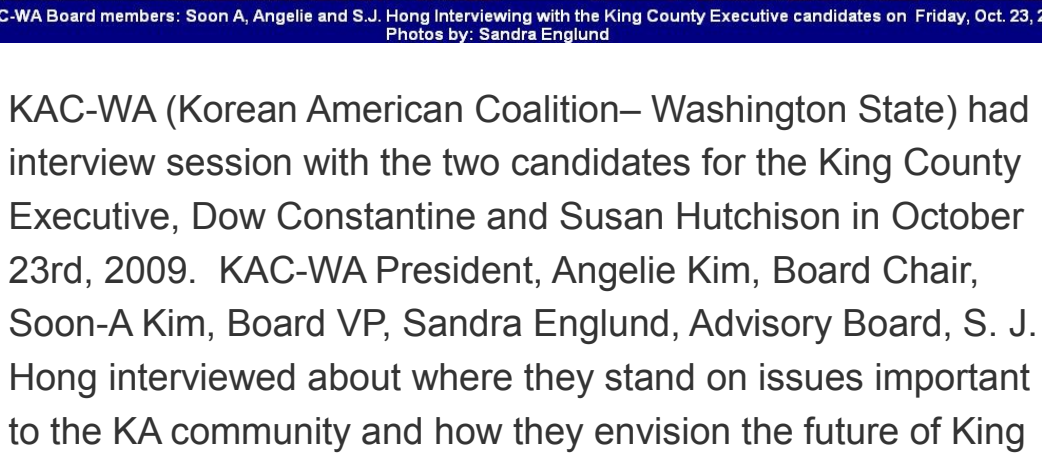




Meet The King County Executive Candidates: Dow Constantine and Susan Hutchinson

King County Executive Candidate, Dow Constantine King County Executive Candidate Susan Hutchinson



KAC-WA Board members: Soon A, Angelle and S.J. Hong interviewing with the King County Executive candidates on Friday, Oct. 23, 2009. Photos by: Sandra Englund

KAC-WA (Korean American Coalition– Washington State) had an interview session with the two candidates for the King County Executive, Dow Constantine and Susan Hutchinson on October 23rd, 2009. KAC-WA President, Angelie Kim, Board Chair, Soon-A Kim, Board VP, Sandra Englund, Advisory Board, S. J. Hong interviewed about where they stand on issues important to the KA community and how they envision the future of King County. Each candidate had one hour interview session:

Dow Constantine 8:30 AM to 9:30 AM

Susan Hutchinson 9:30 AM to 10:30 AM

The following questions and answers were given during the KAC-WA Interview:

KAC-WA: Please introduce yourself and share your history, past and why you're running for this position.

Dow Constantine: I was born in Seattle and raised in West Seattle. I currently represent urban, suburban and rural areas in the county. My goal is to leave King County better than we found it. I have a Bachelor's of Arts degree, law degree and master's degree all from the University of Washington. I started as a legislative intern to 34th District State Sen. Phil Talmadge. While practicing law, I worked with a young County Councilmember Greg Nickels, then served as a Council legislative aide. I have served in Washington's House of Representatives and State Senate. I was appointed to the King County Council in January 2002, and ran four times successfully to the county council. On January 12, 2009, I was elected by my colleagues unanimously as Chair of the Council. On the council, I put in place a whistleblower protection and the first hiring freeze so that we could trim the budget. As a result, we saved \$875,000 by reorganizing so that we could protect human services, such as funding for sexual assault/domestic violence programs. I delivered on a mission and not the status quo.

I am running for the position because I believe we have no time for a learning curve for someone without experience in elected office given the risks of the Green River flooding and a \$56 million deficit. It is critical to get someone with local government experience in elected office. I have a track record of reform and getting results.

Susan Hutchinson: First off, my husband was in the US Reserves and spent some summers in Korea, so I am very familiar with the kindness and hospitality of the Korean community. I am someone who solves problems and fixes things. We are in a crisis. My opponent represents the old ways--partisan politics. I bring experience in the private sector and running a non-profit for many years. I am prepared because of my leadership in the King County Elections Task Force. I am non-partisan and I bring fresh ideas. This election is about change. My opponent has not effected change. Based on my conversation on the campaign trail, this county is open for new ideas.

I have twelve years on the executive committee on KIRO, where I implemented a hiring freeze. I am Executive Director of the Charles Simonyi Fund for Arts and Sciences, which is a grantor that works with arts, science and education organizations. I have executive skills, leadership, judgment and courage. I bring people together and believe that all decisions will have push-back. But if you have the right choice, you can convince people. I ran the Symphony Board--I turned it around and stabilized and balanced the budget. I was chair of the Finance Committee on the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars in Washington D.C. and am on the Board of National Air & Space Museum.

KAC-WA: Many people in the Korean community may not know what the position of KC Executive entails. Please provide a brief explanation of what you feel the position is about.

Dow Constantine: King County is the region's largest government, with departments and services in public health, transportation, environmental protection, and education. There is a 10-member transit board. The position is like the mayor's, but oversees 13,000 employees, drafts budgets and is essentially a figurehead for the county. King County needs an Executive that shares the values of the county. It is second to the Governor in importance.

