What is your name?
Jay Fathi, M.D.

1. For which position are you running?
Seattle City Council District 6

2. What do you know about the unmet basic human needs in the district you would represent?

First and foremost, the most widely unmet basic human need in my district, as well as in all of Seattle, is housing. There are over 12,000 unhoused individuals in the city of Seattle, some staying in emergency shelters, on friends’ couches, in cars and RVs, in tents, or on park benches. Those individuals and many more who are housed are experiencing food insecurity, with current data suggesting 1 in 8 Washingtonian’s are food insecure. Food accessibility is also a serious concern, as more than 50 percent of King County’s low-income population, roughly 15 percent of the county’s residents, live more than a 10-minute walk from a supermarket. In my district and across the country, access to behavioral health treatment is critical for many, including our unhoused neighbors dealing with mental health illnesses and substance use disorders. I believe in ambitious visions, with pragmatic solutions. Our emergency shelters and human service providers are overwhelmed, as need far outstrips what their budgets can currently accommodate. We need to increase services as a response to our crisis, but we also need to be doing work upstream to create a City where we prevent folks from needing these services. We should be designing a Seattle where everyone’s basic needs are met, and that means a city where everyone can live free from discrimination, can provide for their family with one full-time job, have safe and affordable housing, buy healthy and nutritious food from our grocery stores and markets, and receive health care and education that doesn’t upend their financial security. I personally know about the unmet needs in my community because I have been providing health care and advocating for those who are experiencing life with these unmet needs for the past 3 decades in Seattle.
3. What has afforded you the privilege and power to run for office, and how will it impact your role in this position?

I am where I am today only because of the choices and sacrifices my parents made, because of an earlier Seattle that had an economy that let a single mom raise a family and send her son to college, and a public education system that gave me the support I needed to get into college and earn a scholarship to the UW School of Medicine. My father was an immigrant from Iran, and I became a naturalized U.S. citizen at age 10. He and my mother taught me the importance of fighting for the ‘underdog’ -- those who have less than you, and those that have been left behind. Our political and campaign system is set up in a very specific way. Often, it requires an extraordinary amount of connections, funding, and most importantly time to run for office, so it is often only the privileged that can make that commitment to running, which impacts the type of people we in office. I am able to run because I am privileged to have the financial security at the age of 53 to work only part-time while campaigning, thanks to both my career as a medical doctor and administrative professional and my wife’s multiple jobs. I’m also able to successfully fundraise because I’m middle-aged and have lived in North Seattle my whole life, meaning I have fifty years of friends and colleagues across the district who have sent me their democracy vouchers. I think it’s important to acknowledge that I’ve faced less, and different, barriers than other candidates or folks who are unable to run because of the system we have in place. For example, my children are now in high school -- if they were still young, I wouldn’t be able to do this, or if I was a single parent like my mom was. I can also be perceived as “white-passing” with some folks, so I don’t face as much discrimination as my darker-skinned friends from the Middle East, although I have still experienced anti-Iranian and anti-Muslim (although I am not Muslim) bias during my campaign. Interestingly enough, I believe that the privileges that make it possible for me to run for office now, including a career as a family doctor caring for low income individuals and families and having an extensive history and many friends in the district, are the same reasons why I’m extraordinarily qualified for the City Council. Throughout my career, my work has focused on those who are disenfranchised. I have helped community members who struggle with getting health insurance, maintaining a job, and failing to function as a result of mental health problems or addiction. Thousands of my patients have been homeless, or on the verge of becoming homeless. All my life I have worked to improve the condition of those who have less than I do, and these experiences constantly inform my policies and will guide
my role as a City Councilperson. As a doctor, I’ll bring experience improving outcomes for vulnerable populations, and as a Community Health leader at Swedish, and as the CEO of an Obamacare health plan that brought insurance to 250,000 people across Washington, I’ll bring expertise in bringing groups together to solve large scale problems with effective and measurable solutions. As a public school dad and a District 6 resident for over twenty years, I’ll be accountable and available to all my constituents, and help lead Seattle forward during this transformative time for our city. My experiences as a scientist will also inform my role — a good doctor listens to people and provides evidence-based solutions, and a good City Councilperson should do the same. City leaders need to present a clear plan to all of Seattle for the issues we are facing, concisely highlighting data on the problem, the proposed solutions, the action plan with tactics, and to transparently implement said plans. These actions must be followed by a rigorous, ongoing analysis of data and metrics to see if the solutions are indeed producing the desired results, and if not, then the plans must change. These approaches are straightforward and regularly used successfully in health care. I look forward to leading on the Council with these strategies, always rooted in experience and accountability, to both make significant headway on this crisis, and restore trust with Seattle’s voters.

