

PROGRESSIVE DONOR GUIDE

2026 Primary Election



TOGETHER FOR PROGRESS.



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YOUR PROGRESSIVE DONOR GUIDE

2026 Primary Election

INTRODUCTION

The Progressive Donor Guide is designed to inform you about the most important races in Washington and help you invest your campaign contributions as effectively as possible. Our goal is to help you support good progressives in the closest races where your contributions can make the biggest impact.

Our Primary Donor Guide highlights our picks for the most important races to support before the primary election. They are also quite likely to be the most important campaigns in Washington this year. While we have tapped every resource available to assess these races, this list is not exhaustive. The deadline for candidates to file for office was not until mid-May, and in many races, our assessment will be much clearer after the primary.

For the primary, we organize candidates into one of two categories: Strongly Recommend or Watchlist. The Strongly Recommend label speaks for itself.

They generally represent the best progressives in the tightest races – our top priority targets. We have several more races on the watchlist. We are waiting to see how they unfold before making a final recommendation, but they could easily be upgraded in priority for the general election.

Our recommendations focus on the candidates in tough races who need your help to win. That doesn't mean you shouldn't contribute to good progressives who aren't on our list. There are many reasons to support and reward good leaders who don't have the most difficult races, including cultivating relationships with them. Everyone but those in the safest districts has to run a real campaign this year. If they don't have a competitive race, they are probably "surplus" funds to their caucus campaign committee to support the members who do have tough races, which is critical to winning those races and helps build their influence in the caucus.

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POLITICAL LANDSCAPE

2026 is another crucial year for the future of our state and country. The expectation is that Democrats will do well in the midterms as Trump's war on Iran and handling of the economy have driven up costs for working people and fueled discontent among voters. However, Republicans have gone to extraordinary lengths to gain a structural advantage through redistricting, much of which has been upheld by state and federal court rulings. Washington is not exempt from redistricting threats. While the political climate remains challenging, we are optimistic that we can hold our own in Washington and do our part to help save the country with smart strategy and strong work.

Democrats have a good chance of reclaiming the U.S. House in 2026, but the path has become much more complicated in recent months. In a recent 6-3 ruling, the Supreme Court gutted the Voting Rights Act by making it harder to challenge voting maps that weaken the political power of Black voters and other communities of color. Republicans are using the ruling to draw maps with the goal of blocking women, voters of color, and transgender Americans from voting so they can control our elections and stay in power. On top of that, Virginia's voter-approved congressional redistricting map was struck down, eliminating what Democrats hoped would be one of their clearest opportunities to gain several House seats.

The current balance in the U.S. House is 218 Republicans, 212 Democrats, and five vacancies. Democrats need a net gain of six seats to reclaim the House. Democrats are likely starting from a more difficult position than expected and will have to win more battleground races. This raises the stakes significantly here in Washington, where defending Marie Gluesenkamp Perez's seat in the 3rd congressional district (CD) and electing an Independent candidate in the 5th CD could play a major role in determining control of Congress. Reclaiming the Senate will be much tougher. The current balance in the Senate is 47 Democrats and 53 Republicans. Democrats need to defend their seats

in places like Georgia while also gaining a net of four seats to reclaim the Senate majority in 2026, which would require flipping multiple Republican-held seats in states like North Carolina, Maine, or Texas.

At the state level, we currently have a strong Democratic majority in the state House (58-40) and state Senate (30-19). However, we still need to build a bigger progressive governing majority to continue making progress on issues like housing and tax reform. Our job this year is to defend our progressive incumbents in the state House and Senate and pick up a few more seats to expand our governing majorities. We need to defend the seats we've flipped in recent years, replace seats held by moderate Democrats with progressives, and take advantage of opportunities to pick up new seats.

One of the biggest fights at the state level this cycle could also be defending Washington's newly passed Millionaires Tax. The tax imposes a 9.9% levy on annual earnings above \$1 million and is expected to become a major statewide political battle. Mega-millionaire Brian Heywood and his group Let's Go Washington have already launched efforts to repeal the law through the initiative process after the state Supreme Court blocked a referendum challenge. Multiple polls show that the Millionaires Tax is wildly popular, and voters support using the revenue in ways that will benefit everyday Washingtonians. Whether it's an initiative on the ballot this fall or next year, we expect a large coalition of groups that helped pass this tax to also help defend this necessary improvement to our upside-down tax code. The Washington State Supreme Court races will be other crucial statewide races to watch this year. Five of the court's nine seats are on the ballot this fall, and far-right interests are already mounting a [well-funded campaign](#) to support a slate of conservative candidates in an attempt to take over the court. It will be critical for us to fight to protect our judiciary and the freedoms they should uphold by not letting Republicans gain control of the highest court in our state.



