

Thursday, June 20, 2024

Dear Andrew Reding,

Attached: Link to Code of Conduct [here](#) (also a button on my campaign website)
Requesting from Whatcom Dems: Updated Candidate questionnaire

As you know, my name is Maya Morales. Upon your invitation, I joined the Whatcom Democrats in 2021, served on the Issues and Advocacy Committee for one year; contributed to Whatcom Dems' fundraiser auction in 2021; donated countless hours of work to the People First Bellingham (PFB) Campaign and beyond, and brought a fabulous strawberry shortcake & PRIDE brews dessert basket to last summer's Whatcom Dems picnic. This year, I had to ask for a membership renewal fee waiver due to my financial hardship post-campaign, and after my request was denied, another member sponsored my dues in a beautiful gesture of generous solidarity to ensure that I could participate and vote.

I have joined Whatcom Dems in general meetings whenever my schedule allows, and have rallied together with our community in solidarity on many important issues in our platform, including adding public comment in support of the Whatcom Kids levy in a pivotal Council meeting for final approval of the measure, leading a local emergency sign-on letter asking our state lawmakers to oppose re-criminalizing substance use and addiction, which Whatcom Dems signed, pushing for historic amounts of funding in the state operating and capital budgets in 2023 to offset our state lawmakers' failure to pass rent stabilization; and then fighting hard for Rent Stabilization and increased funding again in our 2024 legislative session. This year I also led local advocacy sign-on letters asking local governments to advocate strongly for rent stabilization, *and* for the rapid expansion of sheltering capacity for unhoused folks in the cold.

I've continued legislative advocacy both personally and via WA People's Privacy, the state-level entity I founded after our PFB campaign wrapped up. I've advocated on issues related to our unhoused crisis, carceral systems, drug policy, poverty, rent stabilization and housing, labor rights, LGBTQ+ rights, people's access to abortion and gender-affirming care in our state, racial justice, police accountability, public records advocacy, disability rights advocacy, privacy and tech justice. I began advocating for a ceasefire from the moment Israel's siege on Gaza began in response to a terrorist attack on a music festival in Israel by Hamas, and I have also been careful to balance my calls for peace, and calls for adherence of governments to our constitutional rights and liberties, with clear reminders that discrimination on the basis of religion and/or nation-of-origin of any kind is unacceptable.

In all of this work, almost none of which has been paid work, I have successfully advocated both for *and* against local, state, and federal legislation as part of different coalitions and alliances, and independently; steadily building cross-movement community and solidarity among local and state and national organizers who are committed to tech, racial, economic, gender, labor and housing justice. I have brought forward bold ideas and defended them; I have contributed to major policy wins and to minor tweaks in laws that helped secure smaller wins. I recently introduced and successfully advocated to add important language into our Whatcom Dems party platform to help blaze a path toward protecting unhoused people, and, with the shadow of the pending SCOTUS outcome in *Grants vs Johnson* looming, I immediately followed up on that promise of advocacy with dedicated work in the form of a landmark proposal for a Washington state Unhoused Persons Bill of Rights (UPBOR) that cities and counties will also be able to support. And, as you know, in my work on this UPBOR, I've really pressed against time, producing an exhaustively researched and well-cited resolution with strong language *very quickly* to ensure that we (progressive policymakers) will be ready and able to respond to the SCOTUS decision with the level of immediacy and urgency that it may demand.

Since 2021, I have continued to mobilize with workers, with the Poor People's Campaign, with and alongside ACLU WA. And, since May of last year, have continued to defend WA's groundbreaking health data privacy law (HB 1155 WA My Health My Data Act), our 2023 Shield Laws, *and* The Keep WA Working Act in tech and surveillance policy deliberations with Seattle and Bellingham legislators, in order to ensure local lawmakers' understanding of and compliance with these laws. My dedication and advocacy work to protect

Immigrants and people's access to gender-affirming and abortion healthcare in our state neither began nor ended with the 2023 legislative session: it is ongoing, and it will continue.

I am a directly impacted person with a clear and proven track record of wins and very solid people's advocacy work. My commitments and positions are clear, and my work speaks for itself. Last summer, I ran a challenging but very solid campaign for Bellingham City Council, knocking over 2,000 doors in just a few weeks's time, and earning a respectable share of the primary vote – even as I struggled as a poor candidate to raise funds and reach voters. After the primary, I carried on, knocking over 1600 doors for two other progressive campaigns leading up to the general election. I have remained active in women's electoral leadership organizations in our State since then, which is part of how I found the courage to run again, after being asked to do so by a local elected. I've learned that LGBTQ+ Women of Color must *often* run for office more than once before our parties and communities will show up to support us.

I am running for Whatcom County Charter Commissioner because I am qualified, and I have the right blend of smarts, skills and experience for this work, and I've proven so repeatedly since 2021. Electing smart, capable, progressive LGBTQ+ women of color does matter, and so do our party's endorsements. We do not have any Queer Women of Color holding office in Whatcom County. That's a problem, because it's the lived experience of the people at the table that shapes the policy conversations, and as a mixed race non-binary woman who's lived her entire adult life as an out and proud Lesbian, *I will continue to run until we do.*

I have always organized and acted in alignment with Whatcom Dems' platform, and I will continue to do that once elected. I'm a strong advocate for Ranked Choice Voting, and I will act in party and issue solidarity as a County Charter Commissioner. I look forward to collaborating with other candidates across districts to build winning advocacy and action plans!

I humbly ask for the support of the Chair and PCOs in the certification of my candidacy by the Whatcom Democrats.
Thank you for your work and your time.

Very truly yours,
/s/
Maya Morales

Maya Morales
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