



## **Joe Fitzgibbon Urbanist Questionnaire 2024**

State Representative, LD34, Position 2

**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?**

Yes, I support a state income tax. I think the legislative path either requires the Supreme Court to overturn its ruling in the 1935 case *Culliton v Chase* that income is property or a bipartisan, revenue-neutral tax reform package that implements an income tax and lowers other taxes. Neither of these options seems likely in the short term, so in the meantime I support increasing other revenue streams we already have that are progressive, like the estate tax and the capital gains tax.

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

I would support a transit-oriented development bill even without an inclusionary zoning requirement. I believe our affordability policies should be applied broadly so as to not inadvertently disincentivize housing production in areas well-served by transit and other infrastructure.

**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 support, cosponsored, voted for, and whipped votes for HB 2114. I am confident in its chances of success in 2025 given the changes we expect in the Senate.

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

Rent stabilization, transit-oriented development, eliminating parking minimums, continued SEPA reform

**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?**

Ultimately, eliminating inequities between school districts requires shifting more property taxing authority from the district level to the state level so the state can distribute allocations to districts based on student populations and need. This is likely a long term project. In the short term, the state should raise revenue in 2025 and use it to increase allocations to districts via the prototypical school model, funding for student transportation, and the special education multiplier.

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

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I use a policy framework rather than an arbitrary percentage to guide my thinking on this topic. Because the gas tax is constitutionally restricted from being spent on non-highway infrastructure, I support keeping the gas tax as the only fund source for



highways, with a strong priority for maintenance and preservation over new construction. Other than the highways that are currently programmed, I do not see a need for significant additional highway construction in Washington in the future. Of our other revenue streams, the flexible streams that populate the Multimodal Account should be prioritized for non-car transportation investments, and our CCA revenues should remain dedicated to investments that reduce greenhouse gas emissions - non-car investments as well as EV charging infrastructure.

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

Yes. I also support reducing the number of offices subject to election, like water and sewer districts, irrigation districts, and airport districts, to reduce voter fatigue.

**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](#)?**

I strongly support eliminating the 1% cap on property tax increases, which serves as a ratchet to shrink government revenues relative to inflation each year and has caused crippling budget crises at local governments, particularly counties.