STRONGLY RECOMMEND

FLIP THE HOUSE PROGRAM INDEPENDENT EXPENDITURE CAMPAIGN

We have a real opportunity here in Washington to help flip control of the U.S. House by winning two competitive battleground races in the 3rd and 5th congressional districts. The outcome of these races will shape whether Congress stands up for everyday people or continues giving massive tax breaks to wealthy corporations at the expense of working families and our basic human rights. We must flip the House to stop the Trump administration from making life harder and more expensive for working people while threatening access to healthcare, reproductive freedom, and voting rights.

In the 5th CD, Fuse is running a highly targeted digital video campaign to hold MAGA Rep. Michael Baumgartner accountable for his votes to cut Medicaid and food benefits, raise gas prices, and close rural hospitals. Our campaign will reach and persuade working-class voters with clear accountability messaging that moves them from awareness to action and builds support for them to vote for a working class, economic populist candidate in August who can defeat Baumgartner in the general election. Using a layered digital strategy across streaming TV, online video, and social media, our campaign will reach key voters with high-impact messaging to help them make an informed decision in this race.

We are also running a similar, comprehensive digital video campaign in the 3rd CD targeting swing voters with the messages and messengers they need to hear to make the right decision in this race. Rep. Marie Gluesenkamp Perez defeated MAGA Republican Joe Kent in both 2022 and 2024. This year, she faces a tougher challenge from state Senate Minority

Leader John Braun, a more traditional conservative Republican with legislative experience who may appeal to the moderate and independent voters who couldn't stomach Kent's MAGA white nationalism. Our campaign is focused on reaching the voters Braun needs to win and turning them against him by highlighting his record of voting to raise prescription drug costs, sponsoring a bill to repeal Washington's Paid Family and Medical Leave program, and supporting Trump's destructive budget bill, all while taking tens of millions of dollars from Big Pharma. By defining Braun early, we can show voters that he is not a candidate who will fight for Washington families, and help defend another key congressional seat to build a governing majority in Congress that's actually committed to delivering for working people.

Why?

Winning these battleground races is critical to flipping the U.S. House to ensure we can block the MAGA agenda to hurt working people by gutting healthcare, raising the cost of living, and threatening our fundamental freedoms.

Please contact Reiny Cohen at 206-251-4083 or reiny@fusewashington.org if you would like to fund our work in these Congressional races. It is funded through our federal independent expenditure PAC:

TOGETHER FOR WORKING PEOPLE

PO Box 4897

Seattle, WA 98194

Memo: Flip the House

<https://actionnetwork.org/fundraising/flip-the-house-by-defeating-washington-maga?source=PDG>

JESSICA FORSYTHE FOR STATE HOUSE (POS. 2)

LD 48 - East King County, including portions of Bellevue, Redmond, and Kirkland



Redmond City Council member Jessica Forsythe, the former Executive Director of Emerge Washington, which works to increase the number of Democratic women and nonbinary leaders in public office, is running to bring

more progressive leadership to the 48th legislative district. Forsythe’s campaign is focused on protecting the environment, improving affordability for working people, and funding education. Her opponent, Rep. Amy Walen, has consistently voted against legislation to fix our upside-down tax code and make homes more affordable. During the 2026 legislative session, Walen was an active opponent against the Millionaires Tax, introducing several harmful amendments and even writing an [op-ed in the Seattle Times](#) against the bill. Last year, Walen was bankrolled by big corporations in her attempt to unseat progressive Senator Vandana Slatter, her former House colleague who had been appointed to the Senate, but Walen was defeated by nearly 18 points.

Why?

This is a great opportunity to replace an obstacle to progress with a progressive champion in the state House.

