



King County Democrats 2007 General Candidate Questionnaire

Name	Venus Velázquez	Position Sought	Seattle City Council - Position 3
Campaign Address	Venus for Seattle City Council P.O. Box 9100	Campaign Manager	Joanne Matsusaka
City	Seattle	Phone Number	206-450-3886
State	WA	Fax Number	
Zip Code	98109	E-mail Address	contact@venus4seattle.com
Precinct		Web Page	http://www.venus4seattle.com

Present Occupation Incumbent? How Long?	Public affairs consultant	COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION <i>(Leave Blank - For Committee Use Only)</i>
Employer	Self	
Union Affiliations	none	

WHAT RATINGS AND ENDORSEMENTS HAVE YOU RECEIVED?			
Legislative District(s)/Unions	Municipal League	Women's Political Caucus	SeaMEC
		Endorsed	

PLEASE ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS.					
#	Question	Yes	No	Qualified*	
1.	Are you a Democrat? Are you known as a Democrat? If not, explain.	Y			
2.	Do you support the King County Democratic Platform?	Y			
3.	Do you support the right of workers (excluding military) to bargain and strike?	Y			
4.	Do you support affirmative action?	Y			
5.	Do you support freedom of choice in contraception, abortion and sterilization?	Y			
6.	Do you support public funding for abortions for poor women?	Y			
7.	Do you support school vouchers? Do you support charter schools?		N		
8.	Do you support the Davis-Bacon Act?	Y			
9.	Do you support equal rights for women?	Y			
10.	Do you support the Patriot Act?		N		
11.	Do you support the restoration of voting rights to persons convicted of a felony who have served their sentence?	Y			
12.	How long have you been registered to vote? Have you missed any elections in the last three years?	22			
If you answer "yes" to any of the following questions please explain on a separate sheet of paper.		Yes		No	
14.	Have you ever failed to pay any taxes or court ordered judgments?			No	
15.	Have you ever been found in violation of a Public Disclosure Commission, Federal Election Commission or Seattle Ethics and Elections Commission regulation?			No	
16.	Have you ever been convicted of a felony?			No	

* - If you wish to qualify your answer, please provide an explanation on a separate sheet of paper.



King County Democrats 2007 General Candidate Questionnaire

**PLEASE ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS
(YOU MAY USE A SEPARATE SHEET OF PAPER FOR ANSWERS)**

1. Are you a member of another political party? If so, which ones? Have you ever supported or given money to a candidate from another party in a partisan race? If so, whom?

I am and have always been a Democrat. I have never contributed to or supported a candidate from another political party.

2. Are you a member of your local Democratic District Party? Have you contributed financially to any Democratic Organization? Have you been a Precinct Committee Officer? When/Where?

Yes. I am a member of the 37th district Democrats. No.

3. What are the main messages of your campaign? What is your campaign plan? How many doors have you knocked on to date, pieces of mail planned, budgeting, staffing? Why will you win? What is the fundraising goal for your campaign? How much have you raised to date?

I believe that families and working people should be able to afford to live in Seattle, not simply work here. Many families are pushed out of Seattle, unable to live the "American Dream" of buying a home, setting down roots and helping to build their own community. While many working people and families rent in Seattle, many more must move elsewhere to a locale where they can buy a home and drive back into the city, causing congestion, pollution and lost time with family in order to earn a living.

I have raised almost \$60,000 since February 1, 2007.

Moxie Media is my campaign counsel and they have developed a campaign plan. Jason Bennett is my treasurer. I have a team of volunteers who include former colleagues from my time at Pyramid Communications.

I plan to raise *at least* \$200,000 for my campaign.

4. What are the single most pressing issues facing your jurisdiction? What actions would you take if elected?

Affordable housing: Protect current affordable housing stock; expand section 8 contracts; expand the multifamily tax credit; limit condo conversions

Loss of confidence in public schools: Increase leadership partnerships with Seattle Public Schools; allow Seattle-run family centers to be entry points for parents, especially immigrant parents, to public schools; assess facility management role for the city

Loss of living wage jobs: Increase the city's competitive edge to keep businesses that provide good wages in Seattle; ensure that new developments use union labor

5. If you are a candidate in a contested primary race, what record of performance, ability, experience, personal qualities, and positions on issues distinguish you from your opponent(s)? If you do not receive the nomination, is there any reason you could not support your Democratic opponent in the general election? Please explain.



