

# 38<sup>TH</sup> LD DEMOCRATS ENDORSEMENT REQUEST QUESTIONNAIRE- 2018

Candidate Name: *Adam Cornell*

Office Sought: *Snohomish County Prosecuting Attorney*

## Endorsement Committee Background Information Findings

Workup completed by: **Greg Lineberry**

Adam is running for Snohomish County Prosecutor. Mark Roe will not run again and has endorsed Adam. Adam is currently a prosecutor. At this time I have not heard of anyone else considering running. He has previously served as a Democratic PCO but other than that he has not previously run for office.

A check of Votebuilder shows a strong voting record. Going back to 2002 he has only missed voting in one election (the 2013 primary).

Votebuilder shows Adam as "Strong Democrat" with a score of 345 Dem Points and 0 Rep Points.

A search of the PDC site shows Adam is a very active contributor to Democratic candidates and PACs. Contributions date back many years and include known Democrats: John Lovick, Sonya Kraski, Strom Peterson, Rod Dembowski, Judge Dingley, Gov. Inslee, Mark Roe, Janice Ellis, and Ruth Kagi. PAC donations include "A Safer Snohomish County", "Children's Campaign Fund", "WA Senate Democrats Campaign 2017", and "House Democrats Campaign Committee 2016." I did find one contribution Adam made to Dave Earling for the Edmonds mayor's race. Dave is careful to avoid a party affiliation for the non-partisan Edmonds mayor's position, but he is rated strong Republican and ran for county executive as a Republican.

I made a check of endorsements Adam lists on his webpage. These include his own union (prosecutor's office) and the state AFSCME organization. Adam also lists numerous well-known Democrats to include former Govs Gregoire and Locke, and first lady Trudi Inslee. At the county level, Democrats Dave Sommers, Terry Ryan, Steph Wright, and Brian Sullivan have endorsed. There are a host of state legislators and local elected officials that have also endorsed. I recognize the vast majority of these people as Democrats. Only two Republicans were on the list that I recognized: Gary Haakenson and Ray Stephanson (in fairness Stephanson self-identifies as a "business Democrat").

I didn't find anything remarkable or unexpected on social media.

There are a lot of news articles related to Adam, but that is not unexpected due to his job as a prosecutor. The only article that stood out was a recent one when Adam was testifying in Olympia in support of strict gun legislation. According to the article he "snapped" at a gun rights supporter that was testifying against restrictions being proposed on assault rifles and rifles in general:

Gun rights supporters say rifles are used in only 3 percent of violent crimes as opposed to handguns. Gun instructor Brett Bass testified, "Violent crimes are overwhelmingly committed with handguns, and when we start talking about good policy we have to understand that good policy addresses the majority case and not the marginal one."

Adam Cornell, Snohomish County deputy prosecutor snapped back: "And I want every single member of the committee to know that there was nothing marginal about Anna, Jake and Jordan. There was nothing marginal about those lives." He was referring to those killed in the Mukilteo shooting.

So yes, we know that Adam is a strong supporter of reasonable gun restrictions in the interest of public safety, particularly when it comes to school safety and children's safety.

Adam 's wife Whitney (strong Democrat) is running his campaign. He has hired/recruited a number of young democrats to assist with the campaign.

As I believe everyone is aware of from his discussion at the general membership meeting of the 38<sup>th</sup> LD, Adam had concerns about two areas of I-940: the inclusion of a subjective good faith standard and the broad requirement for independent investigations. The subjective standard was removed from the final legislation (a good move in my opinion but I won't go into that here) and the independent investigation was left to be defined by the Criminal Justice Training Commission. Because I knew this to be an issue for us I asked him about his feelings on the legislation when he submitted the request. He said that with those changes he said he supports the legislation and his issues/concerns were addressed.

That covers my background checks on this candidate.

