renewable energy that can help create a more efficient electric system. With the right policies, we can continue to have affordable power for all of Benton PUD customers.

Barry Bush

This is an issue of immense importance. We are currently growing at the rate of about 900 meters per year. We do a cost of service analysis every other year that is intended to track our current and future energy needs. We have contracts in place that will cover our needs for the foreseeable future.