4. What experience do you have in listening to and amplifying community voices? In what ways do you base your policies and priorities on the needs of those who will be most impacted by them?

I’ve spent my career caring for neighbors in my district and across our community, as a family doctor at the NeighborCare clinic and as Director of Community Health at Swedish. Throughout my career, I have focused on helping those who are disenfranchised — community members who can’t get health insurance, who can’t access ‘the system’ like others, those who are struggling to work and function due to mental health problems, folks who are suffering from addiction, immigrants, the homeless, and other marginalized groups. As a doctor, my job is to listen. As a healthcare leader, my job is ensure folks get the services they need -- and that has always included amplifying the voices of those who are often ignored. When I saw and heard from my patients that breastfeeding was not being well supported at Swedish, I formed the Lactation Quality Improvement Committee, partnered with the Breastfeeding
Coalition of Washington and La Leche League, began organizing and leading community wide breastfeeding conferences at Swedish, then put the organization on the path to becoming a World Health Organization designated Baby Friendly Hospital. When I saw that my patients with no health insurance or Medicaid could not get orthopedic surgery when they needed joint replacements, I partnered with other leaders and helped substantially grow Project Access Northwest, an organization dedicated to finding medical specialists who would provide all types of specialty care to underserved patients. Additionally, I led the opening of a brand new specialty clinic at Swedish further expanding capacity and upgrading these services as it was apparent that additional needs, including dental care, was being unmet. When I ran an Obamacare health plan in our state, I led the effort to win the sole state-wide contract with HCA and DSHS to provide coverage to our 25,000 foster care youth and young adults, partly because I had personally cared for many in the foster care system, and shown a decades long commitment to listening to and amplifying the voices of those in the community most in need. It was beyond gratifying to launch a program with extensive wrap-around services to best support Washington’s foster care population and their families, with a heavy emphasis on behavioral health-mental health and substance abuse/addiction issues-with all staff becoming comprehensively trained in trauma informed care. My entire career has focused on listening to, partnering with, advocating for, and prioritizing the disenfranchised, and creating health care policies based on their needs. When I’m on the City Council I will bring this perspective to every policy conversation -- specifically focusing on those that are the most in need, and considering how each bus stop, labor law, zoning rule, or any policy impacts our goal of racial, social, and economic equity.

5. The cost of health care increases every year. Recent federal policy changes have threatened the long-term sustainability of Medicaid — such as attempts to reduce funding or turn the program into a block grant — and have aimed to undermine the viability of private health insurance markets — such as eliminating the individual insurance mandate from the Affordable Care Act (ACA) or not defending the ACA in court. Given so many barriers being placed at the federal level,
how would you work to improve health care access at the local level to ensure stronger and more vibrant communities?