Please review the request and post any comments or concerns you want other committee members to be aware of. Ultimately, when you are ready, please respond "to all" and let us know your position:

- I am ready to recommend that general membership endorse the candidate.  
OR
- I am ready to recommend that the general membership not endorse the candidate.  
OR
- I am ready to remain neutral and recommend that a decision go to the body with no recommendation one way or another.  
OR
- I need more information (include questions) before deciding.  
OR
- I want to have a meeting to discuss further and/or ask the candidate questions before we make a recommendation to general membership.

I won't routinely inquire about a sole endorsement. Once we have agreed to give an endorsement recommendation to the body if you want the endorsement committee to consider also recommending a sole endorsement you will need to ask me to poll our committee members as to that question. This would be presented to the body as a secondary recommendation if it passes our committee .

The candidates answers to our questions follow.

1. Why are you running for this office?

***I am running for Snohomish County Prosecuting Attorney to give back to my community by creating safe and livable communities and to honor those who have given me so much. I have dedicated my life to public service and volunteerism. Both as a 15-year Deputy Prosecuting Attorney (DPA) and as an advocate for children and families. I spent much of my early life in our state's foster care system. That experience motivates much of my passion for the position of Prosecuting Attorney.***

2. What is your work/volunteer history in regard to public and community service (to include membership in community/charity/service organizations)?

***Having served as a Deputy Prosecuting Attorney in the Snohomish County Prosecuting Attorney's Office for the last 15 years, I have prosecuted a wide array of cases, including aggravated murder, other violent crimes, sexual assaults, domestic violence crimes, and property crimes. Notably, I was one of the prosecutors who prosecuted the gunman in the Mukilteo mass shooting that occurred in July of 2016.***

***I was also appointed as a Special Assistant United States Attorney during my time in the office. During that time, I prosecuted complex federal cases that originated or had a significant nexus in our county. Finally, I have supervised other Deputy Prosecuting Attorneys since approximately October 2014. I served as the District Court Supervisor until March of 2017 and I currently supervise our special task force prosecutors.***

***With regard to my non-profit board service, I am currently on the board directors of the Seattle Repertory Theatre, Edmonds Community College Foundation, and Victim Support Services. I am on the Advisory Board of the Center for Children and Youth Justice. I am a past board member of the Child Welfare***

***League of America, Snohomish County Boys & Girls Clubs, Children's Campaign Fund, and Public Interests Works (formerly the National Association of Public Interest Law).***

***I have served as a gubernatorially-appointed Commissioner (and then Chair) of a state commission. I was appointed by former Governor Gary Locke, and later former Governor Christine Gregoire, to the Washington State Commission for National and Community Service (now ServeWashington). I served as Chair under Governor Gregoire. I also served as a United States Peace Corps Volunteer in Guyana, South America. I was assigned to work with incarcerated youth.***

***I am regularly asked to speak at charity fundraising events about my life in foster care and my perspective about creating better communities. While a law student at Lewis & Clark College in Portland, Oregon I drafted and lobbied legislation to provide a mechanism for college scholarships to children aging out of the foster care system. That legislation became law in July of 2001.***

3. What qualifications/experience do you bring to this office?

***My long experience as a criminal DPA, my community advocacy on behalf of children and families, and my background growing up in our state's foster care system gives me a unique perspective on the criminal justice system. It is not lost on me that I could have easily ended up on the other side of the courtroom.***

4. Please list any Democratic clubs and/or organizations that you are a member of, including the length of time you have been a member and any leadership positions you have held in those clubs/organizations.

***I was a PCO for Edmonds 9 from 2006 to 2008. I have recently been attending LD meetings and events throughout Snohomish County. My wife and I have regularly supported Democratic candidates for public office and have recently given to both the state House and state Senate Democratic Campaign Committees. Additionally, we hosted a house party for Governor Inslee during his first election for Governor and one for Snohomish County Prosecuting Attorney Mark Roe.***

5. Who do you believe will be your main opponent(s) in the election.

***I do not yet have an opponent and I am not sure who might run against me.***

6. Please list your five most significant organizational endorsements to date and your five most significant personal endorsements to date.