Susan Hutchinson: I have a strategic vision of the region and big picture view. I can speed along economic recovery, such as support small businesses by being a tax and regulatory advocate for reform of the B&O tax. I will focus on our transportation policy to ensure that all money must be tied to results in areas of congestion, economics, and safety; and ensure freedom of mobility, tying resources to demand, respecting needs of people, and freight mobility. I want to appoint one person that oversees transportation. I believe in incentives versus punishing. I believe the role is so much bigger--it's about Seattle and the region's role in the country.

KAC-WA: What is the difference between your campaign and your opponent's campaign?

Dow Constantine: My campaign has been a grassroots campaign with thousands of volunteers whereas my opponent has imported money, just like she did her consulting company. I've depended on small donations, amounting to over \$5,000 from individual donors. I believe in having someone ready on day one and keeping more money in reserves. I was raised to be sensible about money.

Susan Hutchinson: My campaign has been full of new ideas, whereas my opponent's has been about attacking me. But that's okay because voters need to understand that I can take it. I feel my opponent is attacking the organizations that I am associated with. But I will work with him as he is on the council. He is not known as a collaborator but as a "bully."

KAC-WA: Many Korean Americans are small business owners. How would you support small businesses in the county?

Dow Constantine: I had a small business of my own when I practiced law. In that practice, I helped many other small businesses through the incorporation process, commercial leases and starting up. In 2001, when I was in the State Senate, I wrote legislation to the Tax Committee to reduce tax burdens on small businesses. As King County Executive, I would reform the B&O tax. Because small businesses create 70% of jobs, we need prosperity in partnership. I also believe that King County has the opportunity to serve as a regional leader to provide a uniform process for permitting and for taxation, and providing business assistance.

Susan Hutchinson: I think that access to money is a big issue for small businesses. I would open the dialogue with lenders and convene five to six of the top lenders and ask how to tackle the problem, such as credit lines, cash flow and lending of capital to investing. I want to make the region a place to thrive and help businesses qualify for access to money. I would clean house, starting with the permitting department. I have a team already talking about this and there is excitement. I believe in making a dent in the regulatory burdens of small businesses.

KAC-WA: Korean Americans in King County reside on both sides of Lake Washington. How do you envision transportation to link Seattle and the eastside?

Dow Constantine: Something needs to happen soon. There are advantages of building a tunnel along I-90--it's the best economic choice for the city as it keeps buses open and allows for much improved mobility. The economic benefit is much higher. I care about light rail. I am on the Sound Transit Board. I have always said that we need light rail to the east side, south to Federal Way and to Everett. I-90 is the fastest route to Mercer Island, and the Bel-Red corridor, as well as Issaquah. My opponent opposed the voter-approved plan to expand light rail across the lake on I-90 to Redmond. We need the political will to break through the logjam. We need the high capacity lanes for buses.

Susan Hutchinson: We need an alternative to what is going on--we need a brand new bridge along 520, rather than taking two lanes off of I-90. I-90 is the most important commuting line from Seattle to the eastside. To cut it out two lanes is not the best alternative. We can eventually create a route that connects Bellevue, Redmond, Sammamish and Issaquah. We would be saving \$30 million in engineering by going on 520.

KAC-WA: What is your position on supporting capital projects, such as efforts to shape a possible Korean American Community Center?

Dow Constantine: King County would be a good partner and as soon as it is in a position to help financially, we would be able to participate in the development. Ethnic cultural centers hold up the core for communities by way of services. Otherwise, it falls on government. It's a small capital investment and the very least that we can do.

Susan Hutchinson: Because the Korean American community stretches throughout King County, we need to understand the unique contributions of each group. What the Koreans bring is different. As we look to Korea, they're viewed as a model--by embracing education, family, and important values that encourage success of small businesses.

KAC-WA: What are your thoughts about annexation, particularly in areas near Auburn and Federal Way?

Dow Constantine: Under state law, all urban areas need to get inside cities. I have worked with people of North Highline who decided they would join Burien. It was a democratic process as they discussed issues about land use. It is a delicate area to negotiate and involves a boundary review board. The default is that the people decide.

Susan Hutchinson: I think that should any area be annexed, it should have the vote of the people. The problems so far have been about lack of good communication. So I would help explain how services will be approved. Other annexations failed because voters were suspicious.

KAC-WA: How can you ensure that you stay connected with the Korean American community if you are elected KC Executive?

Dow Constantine: I have strong ties in the community and have gone out of my way to go to communities who will reflect the county. I'll make sure that I have that strong connection.

Susan Hutchinson: I plan to have an open door and an outreach policy. I believe in leveling the playing fields for government contracts. I want a diverse office and continual input from the community.

**** KAC-WA does not endorse either candidate, but offers the above information for informational purposes only.**

More information, you may refer to their website:

[Dow Constantine](#)

[Susan Hutchinson](#).

Don't forget to submit your ballots by November 3!