King County Democrats 2007 General Candidate Questionnaire

- ∞ I have a track record of working on the issues that council members must address.
- ∞ I have a track record of standing up for what's right, getting things done in the face of controversy and bringing all stakeholders to the table to find solutions that work.
- ∞ I have worked for and with local nonprofits that work on behalf of seniors, low-income communities, communities of color, the environment and workers' organizations to achieve safe and livable neighborhoods, access to health care and on-the-job protections for low-wage workers.
- ∞ I walk my talk. I send my children to public school. I work, as a volunteer, to improve the district's ability to provide a quality school in every neighborhood.
- ∞ I have worked for the city as a neighborhood planner – I am grounded in the challenges and opportunities of growth management, land use, housing, public safety, sustainability and neighborhoods.
- ∞ My husband and I are both business owners. We understand the importance of good jobs and strong businesses, and how much a thriving economy can make a difference in a city.
- ∞ I am a fellow of the National Hispana Leadership Institute, a graduate of Leadership Tomorrow, and a former president of the Washington State Hispanic Chamber of Commerce.
- ∞ I have served on the boards of CASA Latina, The Children's Alliance, the Seward Park Environmental Learning Center, and Communities and Parents for Public Schools.
- ∞ I would be the only councilmember who is raising a family in the city, and whose children attend their neighborhood public school.

If I do not make it past the primary, I see no reason why I would not support a democrat in the general election.

6. Do you believe the current structure of taxes and/or fees that generate funds in your area are fair? If not, how would you change it?

No. We have a “regressive” system of taxation in our state. The poorest residents pay the largest percentage of their income while everyone benefits from our public services. I would support a more progressive system of taxation that would continue to fund much needed public services while not putting the lowest paid workers in the position of financially supporting all Seattleites.

These changes can only happen at the state level. As a councilmember, I would do everything in my power to lobby residents and state legislators for a more fair and just tax system that supports public services so that Seattle residents can maintain a high quality-of-life.

And, as a councilmember I would develop a 10 to 15 year tax plan that outlines what our priorities are and how we should pay for them. The public would have a chance to help define our city's priorities and the way we pay for them, rather than the piecemeal



King County Democrats

2007 General Candidate Questionnaire

7. How would you balance continued growth, the quality of the environment and declining petroleum and energy resources? What is the role of the Critical Area Ordinance (CAO)?

Two words: Build up.

We have an amazing city and building dense living spaces up rather than out would prevent sprawl, decrease commute time, reduce pollution, save energy (heating, cooling, and gasoline for travel) and, most importantly, increase the quality of life for many Seattleites. The Critical Area Ordinance, a King County rule, would prevent destruction of environmentally vulnerable areas and limit development to sound design practices that would both protect local habitat for future generations and respect the private ownership of land. This is fundamental to managing growth.

8. The caucus system helps Democratic Party members in a legislative body work together and stick together. Do you support determining leadership positions and committee chair positions *solely within the ranks of the Democratic Caucus*?

Absolutely. I wouldn't dare select the Republican nominee for office and would not want those who do not identify with the Democratic party to take the choice out of the hands of Democrats.

9. What role should government play in the healthcare system?

Government's responsibility is to help facilitate a just and humane society. We live in such a rich nation and have the ability to provide for every person's healthcare needs if we made it a priority. Government must assist businesses, schools and other employers to provide affordable, quality health care. Starbucks does so all over the world and Dick's Burger manages to provide both health care and college tuition reimbursements. It can be done for employers of all sizes so long as our government and businesses sit down and work together to make affordable health care a priority.

10. What is your position on civil rights for Gay, Lesbian, bisexual and trans gendered people? What is your position on equal rights for same-sex couples when it comes to benefits, civil unions, marriage and parental rights?

Respect, dignity and full civil rights for gay, lesbian, bisexual and trans gendered people. It's that simple.

11. What creative solutions can you offer to address the problems of the economically disadvantaged?

More funding for job training, retraining, basic financial education on savings, money management and owning a new home. Education is the pathway to self-sustainability. We must, as a society, care for our communities. At the same time, we must ensure that our communities have the tools they need to survive AND succeed on their own some day. For example, we need new affordable housing strategies that protect the very low income, in addition to the workforce housing that many in city government are talking about now.

12. What would you like us to know about you?

I have worked tirelessly for social and economic justice. I have built better communities and saved affordable housing while making middle-class housing more readily available.

I have helped workers' organizations beat back class and racial attacks, I have help build coalitions out of contentious situations and developed new communities where none




King County Democrats 2007 General Candidate Questionnaire

I am running on my track record of getting things done and standing up for what's right. I am not making promises that are not grounded in the work I have already done in this city. We need to elect people who have demonstrated courage and conviction BEFORE they get elected because you don't learn these things once you get into office.

I'm not seeking election to fulfill a childhood dream or achieve my life's ambition. I am running for city council because I believe we are at risk of losing the things that make a city great: thriving businesses, quality schools, strong families and safe neighborhoods.

My convictions and beliefs are born from a decade of advocating for the needs of my disabled brother. I've watched a doctor dismiss my 8th grade educated mother because she did not ask the right questions about her deaf son who was also going blind. I've seen the impact that poor public policies have on people's lives, and I've spent my own life working to make sure this city works for everyone. I believe it's time for a different kind of leadership.

In the interests of strengthening the Democratic Party and the ability of the Party to support me or any other candidate, I pledge to uphold high ethical standards. I am responsible for the content of literature, advertising, and statements disseminated by my campaign. If my campaign releases information regarding my opponent(s), I pledge that any such release will allow reasonable time for verification by the voters.

Signature		Date	May 3, 2007
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Please attach a recent resume.