**Organizational:**

***Snohomish County Sheriff and Police Chiefs' Association  
Washington State Council of County and City Employees, AFSME, AFL-CIO  
Snohomish County Prosecutors Local 1811-PA***

**Personal:\***

***Snohomish County Prosecuting Attorney Mark Roe  
Snohomish County Sheriff Ty Trenary  
Snohomish County Executive Dave Somers  
Snohomish County Councilmembers Sullivan, Ryan, and Wright  
Snohomish County Clerk Sonya Kraski  
First Lady Trudi Inslee***

***\*Very hard question. I have been endorsed by 11 current and former state senators and representatives, including Reps June Robinson, Mike Sells, John Lovick, Cindy Ryu, Lillian Ortiz-Self, Ruth Kagi, Strom Peterson, and Sens Liias and Palumbo. I have also been endorsed by former Governors Locke and Gregoire and Supreme Court Justice Bobbe Bridge. I have also been endorsed by the Mayors of Everett, Edmonds, Lynnwood, Mukilteo, and Woodway. Finally, I have been endorsed by Edmonds Police Chief Al Compaan and Lynnwood Police Chief Tom Davis.***

7. How much money has your campaign raised so far? Of that, how much of that is your own money (dollars, not percentage)?

***Approximately \$48,000 raised, of which, approximately \$2,100 has been my personal contribution.***

8. How much money do you expect your campaign will spend? How do you plan to raise the amount above and beyond what you have raised so far?

***Amount spent and raised will depend on who my opponent is. I have a campaign kickoff planned for March 21<sup>st</sup> and already have planned a number of small house parties throughout the region. I also plan call time throughout the campaign.***

9. Do you plan to have any paid campaign staff or use paid consultants, and have you included paid staff and consultants in your overall costs?

***I have hired Northwest Passage as my political consulting firm and plan to add a paid campaign assistant in the near future. Currently, my wife—who is a former international marketing executive—is managing the day to day operations of my campaign. I have included campaign staff costs in my budget.***

10. We live in a very diverse community. Our minority citizens are not fairly represented in employment and are far behind in prosperity. What are your accomplishments regarding diversity and economic equity and what are your goals regarding diversity, economic equity, and civil rights? How will you achieve those goals?

***In my community work I have been an outspoken voice for children and families on the margins, including people of color, who are disproportionately affected by economic inequity. As a U.S. Peace Corps Volunteer in Guyana, South America, I worked with African and Indian Guyanese youth who were incarcerated. In that work I assisted in the teaching them life skills to prepare them for eventual release. Also as a Peace Corps Volunteer, I worked with communities in developing asset-based community development strategies.***

***As a Deputy Prosecuting Attorney, I currently serve on the Juvenile Court Cultural Awareness Committee with Judge Eric Lucas and others. In my professional career I have prosecuted Malicious Harassment crimes that have been perpetrated against people of color. I have also helped to guide people of color who are victims of crime—who are often disproportionately represented in our criminal justice system—through the often complex and difficult challenges they face.***

***If elected Prosecutor, I would seek to expand outreach to the various specialty bar associations throughout the region in an effort to attract applicants from diverse backgrounds. I will also seek to fairly, firmly, and ethically strive to achieve justice for people of color who are both victims and accused.***

11. Opioid use and addiction is a significant and serious problem in our community. Describe what you will do to address the problem of opioid addiction and other drug abuse related issues (addiction, violence, crimes motivated by the use of drugs, treatment, safe injection sites).

*The opioid crisis needs to be addressed as the public health threat that it is. I support, where appropriate, expanding our alternative courts such as mental health court, drug court, veteran's court and the Prosecutor's Office Therapeutic Alternatives to Prosecution program. It is critical to address the underlying causes of why people commit crime to lessen the incidences of criminal conduct.*

*Snohomish County, with the leadership of Sheriff Trenary and Executive Somers, have already taken important steps to address the opioid crisis in our community. Their work in supporting the Diversion Center is laudable and I would support their efforts if elected. Further, it is worth considering whether the county should get involved in litigation against drug manufacturers.*

12. Crime, gang activity, and violent crime are significant issues in our district. Describe how you view the current crime problems and what steps, if any, you will take in the next two years to address those problems. If this requires additional funding, where should that funding come from.

