



Nicole Macri Urbanist Questionnaire 2024

State Representative, LD43, Position 1

Do you think Washington state should have an income tax (yes/no)? If yes, what is the legislative path? If not, what forms of progressive revenue would you champion?

Yes. Our current tax code is now the second most regressive and inequitable in the nation, disproportionately impacting the lowest income Washingtonians. As a long term goal, we should work toward having a more balanced, diversified and equitable tax code which includes a progressive income tax. The political path to achieving that goal is more challenging than ever, however. The legislature has taken some good steps in the right direction with the passage of both a capital gains tax and funding the working families tax credit. First, we need to defend the capital gains tax – which impacts a tiny number of mega-wealthy taxpayers – and the related investments in childcare and public schools at the ballot this November. The capital gains tax and working families tax credit should be strengthened over time to bring more equity to the State's overall revenue approach. The legislature also took a good step a couple of years ago in raising the threshold on the regressive B&O tax, but there's more work to be done in that area. In the immediate term, I support implementing a statewide payroll employer tax similar to Seattle's "Jumpstart" tax, a progressive real estate transfer tax, a wealth tax, and additional business tax reforms that better support small businesses and have the largest corporations in the world pay a greater proportion of taxes.

How would you vote on a transit-oriented development bill without an explicit affordability mandate and why?



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I'll likely vote No on a transit-oriented development bill if it includes no affordability measures. I'm not tied to the policy approach the House passed in 2024 (inclusionary zoning), but the legislature must ensure that we're deliberately creating housing opportunities for low- and middle-income people close to transit. While the status quo is the worst option, we must ensure equitable access to the billions in taxpayer-funded transit infrastructure. I welcome creative ideas including preferential zoning for affordable developers (including for social housing, like I recently saw in Vienna) and state investment to purchase land adjacent to high-frequency transit stops for affordable housing. We should also continue to explore mandates and incentives for private market developers, which have been successful in many jurisdictions around the country, including in Seattle.

Do you support the rent stabilization and renter protection bill (HB 2114) that made it through the State House last year? If so, how would you approach ensuring its passage in both chambers?

Yes. I'm committed to fighting for the 70%+ of households in my district who rent their homes. After being a lead sponsor on rent stabilization bills from 2018-2023, I partnered closely with bill sponsors Rep Alvarado and Senator Trudeau to lead our efforts this year. Through strong statewide constituent advocacy we were able to move this policy further than ever. We must continue to organize in support of this policy during election season and into next session. Our next governor must be a strong champion for this, and I'm grateful to have worked with the Attorney General's Office on the bill's current framing. We can see the consequence of not passing such legislation sooner. Renters in WA have received rent increases that far exceed those allowed in neighboring states, displacing more and more people from their social support networks, schools and proximity to their jobs. The impacts on entire



communities are significant. Policy makers should focus on ensuring some basic housing stability for the nearly 40% of residents in Washington who are renters.

What are the highest priority items on your housing agenda?

We must: 1) increase our investment in building and operating publicly financed, accountable high-quality, climate-resilient, rent controlled housing, 2) create a greater diversity and abundance of housing in all communities by implementing, tracking and enforcing recently enacted land use laws, 3) enhance tenant protections including capping fees and rent increases, 4) expand access to housing to community members who have been systematically excluded from stability and wealth-building and 5) invest in emergency and long-term rent assistance. To do this, we must modernize our tax code. In addition to Just Cause and Right to Counsel in eviction cases, I've been a key champion of efforts like the Covenant Homeownership Act, Middle Housing Act, Social Housing, and significantly increasing public investments in subsidized housing for low-income residents. I was grateful to work with Rep Bateman this year on the Housing Accountability Act, which includes essential enforcement measure to ensure cities don't use loopholes to avoid creating equitable housing options for everyone in their communities. We'll push to get it passed in 2025.

What's your roadmap to fixing educational inequities in Washington state? How can Washington state comply with its constitutional duties regarding education, especially in light of several school districts including Seattle's contemplating school closures to grapple with deficits?

My vision is for each and every student in Washington to have access to a high-quality education which meets their individual needs, where they feel valued



as a member of their learning community, supported and challenged to realize their full ability to engage in their community, and to pursue their career aspirations and life goals. To achieve this vision, we must embrace the belief that the most important interaction is that between a student and an educator. Everything else that occurs in our school systems — from the individual classroom to the administrative functions of OSPI must be focused on enriching that interaction. As a legislator, I can help achieve this vision by promoting policies and budgets that invest amply and equitably in our public schools, empower educators and promote justice and opportunity for all children and families in our state.

What share of the state's transportation budget should be for alternatives to cars, such as transit, biking, and pedestrian infrastructure?

The legislature needs to make significant investments to adequately build out the infrastructure that allows transit, biking and walking to be a competitive alternative to driving alone in the most densely populated areas, not to mention the vast areas of suburban, exurban and rural of the state. The climate is changing rapidly, and we need to take urgent steps to move away from fossil fuel (internal combustion engine) single-occupancy vehicles. A third or more of the budget SHOULD be dedicated to this transition. But for many reasons, including the 18th Amendment to the state constitution [requiring gas tax to be spent on roads], highway mega-project obligations from several past major transportation packages, and the requirement for a bipartisan vote to pass transportation bonds, the path to get there is technically and politically challenging. Most urgently, we must protect the Climate Commitment Act from repeal at the ballot by rejecting I-2117 or stand to lose about \$1 billion in biennial climate-focused transportation funding. The legislature will again face tough transportation revenue and expense choices in 2025. It is imperative



legislators respond to these challenges by taking action to increase access to transit, bike and pedestrian infrastructure.

**Do you support permitting jurisdictions to choose to hold elections in even years?
What other election reforms excite you?**

Yes, I was a co-sponsor of the bills to permit even-year elections, which would promote greater and more diverse voter turnout. The vast majority of states in the US have passed restrictive voting laws over the past decade. Washington has bucked this disturbing trend by passing a number of bills that expand access to democracy, but still lags other states in voter turnout (including #1 Oregon). There are more steps we can take, including permitting ranked choice voting in local elections and presidential primaries, increasing access to people in jails and prisons, and extending campaign finance reform to include statewide democracy vouchers and prohibiting campaign contributions

Due to the interventions of ballot-initiative-monger Tim Eyman and a state legislature that caved to him even after a lawsuit overturned the measure in 2007, Washington State has a 1% cap on property tax increases, greatly tying the hands of local governments and forcing them to use ballot measures to fund basic services. Do you think this cap should remain? If so, what tools will you give local governments to deal with the [fiscal cliff they're facing](#)?

We should lift the cap on property tax increases. At the very least, local governments should have taxing authority that allows communities to keep up with inflation to maintain essential services. The legislature should look at allowing more diverse taxing authority for local governments, including business tax authority for



counties (as I attempted to do several years ago in bill to allow a corporate payroll tax in King County).