



AFT Washington 2022 Candidate Questionnaire

About AFT Washington

AFT Washington represents approximately 6,500 education professionals working in community and technical colleges, regional universities, early learning, and K-12. Our members work with all ages of students, from young children in pre-K education settings to adults in higher education, as well as all facets of education. Our members are bus drivers, maintenance workers, faculty, paraeducators, food service workers, custodians, success coaches, grounds crew members, and more.

Together, with our members and national organization, we advocate and fight for:

- Safe, welcoming, and thriving neighborhood schools for every student, and high-quality, affordable post-high school opportunities to fulfill our paramount duty to help all students succeed, at every level;
- Economic and advancement opportunities for everyone;
- Affordable, high-quality healthcare for everyone;
- Democracy, pluralism, and voting rights by involving the voices of students, parents, and the community, side-by-side with educational employees and elected officials;
- Racial, social, financial, and civic equity, and fighting back against discrimination, hatred, and bigotry.

We hope you will take this opportunity to complete the questionnaire below and allow us to better understand your candidacy. Completing the questionnaire is required for consideration of endorsement or possible campaign contributions. If our Committee on Political Education (COPE) decides they would like further information, we may ask you to participate in an interview.

To be considered, return your completed questionnaire via email, by close of business, on March 25th to aftwashington@aftwa.org. If you have questions, please leave a message at 206-242-4777.

Candidate Biographical Information

Name: CINDY RYU

Candidate for which office: REPRESENTATIVE, 32ND LD POS 1

Party affiliation: DEMOCRATIC PARTY

Political background (offices held or currently hold, offices ran for, party positions, etc.):

- State Representative 6 terms
- Shoreline City Council & Mayor

Community or organizational memberships (past and present):

- Shoreline Chamber of Commerce – Former Board and President
- Community and Economic Revitalization Board – Former Member
- Overseas Korean Politicians Council – Former Chair
- Women In Government – Board and President
- Pacific Northwest Economic Region – Delegate
- Washington Tourism Marketing Authority – Member
- WA State Recreation and Conservation Office Advisory Committee – Member
- Pacific Northwest Coast Presbytery Nominating Committee – Co-Moderator
- Pacific Northwest Coast Presbytery Executive Presbyter Nominating Committee – Co-Moderator

Current occupation: Legislator

Current employer: State of Washington

Are you currently a member of a labor organization? Yes

If yes, which labor organization, and how long have you been a member?

AFSCME Council 28 WFSE Local 341; 12 years

If not currently a member of a labor organization, have you ever been?

If yes, which labor organization, when, and for how long?

General

1. Why are you running for this elective office?

I have earned the support of the voters of the 32nd Legislative District the past 6 campaigns, most recently winning by 70+% winning over a Democratic challenger. I serve as one of 20 chairs of committees in the House as chair of the Community and Economic Development Committee and have a proven record of passing bills successfully, such as HB 1815 Deterring Catalytic Converter Thefts. I also serve on the powerful Appropriations Committee and the Consumer Protection & Business Committee.

I want to return to the Legislature to continue to work on increasing broadband access for more Washingtonians, strengthen our economy, reduce the housing shortage and increase affordable homeownership, as well as increase access to outdoor recreation opportunities for our diverse communities and kids.

2. What qualities distinguish you from other candidates for this office?

I do not have a declared challenger, but the qualities that would distinguish me would be my experience as a successful legislator, reputation as a productive team member of the House Democratic Caucus, and respected as a leader on several policy issues.

Revenue and Education

1. For decades Washington State has had the most regressive tax system in the country, contributing to underfunding of public education and many other investments in the public good. The pandemic has highlighted the numerous gaps in education funding that persist, for example in the form of the digital divide, the need for wrap-around services, stagnant wages, etc. When new funding is

allocated, it is often for specific populations of students or specific programs and in relatively small sums. How will you approach finding new sources of revenue to both invest in Washingtonians and create a more progressive revenue system?

Do you support...