I have a track record of nearly 3 decades as a fervent, vociferous regional leader and advocate for universal healthcare and health equity. I understand that programs like the ACA are incredibly important to adequately serving peoples’ healthcare needs. After the ACA passed, I was asked to be President and CEO of an Obamacare health plan start-up in Washington, which I helped grow from 34,000 covered members to 250,000. I understand the intricacies of health care administration and financing, and am also still currently a front line, hands on medical provider for the underserved. There will simply be no other elected leader with the experience and energies around improving healthcare access at the local level to ensure stronger and vital communities. Lack of access to health care services is driving many of the issues we are seeing in Seattle, and we need to continually refocus efforts on this issue. Unexpected medical costs are a huge catalyst for bankruptcy and homelessness, and many of our unsheltered population are suffering from severe, inadequately treated mental health issues and substance use disorders. Seattle, and our entire state, are facing both a workforce shortage and an inadequate supply of treatment options for behavioral health needs. Unfortunately, the number of times I’ve had patients with addiction or mental health problems who were ready to enter rehabilitation programs but there were no options available is too high to count. I would use my elected office to help expand access to community health programs and emergency funding and rental protections for folks who experience unexpected medical costs, and invest in making it easier for treatment facilities to open and operate by exploring waiving building permit fees, expediting siting decisions, and persuading the state legislature to waive the sales tax on new construction for facilities serving the chronically homeless. The city must partner closely with the county and state in this area to make significant headway, but I’m confident this can be done. Our state has recently dedicated significant funding for behavioral health services, which is a step in the right direction. Lack of treatment options for behavioral health needs is an enormous problem facing us, and these simple further steps could erase millions of dollars in costs and get treatment facilities, as well as more permanent housing for our homeless residents, built faster. Our region is full of leaders who share my passion and expertise, and I look forward to continuing to collaborate with them as a Councilmember, as I have for my entire career.
6. Federal policies over the last few years have created a climate of fear for immigrant and refugee communities across the country. Even Washington State, long a welcoming environment, is no stranger to these challenges, as the recent Department of Licensing scandal showed. This climate of fear impacts immigrants and refugees of all statuses, and new research shows this fear is driving immigrants away from health and human services programs they are legally eligible to participate in. What would you do to leverage local systems and resources to bring immigrant and refugee communities back out of the shadows?

While working at Neighborcare Health’s 45th Street Clinic for 12 years, I worked directly with thousands of individuals and families who experienced this situation and lived in fear every day about accessing ‘the system.’ The threat of them being separated from their families was very real, as it is today. I remember distinctly my mom taking me to City Hall at age 10 and reciting the Pledge of Allegiance as I became a naturalized U.S. citizen -- and I remember being bullied by classmates for my Middle Eastern last name and slightly darker skin. Even during this campaign I’ve had folks who’ve indicated they won’t vote for me because of my ethnicity. As the son of an Iranian immigrant, I have always been aware of the need to broaden understanding and awareness of Middle Eastern culture and community, as well as other immigrant communities, especially in the face of nearly two generations of media and cultural misconceptions mainly perpetrated by political leaders. I also understand the vital importance of immigrant communities in contributing to the vibrance of our community. As a family doctor at clinics for the uninsured, thousands of my patients have been immigrants, from all over the world, many of whom are undocumented, who are trying to build a better life here in Washington, and are enriching our communities by doing so. This is what my own father did as an Iranian immigrant to the United States, coming here for educational opportunities and increased freedoms, and eventually giving back to the community as a university professor for over 30 years. Immigrants are our family, neighbors, friends, teachers, and peers, and it’s our duty to protect them. There are several organizations and programs already working to support immigrant communities and bring them into the full city community. All of our community health centers help immigrants and refugees with their primary and mental healthcare needs. The Northwest Immigrant
Rights Project both assists immigrants with legal issues and advocates for their rights as equal citizens. One America, an advocacy group founded immediately after 9/11, protects immigrant communities from hate crimes and discrimination and helps them with rights and immigration. El Centro de la Raza, a community organization, helps unify and empower all racial, ethnic, and economic communities. I believe that the City Council needs to work closely with all of these organizations, and many others, in order to see how the city itself could better support their work, and continue to elevate these communities that are struggling to be heard, and to thrive. As well, our City needs to invest in public education campaigns so that everyone knows they can access services safely, and without fear of their information being reported to the authorities or ICE. As a doctor who has spent my career serving these communities, it’s heartbreaking and unacceptable to me that our neighbors are too scared to get medical treatment for themselves and their children for fear of interrogation or deportation. We must fight absurd federal policies that are causing this, partner regionally across Washington, and with other progressive states, to send a clear message that we will not be complicit in these immoral policies, and ensure that everyone in our community is aware of our approach, so those needing these critical services feel comfortable and safe accessing them.

