

KCCADV/KSARC Survey
Questions for Candidates for City Council

Candidate Name: Richard Conlin_____ Date: September 27, 2009_____

Please briefly answer the questions below, limiting your total response to no more than two pages. Please send your response as a Word document via email by noon on **Friday October 9th** to merril@kccadv.org.

1. What experience, if any, do you have addressing issues related to domestic violence and sexual assault?

I have a strong track record of supporting domestic violence and sexual assault prevention and response efforts, and of being the leader on the City Council in doing so. I was able to reinstate funding for domestic violence programs that were cut in the Mayor's budget in 2002, 2003, 2004 (for example, in 2002 a reinstatement of \$65,000 to the King County Sexual Assault Resource Center, and the restoration of funding for Batterer's Treatment programs). I spearheaded an audit by the City Auditor to examine and analyze the relationship between the amount of money spent on domestic violence in city departments to expenditures on other issues. This audit found discrepancies between the level of funding for domestic violence and the salience of domestic violence in the community in several departments. My staff served on the Assessment Committee involved in the Interdepartmental Team that developed the Domestic Violence Strategic Plan.

I have also actively supported and advocated for funding programs for services to homeless women and children, including, for example, funding for ADWAS, the first shelter in the country that focuses on the special needs of hearing-impaired victims of domestic violence. Since 50% of homeless women and children are fleeing abuse, money spent on domestic violence is directly linked to homelessness.

In December 2001 I sponsored a forum featuring experts speaking on sexual assault from the perspective of communities of color, and followed that up with a forum with agencies that work with communities of color to speak out about organizing against sexual and domestic violence in those communities in July of 2002. I have sponsored the City Council proclamation on Domestic Violence Awareness Month, and was part of the news conference announcing the formation of the Men's Network Against Domestic Violence. I sponsored a Council proclamation in support of the Men's Network, which targets the education and recruitment of men to commit to do their part to end domestic violence.

I was also a leader in fighting against the proposed consolidation of the Women's, Sexual Minorities and Human Rights Commissions. On June 9, 2004, I was proud to receive a letter from the Seattle Women's Commission citing my advocacy in this area, which stated: "Having prominent male figures speak out on the issue of domestic violence is important in raising awareness of this serious problem. Again, thank you for your continued voice and support on this issue."

In 2007 I received an award from the King County Coalition Against Domestic Violence for my work to secure funding for legal assistance for victims of domestic violence. In 2008, even in the face of a very challenging budget, I was able to secure funding for a program for immigrants who are victims of domestic violence. I will continue to be a strong leader and deliver results on domestic violence issues.

2. What do you see as the role of city government in responding to and preventing domestic violence and sexual assault?

City government has a critical role in this work. We must continue to bring together police, prosecutor, courts, and human services to not only effectively respond to these issues, but to emphasize prevention and awareness. That task requires reaching out beyond City government to community based organizations and partnerships with the County and other levels of government.

3. In what specific ways would you, as a City Councilmember, support our region's domestic violence and sexual assault prevention and response efforts?

I will continue and expand my work on this issue, supporting the coordinated efforts of City agencies and ensuring that funds are found to not only continue but expand services as needed. I have been the key sponsor for adds to the budget for domestic violence work in the last three years, and will always be responsive to the priorities and requests of the community that plays such an important part in addressing these issues on our society.

4. Our community's critical health, public safety, and human services are facing devastating cuts from various sources of funding at a time when the need is increasing dramatically. What will you do to ensure that the services Seattle residents count on to stay healthy, safe and have their basic needs met are sustained into the future?

I have worked with my colleagues and the Mayor to ensure that uniformed public safety personnel and human services programs are protected in the 2010 budget, and I am pleased that the Mayor's budget reflects this commitment. I am confident that we can maintain these programs in the City budget in 2010, and I will continue to treat them as priorities in future years. The real challenges will be at the state and county levels, and I will support efforts to keep those levels of government committed to these issues as well, but I am less sanguine about our abilities to do that.

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