FRIENDS OF FORSYTHE

PO Box 853
Redmond, WA 98073

<https://secure.actblue.com/donate/jessica-forsythe-1>

SENATOR DEBORAH KRISHNADASAN FOR STATE SENATE

LD 26 - Gig Harbor, Port Orchard, and a portion of Bremerton



The 26th is one of Washington’s most competitive swing legislative districts. Deborah Krishnadasan was appointed to fill the vacancy created by Emily Randall’s election to the U.S. House of Representatives in 2024 and

retained the seat with a five-point victory last year. Sen. Krishnadasan’s campaign is focused on lowering costs, funding schools, and expanding healthcare access. Her opponent is Republican Gary Parker, a restaurant owner and retired Intel engineer who could potentially run a strong campaign.

Why?

Defending this seat is critical to maintaining a progressive majority in the state Senate.

DEB K FOR SENATE

11010 Harbor Hill Dr Ste B 277
Gig Harbor, WA 98332

<https://secure.actblue.com/donate/debk>

RENEE HERNANDEZ GREENFIELD FOR STATE HOUSE (POS. 2)

LD 26 - Gig Harbor, Port Orchard, and a portion of Bremerton



Also in this highly competitive district, Republican state Representative Michele Valdez (formerly Caldier) announced this February that she would not seek re-election. Renee Hernandez Greenfield, former Vice Chair of

the Kitsap County Democrats, is a strong Democratic candidate running to fill the open seat. Greenfield's campaign is focused on improving education, fighting for climate resiliency, supporting workers, and creating real affordability. She is challenging Republican Katy Cornell, a far-right pastor who has the full backing of Valdez. Cornell has been outspokenly transphobic and supported efforts to make homelessness worse through ineffective and inhumane policies. Greenfield faces another Democratic challenger, Ted Wetherbee, whose [contributions](#) to Republican candidates and organizations have raised concerns about his values. Winning this race would help flip a key seat in the state House and keep a far-right Republican out of the state Legislature.

Why?

This is a great opportunity to flip a key seat in the state House.

FRIENDS FOR RENEE HERNANDEZ GREENFIELD

1125 Bethel Ave #1412
Port Orchard, WA 98366

<https://secure.actblue.com/donate/renee-hernandez-greenfield-26th-ld>

KRISTA PEREZ FOR STATE HOUSE (POS. 1)

LD 29 - Pierce County



Small business owner Krista Perez is running to unseat moderate Democrat Melanie Morgan. Rep. Morgan voted against the Millionaires Tax, and in 2024 [was investigated and found](#) to

have engaged in "abusive and bullying conduct" while in office. Perez's campaign is focused on addressing affordability for working families including housing, expanding childcare, and supporting workers' rights. Electing Perez would help us replace a moderate Democrat with a progressive who will fight for tax reform, affordable homes, and services for working families.

Why?

This is a great opportunity to elect someone who will fight for our progressive values and bring thoughtful leadership to the State House.

PEOPLE FOR KRISTA PEREZ (D)

PO Box 7437
Tacoma, WA 98417

<https://secure.anedot.com/kristaperez/donate>

STRONGLY RECOMMEND

NO HATE IN WA STATE: OPPOSE IL26-001, IL26-683

**NO HATE
IN WASTATE**
Vote No on IL26-001 & IL26-638

While Washington families are struggling to pay for food, housing, and healthcare, mega-millionaire hedge fund manager Brian Heywood from

California is once again spending millions on two poorly written initiatives that threaten the safety of all Washington kids. IL26-001 would roll back a key student privacy law, while IL26-638 bans trans girls from playing sports on girls teams. The enforcement mechanism for this ban requires all girls who play a sport to undergo invasive genital examinations – notably, all boys are exempt from examinations. Both measures remove commonsense protections for child abuse victims and put girls at greater risk of harm, and are nothing more than a cruel ploy by Heywood to distract voters from the real issues facing students and families.

Defeating these initiatives will be an uphill battle, but not impossible. With enough funding, we can defeat both initiatives at the ballot this year, and IL26-638 may be challenged in court. MAGA-fueled hostility against trans people combined with Let's Go Washington's brand of fear-mongering makes it necessary to conduct voter education on trans identity as well as two very nuanced policy issues.

Why?

Instead of getting distracted by made-up culture wars, it's crucial we focus the fight on protecting and respecting Washington's kids, and ensure our schools are safe, welcoming, and well-funded for every student.