7. Over half Seattleites and over 40% of people in King County are renters. Currently in most of Washington State tenants can be forced to move with only 20 days’ notice and even within the city of Seattle, there is no guarantee that a landlord will renew a tenant’s lease. [For King County Candidates] As part of the King County Council, will you enact just cause protections to give tenants stability? [For Seattle Candidates] As part of Seattle City Council, will you expand just cause protections for renters with fixed term leases who are up for a lease renewal? [For both] What are your plans and strategies to protect renters?

Yes, if elected to the council, I would support the expansion of just cause protections. While the current just-cause legislation protects renters here in Seattle more than anywhere else in the state, it needs to be expanded more to protect renters from
unfairly and without reason being denied from renewing their leases. Overall, the city needs continue to focus on protecting renters. One example that is paving the way for the future of rent reformation is SB 5600, which made it much harder for landlords to evict their tenants by extending notice requirements for evictions and rent raises, and making it easier for tenants to access civil legal aid services. Although SB 5600 was a good start, too many Seattle tenants continue to fall through the cracks. Communities of color face discrimination when trying to rent, and folks with limited English proficiency lack resources and information in their native language and are often taken advantage of when renting. Many low-income folks, young adults, and communities of color are finding places to rent through the internet on sites like Craigslist and Facebook, but some landlords are unaware of the laws, or disregard them. This can lead to unlawful qualifications such as drug testing, unconvicted criminal charges, improperly asking for or requiring certain deposits, or not accepting Section 8 vouchers. Giving renters more time to catch up on rent before eviction and reducing court costs are positive steps, and we must enforce the requirement that tenants receive information about where to access rental assistance. As well, for residents on 12 month leases, landlords do not need cause to not renew a lease — something I know Councilmember Herbold is working on, and I would like to learn more about this well. Additionally, we need to work on landlord education and enforcement so that landlords are aware of and follow the laws surrounding qualifications for renting. We need to do a better job of educating renters on their rights, landlords on their obligations, and, in conjunction with this, we need to make it much easier to report abuses of the system so that violations will not go unaddressed. Seattle can continue to lead with an innovative and bold system that protects renters.

8. In 2018, the consulting firm McKinsey and Company conducted an extensive analysis of the current crisis response and homeless housing programs in Seattle and King County. They found that our region dramatically under-invests in housing and other system-wide responses, while the numbers of people experiencing homelessness grows. They found that between 2014 and 2017, the number of households accessing homelessness services grew by an average 11 percent a year, while funding grew by an average 2.4 percent a year.
The McKinsey analysis estimated an additional investment of between $360 and $410 million per year for at least ten years is required to make and maintain progress in solving homelessness. Such added resources would bring our community in line with sister cities and counties addressing homelessness and affordable housing crises. What are three specific revenue options (local, regional, and state) you would use to generate the necessary funds to fill the gap between current local, state, and federal dollars, and the housing and service system investments required to do the job for Seattle and King County residents experiencing homelessness?

