

2010 Candidate Questionnaire

SECTION I

BASIC CANDIDATE INFORMATION

1. Name as it will appear on the ballot

First Name	Middle Initial or Nickname	Last Name
Beau	A	Gunderson

2. Office sought (include office, jurisdiction, position/district number):

State Representative, Position 2, District 46

3. Are you the incumbent? Yes No

4. How long have you resided in this district/city?

1 year

5. How long have you resided in King County?

26 years

6. Is the office sought partisan or nonpartisan? Partisan Nonpartisan

7. If partisan, please indicate party: No party preference

CAMPAIGN CONTACTS

Campaign Name: Beau Gunderson for State Representative

Address: 1230 NW 121ST ST

City/State/Zip: Seattle, WA 98177

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Campaign E-mail: beau@beaugunderson.com

Campaign Website: http://www.beaugunderson.com/

POLITICAL BACKGROUND

1. Beginning with the most recent position, please list public offices you have held. Include positions on appointive boards or commissions.

Public Office	Elective or Appointive?	Dates Held	Leadership Role (if any)

2. If you ran for public office but were not elected, please list those races below:

Office Title	Year of Run
State Representative, Position 2, District 5	2004

SECTION II

In this section, we are seeking responses that reflect the four ratings criteria: involvement, effectiveness, character, and knowledge. These are defined as follows:

- **Involvement:** What has the candidate done previously in family, neighborhood, community, volunteer work, employment or public life to suggest readiness to accomplish challenging objectives? How do these activities demonstrate readiness for the challenges unique to the office sought?
 - **Effectiveness:** Has the candidate demonstrated promise of being productive in the office sought? Has the candidate shown the ability to work with other people?
 - **Character:** Do the candidate's personal traits show the ability to take on the responsibilities of campaigning for and holding the public office she or he is seeking? Is the candidate a leader, participant or observer? Is the candidate trustworthy, reliable and candid?
 - **Knowledge:** Has the candidate demonstrated the willingness and ability to learn and adapt? Does the candidate understand the duties and challenges of the office sought? Does the candidate have a firm grasp of the issues important to his or her constituency and their potential effects?
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1. In one page or less, why are you running for this office? (Note: the interview committee will be given a copy of this statement before your interview; at the beginning of your interview you will have the opportunity to expand on this statement in any way you wish.)

I'm running in this election because I strongly believe that a democracy requires voter choice. In 2004 the Libertarian Party approached a friend and I and asked us to run for office. Their goal was to give the voters of Washington a third (and sometimes second!) choice in every race in that election. My friend and I had recently become interested in politics and most closely related to the ideals that the Libertarian Party espoused and were very excited to run.

Participating in a political campaign was an excellent learning opportunity and a catalyst to stay informed and involved. My 2004 campaign inspired my friends to become more informed and involved as well—and it's this inspiration that I am making my campaign platform in 2010.

Young people are vastly underrepresented in our state government—only 4% of our state legislators are aged between 20 and 34 and the average age of a state legislator is 56. I want the voters of Washington to have choices that align with their interests. In 40 years of elections there have only been eight individual races for positions in District 46 where a third party or independent candidate participated.

My opponent is an extremely accomplished veteran of her office—but I don't feel that anyone should run unopposed. District 46 also contains Republicans, Libertarians, and members of the Green Party (and other parties and ideologies)—there may not be enough to elect a candidate with a majority but I don't believe you have to win an election to exert influence. A vote for a candidate that aligns with your beliefs is crucial because legislators take notice about the demographics of voters and who they vote for.

2. Describe your most important personal characteristics or traits as they relate to the office you seek.

I am tenacious. I maintain my course against tough odds and the doubt or consternation of others (but not against ethics or good sense) because I believe in leading by example and in following one's principles.

I've completed 25,000 miles of one of my life's goals: to explore our planet by motorcycle. I rode through 19 US states and 8 Central American countries at the age of 25 to learn more about the people of the region and the problems they encounter. I am especially interested how America's War on Drugs affects our neighbors and how our various production subsidies at home affect production and living conditions abroad. I learned, for example, that you can find Washington apples in every Central American country—and that we provided our apple farmers with \$133 million dollars in subsidies, which is greater than 51% of the apple subsidies paid in America!

