

Snoqualmie Indian Tribe Voters Guide 2016 | Joe Pakootas Full Responses

Pakootas is running for U.S. House of Representatives, District 5

Do you have experience working with tribes?

As an enrolled member of the Colville Indian Tribe I have a lifetime of experience working with Tribes. I served 16 years as an elected member of their Tribal Council, five as chair. In addition, I worked as their CEO for five years.

If you were elected, how would you and your staff interact with tribes?

I am running because I believe Indian Country needs more representation in federal government. If elected, my door would always remain open to all tribes, regardless of their size. I consider myself a strong advocate for Native Americans and will fight to protect our cultures, heritage and freedoms.

What is your position on tribal sovereignty?

In my position as an elected official and representative of my Tribe I understand tribal sovereignty. I have written tribal laws and lobbied at the state and federal level for issues relating to tribal sovereignty.

Would you support the Tribe in its duty to protect sacred Snoqualmie Falls? If so, how?

As an environmental protectionist who has created and implemented integrated sustainable forest management practices I am very aware of the importance of maintaining and caring for the natural environment. I fully support the Tribe's duty to protect Snoqualmie Falls and every other natural resource located on Tribal land.

Do you support increasing funding to tribes for treaty-guaranteed services such as education and health care?

I do support increased funding to tribes for treaty-guaranteed services like education and health care. I am acutely aware that very few tribes have the budgets or infrastructure to adequately provide the essential services necessary to care for their members.

What is your position on the collection of tax, on tribal lands?

Tribal members are taxed at a higher rate than other U.S. citizens irregardless of their state's tax structure. It is my position that tribes as sovereign nations should have the authority to make their own decisions about how they manage their revenue structure without the interference of state or federal governments.

Would you support tribal representation in the Federal level?

As a leader in my tribe and its federal corporation's CEO I regularly represented the interests of my tribe with city, county, state and federal agencies. I fully support tribal representation at all those levels of government.