In order to come up with more funds on the local level, I believe that the city government should get creative. For example, the city should consider waiving building permit fees, expediting siting decisions, and persuading the state legislature to waive the sales tax on new construction for facilities serving the chronically homeless. This could significantly lower the costs for more housing, and speed up building. Additionally, I don’t believe that the city should be relying on drawing more money from property taxes — we need to stop continually increasing Seattleites’ property taxes in order to fund housing investments. New funding options for this strategy have just become available. HB 1406, passed this legislative session, grants Washington cities the authority to withhold .0146% of their sales tax revenue - money that would otherwise go to the state — for 20 years and use the money for affordable housing development. This may not seem like much, but .0146% of Seattle’s 2017 sales tax revenue is $3.8 million. We are authorized to bond against this revenue as well, which would allow us to quickly generate tens of millions of dollars for affordable housing at no net cost to Seattle residents. One program that has already been implemented on the King County level is One Table, which was brought together leaders of government and business with service and healthcare providers and those experiencing homelessness to come up with solutions to the homelessness crisis. This initiative, created by Executive Dow Constantine, Seattle Mayor Jenny Durkan, and Auburn Mayor Nancy Backus, was designed to assess and address the underlying causes of homelessness in King County through extensive research and evidence-based solutions. While this initiative did not yield much, I believe that with proper funding, it could help the county find the direct contributors to homelessness, and allow us to spend our funds in a much more targeted
manner, therefore allowing us to have more funding left over to address homelessness on the city and state levels. There are many untapped opportunities for state-level revenue options — our state has the nation’s most regressive tax code, and I believe that corporations and our wealthiest households need to be paying their fair share. To solve our homelessness crisis so that we can enjoy all Seattle has to offer, we’re going to need all hands on deck, and that includes more resources from our high-earning households. Those that have more should give more — whether they are businesses or individuals. I envision a state where no one is too poor to live, no one has to sleep outside, where local businesses can thrive and flourish in their communities, and where large employers hire local workers and invest back in our state by paying a fair share in taxes. I envision a City where young adults who grew up here aren’t priced out because of a lack of affordable housing, and retirees aren’t priced out because of property taxes. To achieve this vision and specifically to raise new revenue for housing and homelessness, I would ask the State Legislature to transition to a new tax structure by a) instituting a progressively leveled income tax, b) instituting a capital gains tax, c) lowering property taxes for low and fixed-income residents, d) evaluating and adjusting impact fees as needed so housing that is developed for well-off residents is balanced with housing for low-income residents so they can live in their desired communities, and e) closing corporate loopholes and reforming our B&O tax to focus on profits over gross receipts so we are taxing wealth instead of low-profit margin businesses and local stores. I am proud to be a leader as a candidate in the area of striving for affordable housing for all, and I am proud to have the sole, unanimous endorsement of the Washington Housing Alliance Action Fund, the state’s largest affordable housing advocacy group.

9. Seattle and King County are in the midst of a child care crisis because child care is expensive and unaffordable for many working families. At the same time, some child care providers cannot afford to pay workers a living wage and stay in business. What ideas do you have for solutions?

Access to affordable child care is essential for promoting gender equity, rebuilding the middle class, family and job stability, and not perpetuating a cycle of poverty where low-income families are financially punished for having children. In Seattle we’ve seen that
child care costs can outweigh rent — and our rents are already high. Seattle already has a nationally recognized early learning-Pre-K program, and we must continue to generously fund this program to maximize its impact. We must also have adequate child care facilities, including providing more condensed support to parents and children through altering zoning laws to permit child care facilities, libraries, and grocery stores on the same block. On the federal level, we’re a long way away from adequate support, so it’s our responsibility as a local government to make universal child care and preschool a reality in Seattle. I’d support opening city-contracted child care facilities funded by progressive tax measures, such as a leveled income tax, and this should enable facilities to offer living-wage employment and strong employee benefits. I’m proud to have been endorsed by SEIU 925, as well as other unions with working families who would benefit from this approach.

10. Survivors of gender-based violence frequently enter the criminal justice system due to their victimization, but criminal justice responses are woefully inadequate and problematic for most survivors for a variety of reasons, especially Black, indigenous, and other survivors of color, refugee and immigrant survivors; and gender non-conforming survivors. What specific solutions will you bring forward for addressing issues of gender-based violence in our city? What mechanisms would you employ to shift the structural oppression and racism, specifically in criminal justice institutions?

