

**The Municipal League of King County**

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**2010 CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE**

The Municipal League of King County requests every candidate who participates in the candidate evaluation process **submit background information prior to his/her interview with a candidate evaluation committee.** The questionnaire is the basis of the League's research and interview process. The League's ratings are non-partisan; they are based on standards of Involvement, Effectiveness, Character, and Knowledge, all of which have been developed and refined over the past 98 years.

A copy of this questionnaire will be provided to Candidate Evaluation Committee members to help them prepare for your interview. Candidate responses, except the confidential section, will be available to the public on the League's website.

The Municipal League requests the following materials from candidates. Please check to make certain you have sent in your:

<b>Candidate Questionnaire</b>					
Sent by:	Email	US Mail	Fax	Not Sending	
<b>Resume (education, employment, and professional activities)</b>					
Sent by:	Email	US Mail	Fax	Not Sending	
<b>Campaign Materials</b>					
Sent by:	Email	US Mail	Fax	Not Sending	
<b>Constituent Newsletters and other publications</b>					
Sent by:	Email	US Mail	Fax	Not Sending	
<b>Photograph</b>					
Sent by:	Email	US Mail	Fax	Not Sending	

**Note: Electronically submitted questionnaires are strongly preferred.** All materials can be emailed to [cec@munileague.org](mailto:cec@munileague.org). They can be processed and made available on-line far more rapidly than handwritten or typed submissions.

For non-electronic submissions, please print clearly and legibly and return the application **as soon as possible in order to allow the committee the greatest amount of time to prepare a complete report on your skills and experience.**

If you have not yet been contacted to schedule an interview, or if you have questions about the candidate evaluation program, please contact the League office at 206-622-8333.

If you have a disability and require accommodation to participate in the candidate evaluation process, please contact the CEC Coordinator at the League office.

## 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
Steve		Litzow

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

**State Senate, 41<sup>st</sup> Legislative District**

3. Are you the incumbent?                      Yes   x   No

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

**15 years**

5. How long have you resided in King County?

**15 years**

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

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

#### CAMPAIGN CONTACTS

Campaign Name:                      Citizens for Steve Litzow

Address:                                      7683 SE 27<sup>th</sup> St #431

City/State/Zip:                              Mercer Island, WA 98040

Campaign Phone:                              206.384.1274

Campaign Fax:                                      \_\_\_\_\_

Campaign E-mail:                              info@stevelitzow.com

Campaign Website:                              www.stevelitzow.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)
Mercer Island City Council	Elected in 2003 and Re-elected in 2007	1/1/2004-Present	

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

Office Title	Year of Run
State Representative	2008

## 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?
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 care deeply about the people and the communities that make up the 41<sup>st</sup> district and have been honored to serve a part of the 41<sup>st</sup> district these past 7 years on the Mercer Island City Council. I have truly enjoyed working with citizens and other elected officials to come up with solutions that make people's lives better. It is as tangible and immediate as a new stop sign, dog-leash laws or fixing a pot hole, to as abstract, complex and long-term as regional transportation initiatives, city-school partnerships and sustainability initiatives. This experience, along with my community activity, as outlined in Question #5, has given me first-hand knowledge of the hopes and dreams of the 41<sup>st</sup> district and the experience and relationships to help build coalitions to solve the most pressing issues for all the people of the 41<sup>st</sup> district.

I am running for the working families who sit around the kitchen table with a pile of bills wondering if they will have a job next month to pay them. I am running for the parents who wonder how they will save enough money to get their children through college and be competitive in our ever changing economy. It is time our government focus on the priorities of rebuilding our economy and creating jobs for working families. We must ensure our state provides a place for small businesses to start investing and hiring again.

Solutions for rebuilding our state's economy are neither Republican nor Democrat. The solutions are beyond party politics and can provide an incredible quality of life for all of our citizens, but it takes leadership and a willingness to work together. I would be honored to be given the opportunity to rise above the inertia of individual interests of Olympia to develop collaborative and innovative solutions that put us back on track and into the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

To improve the education system, we must fully fund basic education as the top priority of the State. I would work with other education advocates Skip Priest, Fred Jarrett, Judy Clibborn and Ross Hunter among others to fully fund the education needs of the State. This would include paying teachers a market competitive wage, ongoing training and performance bonuses. It would include capital improvements and the ability to gain single-subject certification at the high school level to reduce classroom size. As part of fully funding education, we need to expect and measure excellence.

To reduce congestion, we need to build a world-class public transportation system with a flexible mix of buses, bus rapid transit (BRT), light rail and roads that begin to relieve critical congestion choke points immediately and expand as we grow. This begins by replacing the 520 bridge, using tolls to help pay for it, as well as funding and building the already approved congestion relief projects on I-405 and I-90 including the R8A lane re-stripping project. I would then work for an expansion of bus service including a BRT system that would operate along SR 520, I 405, I-90 and SR 167 to serve the major activity centers of the Eastside as outlined in the 2002 I-405 Corridor Program Record of Decision. This system should be populated with electric hybrid buses that have substantially reduced CO2 emissions versus the current buses. It is time to put aside partisan fighting and get the Eastside moving again.

