

# Miller looks to use her experience, background to effect positive change

Democrat says many issues are not getting the attention they deserve



Carina Miller

By Rudy Diaz  
Blue Mountain Eagle

Carina Miller grew up in Senate District 30 living in the Warm Springs Indian Reservation near Madras and now runs as the Democratic nominee for a chance to continue serving the communities in the district.

Miller said, while growing up in rural Oregon on the reservation, she recognized there were many issues in the district that were not dealt with that continue to be ignored.

"With things like Black Lives Matter, it's important now more than ever to have leadership that aren't just going to acknowledge but address these issues," Miller said. "It's everything across the board that needs attention, and it's not getting it."

Miller listed climate change as another issue that is not getting the attention it deserves. She was a supporter of the Clean Energy Jobs Bill, and was elected on the Warm Springs Tribal Council during this time.

The lack of advocacy from the local representatives when they were in Salem and how information was disseminated regarding the bill was frustrating to Miller because she said it was not an accurate portrayal of the people they were representing or the bill presented.

Miller worked as a social worker and educator and worked directly with children and family and saw how this impacted them.

"That's where my passion comes from because I worked with people directly that were impacted by the lack of resources," Miller said. "Our local economies haven't been thriving, and the things that are being supported are more benefiting for corporate people, and they're not benefiting families and humans who live in

this district." Miller said her background and work as an educator, social worker, earning a degree in ethnic studies, being the energy committee co-chair for the Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians and serving as the chair of the Native caucus for the Democratic Party of Oregon gives her a unique experience that current and past senators never had.

"I am running because I care about this district, and I care about all the people, and I know I have the experience to actually pass bills that will have a positive impact on everybody," Miller said.

A goal that Miller has is to pass a carbon bill that doesn't leave out the counties that were cut in the recent edit so counties in the district could have access to funds to deal with utility costs and electricity. She would also like to look at education and Senate Bill 13.

Senate Bill 13, now known as Tribal History/Shared History, directs the Oregon Department of Education to create K-12 Native American Curriculum for inclusion in Oregon public schools, according to Oregon's state website.

She said tribes are currently developing the curriculum, but the ethnic studies bill only had appropriation for those standards. It still needs to be pushed forward to receive funding for professional development.

She also wants to look at funding issues related to the Public Employee Retirement System through tax reform.

"The solution is tax reform, and nobody wants to just say it," Miller said. "Those are the kind of things I want to work on so we can stop focusing on these areas that take up all of our time in legislature asking 'Where is tax revenue going to come from?' when we can start looking at how we can transition from an extractive natural resource economy in rural Oregon to a sustainable

one and decentralize services that are more affordable for families."

Miller said COVID-19 is a hard situation due to the uncertainty with the virus, but she hopes communities prioritize helping other people first, follow guidance from science officials and recognize that leaders can be united in moving forward with the coronavirus.

Miller added she knows there are many people who aren't taking COVID-19 seriously, and she doesn't want to disrespect their opinions because as an indigenous woman, she recognizes

that sometimes the government misrepresents what they're really doing. However, she added people need to also understand what people have lost due to the pandemic.

Warm Springs has experienced lost lives due to the pandemic, including the wife of the Warm Springs chief, according to Miller.

"We need to be responsible leaders and acknowledge the pain that has happened," Miller said. "I just want it to be clear that the whole picture is shown of how native communities are at a higher rate, being disproportionately impacted, and that's not being addressed at all by our representation here."

Miller said, when it comes to topics like racism, humanities and supporting immigrants who are neighbors, she will take a stand and address these topics.

"I'm very well versed, and I want to put my best foot forward, and I think if you look at my work that's always been reflected," Miller said. "I have been prepared by my community, by my grandparents, by my tribal elders and co-leaders on council. They taught me and got me ready, and I have a lot of actual work that proves I am ready to make the changes for this district, changes they deserve."

# Findley wants to continue representing his constituents and have their voices heard

Incumbent Republican said he supports peaceful protests but not property destruction, assault



Sen. Lynn Findley

By Rudy Diaz  
Blue Mountain Eagle

Lynn Findley said, as a state senator, being a voice for the communities in his district has been an important responsibility along with getting feedback on proposed legislation so his constituents can be heard in Salem.

As the pandemic continues, this responsibility has become greater since COVID-19 has made public input harder to receive.

"The public hearings we have are invited testimony only, and we don't get people who come in and give us good input, and I don't like that," Findley said. "I need to ensure that I'm that conduit between policymakers in Salem and people on the ground that it impacts."

Findley, the Republican incumbent for Oregon's Senate District 30 from Vale, said being in a supermajority is difficult because their voice is not always needed or wanted, but he believes success in the legislature is achieved by reaching across the aisle and working with colleagues.

"As I was in the House, I think I passed more legislation than any other Republican because I listen and I talk," Findley said. "You work with them collaboratively to find a good solution for all."

The biggest success that he has had so far as a senator was the 911 bill in the last long session. He said the bill originated in John Day because the city called him and said their 911 dispatch center was failing due to a lack of funds.

Findley worked with the city of John Day, and together they developed legislation that raised the fee collected for telephones, landlines and cellphones to go directly to the 911 funds.

