

Bio - Sheila Finkenbinder

I was raised near Seattle, earned a BA in Education, married and moved to Texas. My husband and I raised two children, while living in six states; doing small contracting jobs, owning a hardware store, and teaching occasionally.

We sailed to Alaska in 1990. Our kids are grown now, and I'm widowed. I'm most proud of my ten years as the founding director of Sitka Works; helping hundreds of people either get trained for good jobs or start their own businesses.

In 2008, I became the executive director of the Chamber of Commerce, and then was legislative aide for Representative Wilson. Since retiring, I've worked part-time, seasonal jobs, and ran for State House in 2016. I'm an active community participant and volunteer, serving on the boards of several non-profit organizations. I'm building an ADU in my backyard, and planning to stay in Sitka for the rest of my life.

Advocacy Statement - Sheila Finkenbinder

I'm running for Assembly because I love Sitka, and I'd like to help it grow and prosper through a positive, pro-development attitude. I'd like to see the Assembly say "Yes" more often to business development; large and small, created by locals as well as those who want to bring new enterprises to town. We should be turning perceived roadblocks into opportunities for creative problem solving, leading to solutions.

Sitka needs to increase our tax base - not raise our tax rates. No municipality has ever taxed its way to prosperity. By attracting more businesses and workers we could lessen our individual tax burdens. Populations grow when there are jobs. Jobs happen when somebody makes something, or offers services, that others want to buy. We can encourage that to happen.

After living here for 27 years, I've seen a lot of growth and improvement in the infrastructure that makes this a great place to live; public buildings, harbors, dams, paved roads, and attractive landscaping. But, after all these years, it's still the same 9,000 of us supporting that expanded infrastructure. What if we set an intentional goal to attract people and businesses to town? More residents could help Sitka Community Hospital remain open, help fill our schools, keep our utility rates down, and breath new life into the community.

As an assembly member, my intent will be to help steer conversations in a positive direction that will lead to solutions for the cultural, economic, physical and social health of our residents.