WASHINGTON FAMILIES FOR FREEDOM

PO Box 21961

Seattle, WA 98111

[https://secure.actblue.com/donate/
nohateinwastatewebsite](https://secure.actblue.com/donate/nohateinwastatewebsite)



WATCHLIST

There are many important races on our watchlist. We are waiting to see how they unfold in the primary before making a final recommendation, but could upgrade many of them for the general election. The primary will show how close the partisan matchups really are.

STATE SUPREME COURT

Far-right interests in Washington state are working to mount a conservative takeover of the state Supreme Court this year. With five of nine state Supreme Court positions on the ballot, this election provides an unprecedented opportunity to reshape the court. Considering the Trump administration's attacks on so many fronts, including our civil rights, democracy, freedom of speech, labor standards, environmental protections, and the rule of law, the State Supreme Court races will be some of the most high-stakes races in the general election. Republicans have already launched [Full Court Press](#), a well-funded campaign aimed at electing a slate of MAGA-aligned candidates in order to take over the court and implement a full-fledged attack on progressive policies here in Washington. All five seats will appear on the November ballot and we expect to make contribution recommendations for these races in the general election.

DEFEND THE MILLIONAIRES TAX

The state Legislature passed The Millionaires Tax (SB 6346), which imposes a 9.9% tax on household earnings over \$1 million. This tax is projected to generate \$3 - \$4 billion annually to fund schools, healthcare, childcare, and the Working Families Tax Credit, making significant progress in rebalancing Washington's infamously upside-down tax code. This bill was a generational effort by a massive coalition of hundreds of community organizations, labor unions, and legislators. Following Governor Ferguson's signing of the bill, Brian Heywood's group Let's Go Washington is now collecting signatures on an initiative to the people in hopes to repeal the Millionaires Tax at the ballot this November. They must collect 309k valid signatures by July 2nd in order to qualify for the general election. Multiple polls show that the Millionaires Tax is wildly popular and voters support using the revenue to benefit everyday Washingtonians. Whether it's an initiative on the ballot this fall or next year, we expect the large coalition of groups that helped pass this tax to also help defend this necessary improvement to our upside-down tax code.

MICHAEL SHEPARD (D), EAMON COLLINS (D) VS. ERIKA CREYDT (R)

LD 42 - Rural Whatcom County and northwest Bellingham

State Senator Sharon Shewmake, who led a Democratic effort to transform the 42nd legislative district from red to blue, announced she will not be seeking re-election in 2026. She first flipped a state House seat in 2018, narrowly defeating four-term Republican Vincent Buys. After serving two terms in the House, Shewmake again won the state Senate seat in 2021. She won both of these elections by fewer than 1,000 votes. Bellingham Port Commissioner Michael Shepard and Whatcom Democrats Chair Eamonn Collins are the Democratic candidates in the race running against Republican Erika Creydt. This is still a swing district and will be a key seat for Democrats to defend.

SEN. CLAUDIA KAUFFMAN (D) VS KRISTINA SOLTYS (R)

LD 47 - Southeast King County, including Kent, Covington, and Auburn

The 47th LD was a historically Republican-leaning swing district, but has gradually shifted left in recent years. Sen. Claudia Kauffman won by a five-point margin in her last election. Her opponent, Republican Covington City Councilmember Kristina Soltys, opposes the Millionaires Tax and helped implement Covington's ALPR camera program, which has aided ICE in the unlawful detention of our immigrant neighbors. Kauffman has a major fundraising lead and more name recognition than her Republican opponent, but she needs to run a good campaign and we shouldn't take anything for granted.



DIANA PEREZ (D) VS REP. DAVID STUEBE (R)

LD 17 - Eastern Vancouver and southwest Clark County

Vancouver City Councilmember Diana Perez is challenging Republican incumbent Representative David Stuebe. He narrowly held this seat in 2024, winning by fewer than 1,000 votes over Democrat Terri Niles. That was the first election after redistricting made the 17th LD slightly more favorable to Democrats, potentially making this seat a good pick-up opportunity.

REP. ZACH HALL (D) VS MICHELLE BENNETT (R)

LD 5 - Eastern and southeastern King County

Democrat incumbent Representative Zach Hall is running to retain his seat in the state House after being appointed in 2025 following Sen. Victoria Hunt's appointment to the state Senate. Hall previously served on the Issaquah City Council and is one of the youngest members currently serving in the House. Challenging him from the right is Republican Mercer Island Police Chief Michelle Bennett, who is running a campaign focused on a punitive approach to public safety, cutting funding for essential services, and opposing the Millionaires Tax. Given that Hall is relatively new to the Legislature, this could be a vulnerable seat we will need to defend in the general.