"That took a lot of work," Findley said. "The first thing you say is here's a conservative Republican pushing to raise taxes, which is something I typically don't do, but in this case it was a critical key safety measure for all of Oregon, and it took the entire session to do it collaboratively with people on both sides of the aisle."

Findley said there were some hot-button issues during the last session, such as the cap and trade climate legislation, which was very divisive. He said the legislature heard from 34 of 36 counties in the state who opposed the bill. He said he is not a climate change denier and believes the climate is changing and carbon levels are high, but getting to the problem requires more than just taxing people.

"In my district's case, we have better measures to reduce carbon," Findley said. "Carbon sequestration with our natural resources is a key component of that, and that's through forest management, rangeland management and having healthy ecosystems, which reduces fires, which are better alternatives."

Findley served on a COVID-19 committee in the second special session and said the virus has impacted every aspect of life.

He has been engaged on talking about the impacts on rural Oregon. Some areas, such as Wheeler County, with one case confirmed in the county, faced with the same economic restrictions as downtown Portland, he said.

Findley continues to work

with the governor's office, Oregon Health Authority and the Oregon Department of Education to open some rural schools and businesses.

"We've got to be respectful, and we have to have a safe work environment where everybody feels safe," Findley said. "COVID is here, and we have to learn how to live with it and deal with it appropriately so we don't kill our economy. Masks are terribly uncomfortable, but if I wear a mask and it allows a business to stay open, it's worth wearing a mask."

Findley said he respects and fully supports anyone's ability to peacefully state their case and protest, but he does not support the destruction of private property and assaulting others.

"I've had a lot of conversations with other caucus members on both sides of the aisle, and there are probably some injustices that have occurred, and we need to work better on that, but we're in a law and order environment society, and we have to respect our law enforcement folks," Findley said.

He said the state needs to help law enforcement do a better job through training and through augmentation of people who handle mental health situations.

Findley said he strives to have open communication and tries to be as transparent as he can with the virtual town halls. He tries to visit each community in person. He also established weekly communication between county commissioners and elected legislators to talk about what is being done right and what can be improved on.

"We're all in this together, and I respect and understand the bountiful natural resources we have here, and we need to protect them," Findley said. "They didn't become degraded overnight, and they're not going to be fixed overnight."

# Merkley bids for a third 6-year term in the U.S. Senate

Republican challenger, QAnon supporter Perkins condemns Portland protests



Sen. Jeff Merkley



Jo Rae Perkins

By Gary A. Warner  
Oregon Capital Bureau

Democratic U.S. Sen. Jeff Merkley is seeking to sew up his seat for another six years, hoping Democrats can snatch the Senate majority from Republicans on Nov. 3.

"I'm going to work to fix our broken and dysfunctional Senate so it isn't just a graveyard for good ideas," Merkley said in March 3 video to supporters.

Merkley ironically made the comment while throwing in the towel on his unofficial bid to be the Democratic nominee against President Trump.

Since 2019, he'd visited Iowa and New Hampshire to court progressive Democrats. He's the third most liberal member of the Senate, accord-

ing to voting site GovTrack.us, with only Sen. Bernie Sanders of Vermont and Kristen Gillibrand of New York to his left.

With his polling numbers behind most of the 15-person primary field at the time, Merkley switched his attention back to the Senate. There he starts out with the advantages of incumbency and the 286,560 voter registration edge Democrats hold over Republicans in Oregon.

Linn County Republican Party Chair Jo Rae Perkins is his opponent in the Senate race, but Merkley more often is running against Donald Trump and the Senate majority that has made the president's policies into laws.

Merkley voted for Trump's impeachment and against the president's nominees for the Supreme Court, Brett Kavanaugh and Neil Gorsuch. Against a Senate Republican majority, Merkley was on the losing end of those votes.

Merkley has called out the "racist rants and glorification of violence" of white supremacist groups he says Trump implicitly condones. He co-sponsored legislation to ensure there are enough polling places on election day. He's criticized what he says was Trump's dismissal of COVID-19 at the beginning

of the pandemic crisis. Merkley says presidential inaction, delay and misinformation undercut efforts to slow the virus, which has killed more than 208,000 people in the United States.

Perkins says she is a social and fiscal conservative who is an outspoken supporter of Trump and his policies on immigration, gun rights and taxes.

Perkins says Democrats' impact on the state is best illustrated by more than 100 days of protests in Portland. In a recent online ad, she zeroed in on Merkley amid

visuals of demonstrators running in streets, law enforcement in riot gear and the air swirling with tear gas.

"This is not the Oregon you signed up for," the ads say before shifting to a scene of Perkins looking out across a sweeping rural landscape.

Perkins has attracted national attention for her support of QAnon, a growing conspiracy theory movement that believes a "deep state" of government officials is trying to undermine Trump. The group is designated by the FBI as a domestic terrorist threat.

After winning the Senate primary, Perkins made a video using the QAnon slogan, "Where we go one, we go all."

"I stand with President Trump," Perkins says. "I stand with Q and the team. Thank you, anons, thank you, patriots. Together, we can save our republic."

Merkley has also been endorsed by the Independent and Working Families parties. Gary Dye is the Libertarian, and Ibrahim Taher has been endorsed by both the Pacific Green and Progressive parties.

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