



## **Jessica Bateman Urbanist Questionnaire 2024**

State Senate, LD22

**Do you think Washington state should have an income tax (yes/no)? If yes, what is the legislative path? If not, what forms of progressive revenue would you champion?**

Washington is now home to the second most regressive tax code in the nation. It was dead last until we passed a capital gains tax a couple years ago. We currently do not have income tax, which means lower income earners pay a disproportionate amount of taxes compared to high income earners. I support a progressive income tax with multiple rates that go up the higher the income. Our constitution puts limits on the amount property can be taxed and the Supreme Court has held that income constitutes property. In addition, the uniformity clause limits progressive taxation. I support a Wealth Tax which we can use to make our tax system more fair.

**How would you vote on a transit-oriented development bill without an explicit affordability mandate and why?**

I voted in support of the TOD bill in 2024, which included an affordability requirement. The bill did not pass the legislature this year and will be brought forward again. The bill will now apply to the 2029 planning cities, so we have some time to craft a good bill that balances requiring cities to allow denser housing near transit while also infusing affordability as construction occurs. I support requiring cities to offset the cost of affordability requirements by offering a MFTE and other offsets like reducing impact fees.



**Do you support the rent stabilization and renter protection bill (HB 2114) that made it through the State House last year? If so, how would you approach ensuring its passage in both chambers?**

I co-sponsored HB 2114 and voted in support of it on the House floor. I look forward to working with my Senate colleagues next year on the housing committee to ensure the bill passes.

**What are the highest priority items on your housing agenda?**

The Housing Accountability Act - we must provide oversight and accountability for cities to actually make it legal and 'feasible' to build diverse housing (ADUs, PSH, middle housing and co-living). TOD - it is essential that we allow denser housing near transit to achieve our housing and climate goals. Eliminate minimum parking requirements - its time to prioritize people over parking. Neighborhood cafes - we need to allow these businesses to create more livable walkable communities!

**What's your roadmap to fixing educational inequities in Washington state? How can Washington state comply with its constitutional duties regarding education, especially in light of several school districts including Seattle's contemplating school closures to grapple with deficits?**

We must reform the state's finance system to prioritize under-resourced districts. We should reform the Prototypical School Funding Model which is based predominantly on enrollment, to be weighted so that students who are multi-language learners or come from low-income households are weighted more heavily in enrollment counts, generating more state investment. Other opportunities include: reforming the levy lid system to ensure commercial entities pay their fair share without overburdening



residential property owners, especially within higher-poverty school districts; and further examine the impacts of the experience mix.

**What share of the state's transportation budget should be for alternatives to cars, such as transit, biking, and pedestrian infrastructure?**

We must invest significantly more into alternative transportation options. In order to do that we must reform the way we fund transportation project in our State. I don't have an exact percentage, but it's much higher than the status quo.

**Do you support permitting jurisdictions to choose to hold elections in even years? What other election reforms excite you?**

I do and I've supported the bill.

**Due to the interventions of ballot-initiative-monger Tim Eyman and a state legislature that caved to him even after a lawsuit overturned the measure in 2007, Washington State has a 1% cap on property tax increases, greatly tying the hands of local governments and forcing them to use ballot measures to fund basic services. Do you think this cap should remain? If so, what tools will you give local governments to deal with the fiscal cliff they're facing?**

As a former city council member, I understand the detrimental impact of our 1% cap on property tax increases. It impedes our ability to invest in vibrant communities and a robust safety net. I support eliminating the cap.