	Yes	No
Capital Gains Tax?	X	
Wealth Tax?	X	
Estate Tax?	X	
Elimination of cap on Workforce Education Investment Account tax?	X	

2. During the pandemic, many Washingtonians have lost their jobs and been evicted from their homes. The poverty rate has increased during the pandemic, particularly for BIPOC Americans. In the 2022 legislative session, a bill was introduced that would have given cash assistance to those below the poverty line with a stipend, also known as Universal Basic Income or Guaranteed Basic Income. What is your position on this policy? Do you believe it can help address the racial wealth gap?

I support this policy, as I believe it can help address the racial wealth gap.

3. Public education, from K-12 through Post-High School has seen state disinvestment for several decades. What will you do to increase the funding of community and technical colleges in order to invest in the workforce? Do you support pay equity for part-time faculty?

In both Appropriations Committee and on floor votes, I have advocated for and voted for increased funding of community and technical colleges because we need to invest in appropriately trained workforce – especially when it is so challenging to recruit and retain a well-trained staff. With the silver tsunami of retirements, we must also support pay equity for part-time faculty.

4. Pre-K 12 employees work with students dealing with a wide range of issues outside of school, e.g. trauma, behavioral challenges, developmental disabilities, health issues and more. This can pose safety issues, for example for paraeducators who are often hit, bitten, shoved or in other ways harmed because of student behavior. Many factors contribute to this phenomenon, which translates to a range of potential solutions. How would you approach problem solving if a group of workers sought your support in addressing this issue?

I approach problem-solving by listening first and then asking agencies and others to check the facts while eliciting help of my colleagues who have more expertise in the subject matter. I like to convene the stakeholders to explore and decide on solutions together. I have supported the multi-year efforts by education leaders such as Rep. Sharon Santos, Rep. Monica Stonier, and Rep. Lillian Ortiz-Self to improve and better fund our PreK-12 schools.

When workers and school board members alerted me to lack of subs, I reached out to Rep. Steve Bergquist to allow retirees to work more hours. When Shoreline Community College staff alerted me to the potential demise of the Dental Hygienist program with the demolition of their building, I worked with Rep. Gerry Pollet and others to make sure college leadership found a home for the program if they wanted the capital funds for the new building.

- In recent years public officials have attempted to solve budget problems through privatization of public services. This diversion of public funds has led to a poor quality of services, reduced accountability, and a loss of good jobs, while failing to realize the promise of saving money. What is your position on privatization in the education arena? Please explain.

I believe public funds should stay within public control, oversight, and accountability.

Do you support...

	Yes	No
Public tax dollars funding private charter schools?		X
Privatization of school and college resources (i.e. counseling, childcare, student services)?		X
Public Capitol Funds for projects at private colleges and universities?		X

Collective Bargaining

- Many Washingtonians recognize the value of union representation and are organizing at their workplace, such as legislative aides in Olympia, workers at Starbucks, etc. Do you support every worker's right to collectively bargain for better working conditions, and their right to join a union? Please explain.

Yes. My family's experience as immigrants was that my Dad, a welder, was represented and so he was paid well, had regular breaks, medical benefits and retirement benefits. He was able to keep working until age 70. On the other hand, my Mom, as an unrepresented piece-work seamstress, earned about a third of what he earned, had no regular breaks, and no benefits nor retirement pay. She was so worn out she could not work beyond age 50.

My daughter who is a schoolteacher in Southern California benefited from being represented. She also had extensive benefits when she had a baby recently. She could not return safely to the classroom during the pandemic with an unvaccinated child. To know that she had 5 years to return to work gave her a peace of mind – though she most likely will return to the classroom soon after my grandchild is eligible to be vaccinated.

- We see ongoing attempts to weaken unions and diminish working conditions here in Washington State and at the federal level. What policies can support unions and workers' rights and how will you work to enact such policies?

I have been relying on the weekly off-campus Labor-Legislator meetings during the Sessions and Rep. Mike Sells and his Democratic committee members to lead us by introducing policies to strengthen our pro-labor policies. I will support recruitment and mentoring of labor-friendly candidates while serving on the Executive Committee of HDCC.