These issues are inseparable. Their solutions are bipartisan and have a symbiotic relationship in which there is mutual benefit from cooperation as we move forward in an environment of limited resources, greater density and global competition. The success I see is my sons and daughters raising their sons and daughters in a thriving Puget sound region.



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

I believe I share three traits with other effective public servants. These are courage, optimism and a collaborative spirit. As I have had the good fortune to work with and observe legislators at all levels of government over the past several years, I have developed my legislative approach based on these traits. You need courage to stand up and advocate for what you believe is right for your constituents in the face of opposition. You need optimism to believe that things can truly be better, that you can find a solution. And finally to make it all work, you need a collaborative spirit that allows you to listen, contribute and build consensus. My father always told me, "It is amazing what you can accomplish, if you don't care who gets credit." I have found this to be a very effective approach in the 7 years of non-partisan legislative work on the Mercer Island City Council.

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 have been happily married for 22 years to my wife, Jenny, and together we have raised four active and happy children ages 19 to 11 years old. My family, above all else, has shaped who I am as a person. As any spouse and parent knows, your family grounds you, supports you and stretches and pushes you in ways that you cannot imagine, but seem obvious in hindsight. Of the countless things I have received from my family, one that applies to being an elected official is a greater sense of empathy.

In 2005, I was on the board of our Rotary Club's annual Mercer Island Half Marathon fund raiser. The race had been put on by the Rotary club for 30 years raising about \$50k with 2500 participants each year. At the first board meeting, I was asked to figure out how to increase participation and money raised. Shortly thereafter, I was on a Y-Princess Campout and listening to a friend talk about his sister dying from colon cancer and his desire to honor her and fight colon cancer. Another friend with us was a doctor at Virginia Mason discussing their efforts to increase colon cancer screenings. Together, we developed the idea of what became the Mercer Island Half Marathon for Colon Cancer Awareness. Over the next six months we worked with Rotary, Virginia Mason and King5 TV and successfully raised over \$150,000 with over 3500 participants. The Race continues today – 6 years later - raising hundreds of thousands of dollars as a premier Colon Cancer Awareness event.

As the Council Member on the Mercer Island Planning Commission, I became convinced after listening to the commissioners and particularly the Planning commission chair, Bill Chapman, of the need to sustain – if not enhance – the environment as well as the economy as we grow. I also became convinced that local governments needed to take the lead in this Sustainability movement. The issue was that my fellow council members at the time did not share my convictions. While I was able to do a few things as an individual council member to promote sustainability, it wasn't until I teamed up with a new Council member that we were able to make real progress on making Mercer Island a sustainable community. We worked together to develop a plan, co-authored articles for the Mercer Island Reporter and received unanimous support from the Council for a Sustainability Work plan including having the City take a lead role in the formation of the Puget Sound Regional Green Fleet Initiative among other accomplishments. It was an impactful and enriching experience to see that varying backgrounds and beliefs could collaborate on this issue and deliver results that continue to benefit the community today.

Lastly, I would like to add my run for the State House of Representatives, I understand that most candidates would not consider running for office and coming up a few hundred votes short a positive experience, I however look at that event as one of my greatest accomplishments. From that years efforts, wonderful opportunities happened for the community and my life. First and foremost I ran to represent the people of the 41st district and make sure that their values were reflected with an effective common sense approach in Olympia. I think that my participation in the election made Marcie a better candidate, as she did me, and that some of our ideas sharpened during that process which allowed Marcie to have a wonderful session in Olympia representing our community. Additionally, many of the relationships I made during that campaign reached out to me for help in several areas which allowed me to broaden my opportunity to serve my community. For example, NARAL asked me to join their PAC board. While most think Republicans can not work collaboratively on women's rights issues when they involve freedom of choice, my service on their board has expanded their minds and my mine as to the ways we can protect life while respecting a woman's sacred right to make decisions about her own body. I would not have been allowed to be apart of a discussion that influences so many members of our community in so many ways. If I had not run for office, this opportunity for personal growth and community involvement, and countless others would not have been bestowed upon me.

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.

Mercer Island City Council (2003 – present)  
Board Member, Summer Search, non-profit mentoring program for at-risk youth (2007-present)  
Board Member, Bellevue College Foundation (2009-Present)  
Mercer Island Rotary (2002 – present)  
Mercer Island Rotary Colon Cancer Half Marathon Board (2005-2006)  
Mercer Island Chamber of Commerce (2002 – present)  
Bellevue Chamber of Commerce (2006- present)  
Member of Mercer Island Youth & Family Services Board (2002-2003)  
Eastside Transportation Partnership (2006 – present)  
Lake Heights YMCA Y-Guides and Y-Princesses (1996 – present)  
Mercer Island Senior Foundation ( 2005- present)  
Mercer Island Boys & Girls Club (1996 – present)

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

The most important duty of a State Senator is to represent the people of the District in building durable coalitions around solutions that solve public problems. To do this effectively, you have to constantly listen and respond to the diversity of public views on all sides of the issue and strive for the common ground that will get the job done. Being the best representative for your constituents means not only bringing a voice to their hopes, dreams, fears and concerns, but also bringing common sense and a collaborative spirit to allow a good solution to be implemented versus the endless discussion of the “perfect” solution.