Throughout my career, I have treated many patients of gender-based violence, and connected them to the services they need to recover, both mentally and physically. I have witnessed first-hand the cycle of gender, domestic, and sexual violence and abuse perpetuating and leading to poverty, and even eventually causing homelessness. While there are many programs already helping with these issues, the city needs to do a better job helping the victims of gender violence, particularly sexual assault, get the proper care and treatment that they need. For example, Seattle’s Bias Crime Unit and the SPD’s Safe Place Program have been particularly good at helping members of the LGBTQ+ community who have been victims of gender violence. While these programs have been incredibly helpful for victims of gender violence, we need to build on the start
represented by the Safe Places program, the city’s mandated transgender training for police, and the proposals put forward by the LGBTQ Task Force. In particular, we can use Neighborhood Matching Funds for projects that promote LGBTQ safety, funnel more resources to social service providers that work with LGBTQ youth, and improve interventions that provide housing to transgender homeless youth who are at greater risk of violence. Additionally, there are still many programs that are woefully underfunded. One such example is the Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner Program (SANE), which is an examination and rape kit performed by a specially trained nurse. We need more people trained to perform these exams and help more victims of gender-based violence. As well, the Harborview Center for Sexual Assault & Traumatic Stress, where every person who comes into the ER or clinic who has been sexual assaulted is sent, needs more funding, as they are not currently equipped to deal with every patient they are being sent. There are also many immigrants and refugees being affected by a lack of adequate trained professionals. Staff should be appropriately trained on cultural sensitivity, and have folks on-site or through tech contracts that can serve as translators. Specifically, those seeking asylum because of gender violence and/or sexual abuse need an exam performed to complete their asylum. These refugees often have to wait for months and months for the tests to be performed, as there aren’t enough medical professionals trained to complete them, which indefinitely delays their asylum. All of these programs need more funding and training programs so that we can better help victims of gender violence and raise awareness about this issue. In order to shift structural racism in the criminal justice system, I would like to end the criminalization of poverty, which unfairly targets those with low income and minorities. We need to make the failure to pay fees and fines a civil offense instead of a criminal one, and end the practice of money bail, which not only targets people of low income and color in our communities, but also prevents them from earning income, leading to the loss of jobs and housing.