Social Justice

- What do you see as your role as a state official in addressing racial, social, and economic inequities in our educational system? Please specifically address each issue.

I served as Chair of the House Democratic Members of Color Caucus when we were as few as 6 members. Now that we at 19 and a full third of the House Democratic Caucus, I work with members and their bills: As chair of Community and Economic Development Committee, I successfully moved HB 1723 Closing the digital equity divide by increasing the accessibility and affordability of telecommunications services, devices, and training (Gregerson) through the House, which is on the Governor's desk for his signature. I also worked extensively on HB 1827 Creating the community reinvestment account and community reinvestment program (Morgan). Even though it stalled in the Senate, we were able to increase the requested \$125M investment to \$200M in the adopted Supplemental Operating Budget.

As the convener of the Outdoor Recreation Roundtable for 2 years, and now as a co-chair of the Outdoor Recreation Caucus, I have been advocating for increasing access for diverse communities and increasing diversity in their leadership. Washington Trails Association since then has developed an Outdoor Leadership Training program for school-age youth and we successfully funded a pilot program of Emerging Leaders Program: Expanding Equity in the Outdoors in State Parks.

2. We are faced with numerous threats to social justice, including ongoing threats to our immigrant communities, the housing affordability and student debt crises, police accountability, and more. Where have you shown leadership and acted on issues of social justice in the past? What will your social justice priorities be if you win your election?

I represent the constituents of the 32nd LD, but as one of the few immigrants in the Legislature and only Korean American, I am expected to also represent the communities of color. In the past we funded services for undocumented Washingtonians on the backend of the budget; now we're able to discuss them more freely. With the establishment of the Community Reinvestment Account and its significant funding, we can start to address reparation and community/economic development for the Black community members. I will continue to work on increasing affordable housing units, increasing public broadband, and access to outdoor recreation while also supporting small businesses owned or operated by persons of color and their access to capital. I will also support Members of Color Caucus in our combined efforts toward social justice.

3. Several bills were passed in the 2021 legislative session designed to reduce police violence and hold police accountable; in the 2022 session attempts were made to dilute the definition of excessive force and minimizing the role of de-escalation. What is your position on these issues?

In 2016 I introduced HB 2908 establishing the joint legislative task force on community policing standards for a safer Washington. Much work has been done since then by many others including the 2021 suite of legislation. I believe more work needs to be done and I will continue to advocate for de-escalation.

4. Hate crimes have risen 25 percent nationally since 2015. But the number of hate crimes in Washington state increased by 97 percent. There were 542 hate-crime incidents reported statewide. How do you plan on addressing the increase in hate crimes in Washington state?

As an older Asian female who is still masking, I have been targeted. I've spoken up and stepped up to push back against haters.

Campaign Information

Are there any additional comments you would like to provide that you believe are necessary in understanding your candidacy?

Notwithstanding my service on their Executive Board for nearly 15 years and as one of their highest donors, I now have detractors within the 32nd Legislative Democratic Organization whose members fielded a challenger against me in 2020. Because of their endorsement of my opponent, I was not able to garner any Democratic organizations' endorsements, but I still won the General Election over their endorsed candidate 71.6% to 26.7%.

I fully expect another similar challenge this year.

What is your overall campaign budget? \$100,000.

How many volunteers are currently working on your campaign? What is your goal for volunteers working on your campaign?

I have not recruited volunteers yet, but I expect at least a dozen volunteers. If I have a serious Democratic challenger, I will recruit another 20 or so as well as a full time campaign manager. Unfortunately, that will take \$s away from my ability to surplus to HDCC to help those in swing districts.

To date, how much money have you raised and obtained pledges for?

I already have \$45,000 cash in my campaign fund and expect to raise another \$20,000 by Primary Election.

Please provide any endorsements you have received:

- Mountlake Terrace Mayor Kyoko Matsumoto Wright
- Lynnwood Mayor Chris Frizzell
- Hon. Ruth Kagi

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Campaign & Personal Cell 206-605-1588

Email address: friendsforcindyryu@yahoo.com

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