*Protecting the community is the paramount duty of the Prosecuting Attorney. Violent criminals—including those gang affiliated—who would harm children and families and compromise the livability of our communities have to be fairly, firmly and ethically prosecuted.*

*Working toward helping at-risk youth in our community is important. Expanding positive opportunities for children on the margins through community organizations like the YMCA and Boys & Girls Clubs may keep children away from unhealthy lifestyles.*

*Additional funding for police and prosecutors may be necessary to serve the needs of community protection, but it is also important to educate and persuade the community to fund worthy non-profit programs.*

13. What should we do, if anything, to improve firearm safety and reduce firearms violence, particularly in regards to school shootings and mass shootings?

*Having prosecuted the gunman in the Mukilteo mass shooting in July of 2016—and having been present at the scene of the murders in the short hours after the killing—I have seen with my own eyes the carnage that results when an angry and jealous 19 year-old gets his hands on an assault rifle. Our laws must change.*

*While I am not in favor of banning guns it is important to balance Second Amendment rights with community safety considerations with regard to those under 21 and the mentally ill who are a risk to themselves and others.*

*During the last two legislative sessions, I have traveled to Olympia at the request of the Alliance for Gun Responsibility to speak out about the need for common sense gun legislation. During this past session, I testified before both the House and Senate on the Enhanced Weapons Background bills. My testimony was featured on the local NPR affiliate, King 5 television, and a front-page story in the Everett Herald. I have and will continue to be a champion for this cause.*

14. How should we respond to Republican efforts to eliminate the Affordable Health Care Act and reduce or eliminate access to medical insurance coverage for all persons?

***Personally, I would support Democratic efforts to resist change. I support health care for all and would personally support state legislation or initiatives that preserve health care access to everyone on our state.***

15. What are your thoughts about the mass enforcement of immigration violations? Sanctuary cities?

***I personally believe that there needs to be a path for citizenship. Mass enforcement is not in the best interests of our country and it is not fair to people that have worked and lived in the United States for many years while contributing to their communities and raising their families. I would use my position as prosecutor to encourage all cities to have policies that protect their residents from immigration inquiries when a person calls 911, or is a victim or witness to a crime, or registers for classes, uses a public library, participates in political discourse, signs up for public utility service, or engages in any other public activity that all residents are able to participate in. As a prosecutor I support and will continue to support the use of U-Visas to permit victims of crime (and their families) to enter or remain in the United States when they might not otherwise be able to do so.***

***I think it is reasonable and appropriate for local law enforcement agencies to make notifications to federal immigration authorities in situations where individuals have committed serious crimes, led or organized human trafficking, advanced or conspired in criminal gang activity, or created other serious threats to the public. But that should not extend to “low-level” crimes that don’t merit significant, if any, jail time upon conviction.***

16. What steps, if any, do you think need to be taken to improve voter turnout in the district, increase public involvement, and to reduce voter apathy?

***The Prosecutor is the legal advisor to the County Auditor, I would support efforts to expand voter turnout and would work hand in glove with her efforts to do so. I have committed my life to public service and have included in my public statements as a candidate the need to motivate and inspire people to get involved both in the public sector and the non-profit sector.***

17. What is your position on Charter Schools in Washington State? What changes would you advocate for in the public education system? How have you demonstrated leadership in public education policy and how will you do so if elected?

***The jurisdiction and subject matter for the question is outside of the office I seek. Nevertheless, it is important for people to know that I am a product of our state’s public education system. In large measure, I was able to thrive as a child in foster care because of dedicated teachers who often served as surrogate parents to me. My success could have never been achieved without some very wonderful and caring public school teachers.***

18. What environmental initiatives have undertaken, what have you accomplished, and what are your immediate environmental goals if elected?

***The Prosecutor is the legal advisor to the County. If elected, I and my staff would provide sound legal advice to the Executive, Council, and other departments with regard to environmental issues. I am a member of the National Audubon Society. As an amateur birder, I have participated in the Christmas Bird Count the last three years. To the extent that the county has jurisdiction over environmental crimes I would fairly, firmly, and ethically prosecute those who would seek to destroy our environment.***

19. Do you believe you lean more toward labor or more toward management? Do you have a history of union membership/union service? Describe your relations with labor and past labor related accomplishments.