11. Describe how you would represent your constituents to ensure there is a pathway to emergency food services for all who need it. What policies and investments would you support so that residents across Seattle and King County have equal access to adequate, culturally appropriate, healthy food?
That anyone should suffer from food insecurity in a region as wealthy as ours is a perverse injustice. We know a lot about the incidence of food insecurity in our region. We know it impacts over 10% of adults and 20% of families in Seattle. It tracks class, race, and LGBTQ status, of course, and disproportionately impacts families with young children. It is concentrated in South Seattle, particularly along the Duwamish waterway, but can be found in pockets throughout the city. It is increasing fastest in Seattle neighborhoods that are the farthest north or farthest south, and among older Seattle residents and homeless residents. As a doctor, it’s been my job to educate my patients about healthy eating, but they are often living in poverty, and their responses really put everything into perspective. As a professor I’ve taught residents and students that that when it comes to health education around food choices with the underserved, they will often hear, “why would I spend two hours round-trip to get to the grocery store, because we don’t have one in our neighborhood, and have to lug them back alone? Why should I spend $40 on groceries and an hour cooking, when I get home at 7pm from work and McDonalds can feed my entire family on $10?” You can’t argue with that when our system allows folks to make wages that can’t cover the cost of rent, makes eating unhealthy cheaper, and doesn’t provide general and culturally appropriate grocery stores in all areas. As a professor, I’ve had to teach my students that these are the injustices their patients face. As a City Councilmember, I will to take on those injustices. Many neighborhoods don’t have a supermarket for residents to shop at, and instead, they must purchase their food at the local corner store, leading to unhealthy diets and undernutrition. This issue especially affects the homeless and those without a car, because they can’t travel to access healthier and more sufficient food. This was one of the core issues we focused on when founding Global to Local in South King County earlier this decade. Our city needs to do a better job of providing for people who are living in these situations. One way we can do so is to increase the number of locations of, capacity of, and supplies for food banks throughout the city. We can also explore expanding the practices of food banks, such as more mobile food banks/food delivery programs. While some food banks are already doing so, their resources are sadly limited, and other food banks don’t have the ability to travel at all. We also know that to address food insecurity in Seattle we will have better support our local network of food banks. Our region is served by a few large non-profit food providers (e.g., Northwest Harvest, Food Lifeline) that distribute food to food banks throughout Seattle. These local food banks distribute food to people in need, deliver food to homes, and do their best to ensure they have food that is nutritious and culturally appropriate for the communities they serve. These food banks are in desperate need of additional funding. They need
money to buy supplemental food, for staffing, space, and operational costs, and for vehicles to deliver food throughout the community. The City of Seattle is generating enough Sweetened Beverage Tax revenue to shore up our local food bank network. As a Councilmember I will intently explore increasing funding for our food banks. By providing more funding to these organizations and programs, we can ensure that all residents of Seattle have access to one of the most basic human needs: food. I’m also excited about the Fresh Bucks program that Seattle has started, which gives SNAP/EBT recipients greater access to fresh fruits and vegetables by doubling their spending capacity at farmer’s markets and neighborhood grocers.

12. According to a 2017 FBI report, nationwide reports of hate crimes increased by 17% from 2016 to 2017; by 32% in Washington State, and 198% in Seattle. Within Washington State, 38% of reported hate crimes were in Seattle. The City Auditor analyzed data that reported hate crimes doubled from 2014 to 2016 and doubled again from 2016 to 2018. 54% of the crimes related to race/ethnicity and 32% sexual orientation. What are your ideas for responding to hate crime in our region without criminalizing communities of color?

Seattle has some of the strongest hate crimes laws in the country, and our police department has already worked very hard on the programs that address and respond to hate crimes in the city. We need to keep our leadership on that issue by strengthening the SPD’s Bias Crimes Unit and its Refugee Women’s Institute, as well as increasing outreach into the Seattle community, and implementing the City Auditor’s recommendations from their second hate crimes report, including improving the way SPD documents hate crime data. I will listen to my neighbors and all communities to look for improved ways to protect our most vulnerable. Anything we can do to improve trust between the police and the community will go a long way, so I also believe we should strive for improved community policing.
13. As a city, we have moved to district representation. However, the needs of our residents are not necessarily most efficiently and effectively addressed by district. Nonprofit services most often cross multiple districts and people who make use of the services interact with providers throughout the city. How will you work to represent both the needs of your district as well as Seattle as a whole?

Throughout my life’s work, I have always prioritized serving those who are the most in need, and if elected to the City Council, I would continue to do just that — whether they are in my district or not. I like that we switched to district representation because it means folks have a more direct voice on the Council. City council campaigns are now more likely to be won by the folks who are talking to voters the most in-person, and who have deep community roots, not just those who know the right donors and wealthy interest groups. It also sets us up to be more intentional about listening to individual constituents’ concerns, which I think is our responsibility. However, our City’s issues don’t stop at our district borders, and neither do our service providers. Elected officials tend to find specific subject matters, through their committees, that they can focus in on, and I’d intend to do that. Since my background is in health care and social services, I’d like to bring the connections I already have with our local community health advocates, and make new ones, to seriously address our addiction and mental health crises.

14. Will you support an automatic annual inflation adjustment tied to the CPI-W for the City's human services contracts so providers can maintain current levels of service as costs of doing business increase?

Yes, this is essential to being able to continue providing services and paying our human service providers living wages.