BATTLEGROUND STATES FUND



Fuse has organized our national Battleground States Fund this year to help our donors maximize the impact and effectiveness of their contributions toward the battleground races we must win to reclaim the country. We've built a strategic list of the most important races now required to flip the U.S. House and build a lasting anti-authoritarian majority. The strategy is to build a bridge to the economically stressed, anti-partisan voters in working class communities with locally anchored, trusted-messenger based campaigns.

Please contact rosej@fusewashington.org for more information about great opportunities to impact the most important national battleground races.

WHY TO GIVE

We believe there are six basic reasons to make campaign contributions:

DEFEND OUR COUNTRY

The rise of far-right extremism in this country is deeply sinister and concerning. MAGA Republicans and white supremacists are attacking our democracy, the rights of women and transgender people, and promoting racism and violence. We run the risk of losing ground on all of our policy advances if far-right Republicans win, and with so much at stake in every one of these elections, every donation to support progressive candidates is a tangible and impactful way to fight back against rising MAGA authoritarianism.

HELP GOOD PEOPLE WIN

We believe the top priority is to support good progressives in close races who need your contribution to win.

REWARD PROGRESSIVE LEADERSHIP

Strong leaders who take political risks deserve our support. They generate enemies and opposition with good votes, and if we don't support them it sends a powerful negative message to other legislators.

BUILD RELATIONSHIPS

Contributions can build personal political capital with your elected officials, making you a more effective lobbyist for progressive causes.

DEFEAT CONSERVATIVE LEADERS

Take out incumbents or challengers who are real obstacles to progress.

ACHIEVE OUR POLICY GOALS

Whether your goal is to strengthen laws that fight carbon pollution, create a more equitable tax system, or increase funding for education, investing in the races that build a majority supporting your goals is the key to our success. We don't recommend contributing more than a nominal amount to a non-competitive race unless you are working to strengthen or maintain a relationship with the candidate.

HOW & WHEN TO GIVE

In person: We recommend making contributions at events or in person where you can make a personal connection with the candidate. This way, you can communicate your concerns and priorities to a candidate when you make a contribution.

By mail: If you can't contribute in person, we recommend that you mail a check with a note, telling them you are supporting them because they were recommended in the Fuse Progressive Donor Guide. Sending them a check eliminates the credit card company's cut (which adds up) and allows you to add a message to your contribution.

Online: If you can't donate in person or by check, donating online is a good option.

Independent Expenditures: Most legislative races now have substantial independent efforts to bolster good candidates. Independent expenditures cannot be coordinated with the candidate, and are not subject to contribution limits. We are happy to provide insight and guidance about specific races and independent expenditures if you are interested.

SAMPLE BUDGET

Our recommendation levels are based on a sample budget and the level of contribution that is significant for a given type of race. The contribution limit for a state legislative race is \$2,400 per election cycle per person (\$4,800 for a married couple). For a Congressional race the limit is \$5,800 per election cycle per person. After the primary, the limit is half those amounts. If you have the ability to make larger contributions than the ones outlined in these budgets, please do so! We are happy to provide advice and recommendations for larger budgets.

STRONGLY RECOMMEND

FLIP THE HOUSE INDEPENDENT EXPENDITURE CAMPAIGN	\$1,000	\$2,000
JESSICA FORSYTHE FOR STATE HOUSE (POS. 2)	\$250	\$500
RENEE HERNANDEZ GREENFIELD FOR STATE HOUSE (POS. 2)	\$250	\$500
KRISTA PEREZ FOR STATE HOUSE (POS. 1)	\$250	\$500
DEBORAH KRISHNADASAN FOR STATE SENATE	\$250	\$500
NO HATE IN WA STATE OPPOSE IL26-001, IL26-683	\$250	\$500
TOTAL	\$2,250	\$4,500
SAVE FOR GENERAL	\$2,750	\$5,500

**FUSE IS A STATE-
WIDE ADVOCACY
ORGANIZATION
DEDICATED TO A
VISION OF SHARED
AND SUSTAINABLE
PROSPERITY, EQUITY,
AND JUSTICE FOR
ALL PEOPLE.**