***I am a proud union member and have been for more than 15 years. I am endorsed by the Washington State Council of County and City Employees, AFSME, AFL-CIO and my fellow Deputy Prosecutors, Snohomish County Prosecutors Local 1811-PA. While I have never served in a leadership position in my union I have long supported our efforts. It is critical to fairly support our union workers.***

20. List the milestones in your public service career that demonstrate Democratic ideals. List any actions or issues supported by Democrats that you did not support and explain your position on those issues that caused you to oppose.

***I have dedicated my life to public service and volunteerism. It is not lost on me that without the help of so many caring people and organizations—not to mention a social safety net that kept me feed, housed, and healthy—I would not have been able to achieve the success that I have. In essence, I am a product of Democratic ideals.***

***The milestones in my career that demonstrate Democratic ideals are too numerous to mention. Notably, I served as a U.S. Peace Corps Volunteer—a program created by President Kennedy, have served as a gubernatorially-appointed Commissioner to Serve Washington under two former governors, been honored with the State Bar Association’s Public Service Award, and the Norm Maleng Advocate for Youth Award from the Center for Children and Youth Justice. Finally, as a law student, I drafted and lobbied legislation that gave children exiting the foster care system a chance at going to college. That bill became law in 2001 in the State of Oregon.***

21. List three of your most significant accomplishments that you made in your most recent term as an elected official or, if never elected, your three most significant accomplishments in public service.

- 1. Serving the people of Snohomish County as a 15-year Deputy Prosecuting Attorney, day in and day out as a fair, firm, and ethical prosecutor;***
- 2. Drafting and lobbying legislation as a law student in Oregon to provide a mechanism for children aging out of the foster care system to get a college scholarship;***
- 3. Washington State Bar Association Public Service Award (2016)***

22. Describe the three “stretch goal” accomplishments you intend to achieve in your next term if elected.

***First, effectively work with the County Council to expand the ability of my office to protect the community by adding additional DPAs and support staff. Second, work to expand alternative courts, such as mental health court and drug court, where appropriate, to address the underlying causes of criminal behavior. Third, persuade the legislature to pass common sense gun legislation.***

23. The district has a large homeless population. The City of Everett has third lowest rate of home ownership in the state at 55.5% renter occupied (state average is 37.2%). Per capita income is one of the lowest in Snohomish County, and slightly above the state median (Everett \$25,102, state median \$22,632). Everett has the highest percentage of low-income residents in Snohomish County. With these facts in mind, what measures do you propose to balance the scales and bring greater opportunity for housing, home ownership and economic equity to Everett residents, particularly to minority citizens?

***Personally, I will continue to be a voice for progressive social justice programs and will speak out about the need to help children and families on the margins. Where appropriate, I will seek to expand alternatives to prosecution and continue to fairly, firmly, and ethically, prosecute the crime of Malicious Harassment where appropriate.***

24. What do you consider the major issue facing our community today, and how do you intend to address it?

*Lack of support for children on the margins of society is the major issue facing our community today. The opioid and mental health crises have led to significant increases in abuse and neglect of our most vulnerable population. A childhood in foster care taught me that a meaningful relationship with an adult is critical in creating a healthy community. But it also taught me that we have to be strong against those who would harm children. And where appropriate, innovative and empathetic toward those who are battling addiction and mental health issues and who want a better life for them and their children. If elected, I hope to bring to bear my unique perspective in a way that motivates members of our community to get involved to collaboratively address the challenges we together face.*

25. Finally, IS THERE ANYTHING ELSE YOU WOULD LIKE TO TELL US THAT YOU THINK WE SHOULD CONSIDER IN EVALUATION YOUR CANDIDACY?

*Please contact me if you have questions about my responses. I look forward to the honor of your endorsement.*

**Please attach a high-resolution photo (a “head shot”) along with your questionnaire.**

