

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
Ross		Hunter

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

State Representative

3. Are you the incumbent? Yes No

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

14 years

5. How long have you resided in King County?

22 years

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

7. If partisan, please indicate party: **Democratic**

CAMPAIGN CONTACTS

Campaign Name: Friends of Ross Hutner

Address: PO Box 4204

City/State/Zip: Bellevue, WA 98009

Campaign Phone: (425) 637-8149

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Campaign E-mail: Ross@rosshunter.com

Campaign Website: www.rosshunter.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)
State Representative	Elective	2003-present	Finance Committee Chairman

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

Office Title	Year of Run
King County Executive	2009

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 am running for re-election because I know I can continue to make a difference for our schools and our community. I believe that we can build a new coalition of moderate legislators from both parties to make substantial changes to the way we do business as a state. (This gets harder as there are fewer Republicans in the central Puget Sound, but remains critical.) I have a handful of core beliefs about the role of government here in Washington. We must:

Adequately invest in our education system, from early learning through K12 and higher education. Our children must be prepared to compete in the new economy, and our economy must have educated workers to help attract the kind of businesses we want as a state. This year we have an opportunity to either succeed spectacularly with WA Learns, or fail equally spectacularly. It is important that we do one or the other, and not try incremental solutions.

Expand our transportation system so that it catches up with the population growth we have experienced over the last few decades. We are at the cusp of a major change in this system as we move to more investment in transit and a different way to pay for investments as the gas tax becomes a declining resource. We are working hard to balance our investments across the modes and to integrate the planning of multiple jurisdictions. Integrating transportation investment with land-use planning continues to be the critical link.

Create a business climate that makes it reasonable for companies to locate and expand here. As chairman of the Finance committee this is one of the key responsibilities I have.

Budget for the long-term, making prudent decisions about both revenue and expenses. I am fighting to increase the transparency and accountability of how we both raise revenue and spend it. I was proud to be the prime sponsor of the Rainy Day Fund bill in the House.

In short, I am a fiscally conservative Democrat who is generally thoughtful.

I'm a moderate.

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

I'm smart, assertive, goal-oriented, and hardworking. I provide leadership. I also am old enough to have developed the ability to listen to other people and figure out their needs and desires.

The legislature deals with a wide variety of issues, most of which are very complicated. It is hard to develop the expertise to understand the implications of proposed changes. I am a quick learner, and have developed a relatively deep understanding of the budget and revenue system for the state.

To make a difference in the legislature you have to be willing to make decisions and push an agenda. Balancing the difference between assertive and aggressive is important, and I try very hard to come down on the assertive side. Without the willingness to make change and take risks nothing happens.

I have a deep interest in making sure the state lives up to its constitutional requirement to amply provide for the education of all students, and am willing to push forward to make this happen. I am able to keep this goal foremost in my mind, and adapt all my energies in this direction, with minimal distractions.

I work hard. I read countless documents. I attend endless meetings. I listen to people for hours. I knock on thousands of doors. I answer constituent correspondence in the middle of the night.

I am able to provide leadership. I can bring groups of people together to accomplish things they could not do individually. This requires listening to their goals and desires and shaping an agenda that works for everyone. For example, I built a coalition of both Republicans and Democrats to approve the result of the Basic Education Financing Task Force that fundamentally changed how we budget for schools, changing the very definition of our constitutional funding requirements.

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.

The three accomplishments I'd like to address here come from different aspects of my life - public, charitable, and business.

I drove the legislature's basic education financing task force and produced a product adopted in 2009 that fundamentally changes how education is funded in Washington. The required building a coalition, creating the political framework that made it possible, and making the compromises we needed to make to get it done. It is very difficult to make changes this big and this was a major effort.

I took over a Cub Scout pack that was largely a collection of individual dens with no overall goals or activities. We had painful Pack meetings, no outdoor program, and mediocre membership. In the two years I was Cubmaster we doubled the number of scouts that went camping every year and doubled the number of days of camping. We increased the number of boys that graduated to Boy Scouts, improved our pack meetings and ceremonies, and grew the membership from 45-50 to almost 100 boys. We had to split the pack in half to keep it manageable. I am most proud that the leadership team started to work more closely together, and we grew a new generation of leaders to take over the Pack when I moved on.

I was asked to take over a product team at Microsoft that had almost none of the original members - only 3 people, including a temporary hire - and ship a major upgrade of the product within a year. I was able to hire a great team, build a solid organization, and ship the product. This required learning an entire new product category - I had never been a "server" person at Microsoft, and had little technical knowledge of the product area, nor had I worked with the set of customers. We did not lose any customers during the transition.

All these accomplishments have a common theme - I was able to build a group of people into a team and lead them to accomplish a goal that I set. This required listening, leadership, and drive.

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.

1997-2002 Cub Scout Pack 435 - Den Leader, Cubmaster. I substantially improved a Cub Scout pack over the 5 years I was involved in it, and handed off leadership to the next generation of leaders.

1999-2002 Cascade District Boy Scouts of America. I was Vice-Chair of the district council for the scouts while my son was involved in Cub scouting. I helped develop several activities including a Bike Rodeo and a Scout Expo at Bellevue Square Mall.

2000-2010 Bellevue Schools Foundation Trustee. I helped with program design and fundraising for "Project Discovery," the Bellevue Schools Foundation effort to improve science education in Elementary and Middle Schools in Bellevue. As a trustee I help set the strategic direction for the foundation and with fundraising. I serve on the strategic priorities and marketing committees.

2002, 2006 and 2008 Steering Committee, Bellevue Quality Schools. I worked with the committee that managed the election campaign for the Bellevue School District levies in both 2002 and 2006. In 2006 I managed the messages for the campaign in addition to managing the speaker bureau, during the legislative session. We passed with over 75% of the vote. In 2008 I largely provided strategic direction for a half-billion dollar bond issue, the largest in the state to pass.

2004-2010 Hopelink board of directors. I have been asked to serve as a board member for the Eastside's largest human services organization. My role as a governmental representative on the board is to provide information about state budget process, and to learn how human services can be delivered effectively. I find this invaluable in my role on the Ways and Means committee.

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

The Legislature creates laws for the state, sets the biennial budget, and oversees the executive branch's implementation of the laws and budget. Individual legislators also serve a crucial role in lubricating the system by helping individual constituents navigate the system.

The longest-lasting impact is creating new laws or modifying old ones. Making major changes requires extensive knowledge of the impact your decision is likely to have, plus the ability to think about possible alternatives. It is humbling to think about the long-term impact you can have, and it causes me to be very thoughtful about what I do. The longer I am in the Legislature the more concerned about this I become.

The most important duty I have for an individual constituent is the kind of help I and my office provide unblocking needed services or permits, or just making something that should happen actually do so.

The most ephemeral, but the most important, is our ability to change the pattern of thought of the electorate. We can use the "bully pulpit" to cause major changes in how people think about government, and this can change what is possible. I was able to use this pulpit for changes in the education finance system, and am now taking on larger changes in the way local and state governments work together to manage the place where we live.