I have a voracious appetite for knowledge—I want to understand what's going on at the various levels of government that affect me as well as understand why those decisions are being made.

I endeavor to be a good communicator. I spent my youth reading and agree with Sherman Alexie that juvenile literacy is incredibly important—it gives us the vocabulary to get across our ideas and augments our creativity by showing us what's possible in the imaginations (or real lives) of others.

3. Please describe, in sufficient detail, one to three accomplishments or contributions of which you are most proud. These examples should illustrate skills and capabilities you think apply to the office you are seeking. These accomplishments may have occurred at any time in your personal, professional, or public life.

- I worked with The Advocates for Self Government to bring their "World's Smallest Political Quiz" to Facebook where it has since been taken by more than 350,000 people. This task required a strong grasp of current technology and the ability to learn quickly. The Facebook developer platform was brand new when I began writing the software to launch the Quiz there. My desire to keep learning was the genesis of the project—I approached the Advocates because I believed their quiz increased political participation and it seemed like a good fit for a social website and a good motivator to learn a new programming system.
- I am proud of my 2004 campaign for office—I gained visibility for my views amongst the voters of my district and the citizens of greater King County. I participated in newspaper interviews based on the novelty of my age and resolved then to help make younger candidates commonplace—I want a Washington where a young candidate is not a novelty.
- On my motorcycle trip to Panama and back I tested and increased my ability to deal with stress. I encountered new situations daily and had to be able to think quickly and creatively when problems arose—be they trucks sliding down muddy tracks into my path of travel or border crossings with less than legitimate crossing tariffs. I also learned about fundraising for charity by selecting Alzheimer's Association as the primary benefactor of my trip and using my website as a platform to raise funds for that organization.

4. Please list or describe current and past activities in the community in which you have acquired skills that relate to the office you seek. Include your role in the activity and the year(s) in which you were involved. Involvement consists of many areas such as family, neighborhood, community, employment, or public life.

- I'm an active participant in my neighborhood watch group. The experience has sharpened my communication skills by allowing me to work with people who have a common goal (their own safety) but who don't see eye to eye on how that goal should be accomplished.
- I consider my previous campaign as community service—providing a choice for voters is a valuable service. That experience taught me a lot about the elective process in Washington and provided me the motivation to stay informed and involved in politics.
- In my friend group I am the person that makes sure everyone is registered to vote and informed about the candidates and initiatives.
- I'm also the most politically involved in my family—my parents never talked about politics when I was growing up but both inherited Democratic beliefs from their parents. It was seeing this inheritance of beliefs that led me to begin looking for ways to judge ideologies on their merits and not because I had been inculcated with them. Since my first run for office I've talked to my parents and sister about what's going on in the world and helped them to become informed about the problems we face.
- I contribute to a number of opensource projects. Chief among them is Mapnik, a map tile renderer that powers Openstreetmap—a project which aims to duplicate the kind of global, high-resolution map that Google Maps provides--but under an opensource license.

5. Please describe the duties of the office you seek. Which are the most important duties and why?

Members of the House are responsible for introducing, amending, and voting on legislation. Collectively the process is referred to as “public decision making” and involves reaching a consensus on legislation that affects everyone in the state in one way or another.

I believe the most important duty is to question both the conventional wisdom and the long-term effects of proposed legislation. Humans are poorly equipped to act in their long-term self-interest if it conflicts with their short-term interests. Increased taxes, for example, may help solve an immediate budget crisis--but unless the effects are well-studied a new tax may motivate behavior that is detrimental or put undue pressure on some segments of society.

Tax credits can misfire in the same way—one example that comes to mind is the farm equipment tax credit that rewarded the purchase of heavy vehicles like the Hummer. Another example that applied to the Hummer and other large vehicles was the regulation that exempted cars over a certain weight from emissions controls—a motivation for vehicle manufacturers to make their largest SUVs larger.

Farm subsidies like the biofuel subsidy for corn-based ethanol have the unintended consequence of raising corn prices around the world. Prior to ethanol subsidies our corn farming subsidies all but wiped out corn production in Mexico—the country where corn was first farmed more than 10,000 years ago.

We need more insight into the behavioral impact of our legislation—I believe that behavioral economics has much to teach us about how proposed laws will really affect our citizens and corporations and am an advocate for its application in the legislative process.