Skagit County Election Pamphlet Misleads Voters, Candidates Demand Correction

July 22, 2026

Edison, Washington - July 22, 2026 -

As August 4 primary ballots arrive in voters? hands, four certified write-in candidates demand a correction, and the question now sits before the Washington Secretary of State.

Skagit Residents (skagitresidents.com) today announced that the four certified write-in candidates for Skagit County office in the August 4, 2026 primary election have formally asked the Skagit County Auditor, the Washington Secretary of State, and federal election officials to correct the public record after the County?s official local voters? pamphlet designated the races for County Treasurer, Coroner, and Clerk as ?UNOPPOSED.?

County records show that valid declarations of write-in candidacy have been filed and accepted for all three of those offices, Tim Garrison (Treasurer), Derrill J. Fussell (Coroner, declaration stamped received May 20, 2026), and Amanda Toscano (Clerk), as well as for Skagit County Sheriff (Cody Hart). Under state law, RCW 29A.24.311(2), votes cast for certified write-in candidates must be counted, and the declarations are public records open to inspection under RCW 29A.24.070.

The candidates? letters, sent Thursday, July 16, ask the County to publish a corrective notice within three business days identifying the certified write-in candidates and stating that the races are not unopposed. The letters note that no statute authorizes an ?unopposed? designation in a local voters? pamphlet, and that the Secretary of State?s own rule, WAC 434-381-120(1), treats the filing of a write-in declaration as the event that ends a candidate?s unopposed status.

In a written response on July 16, the County conceded that state law ?does not specifically prohibit providing write-in candidate information on a website?, a reversal of its July 6 position that the County ?would violate the law? if it published such information, yet it still declined to publish, citing a ?state policy preference? it infers from a statute that in fact expressly allows counties to include write-in candidates in the voters? pamphlet by local ordinance. The County

also stated that it ?will follow the state?s guidance,? placing the question squarely before the Washington Secretary of State, to whom the candidates have written separately.

?This is about voters? right to accurate information, not about any candidate?s ambitions,? said Cody Hart, certified write-in candidate for Skagit County Sheriff. ?Every pamphlet delivered in this county tells voters these races have no opposition. The County?s own files say otherwise. We are asking officials to tell voters what their own records show, while ballots are still in voters? hands.?

?We followed the law, filed the paperwork, and were certified, and the official pamphlet then told our neighbors we don?t exist,? said Derrill J. Fussell, certified write-in candidate for Skagit County Coroner. ?A voter cannot write in a name she has never been told is on file. All we are asking for is accurate public notice before voting ends.?

The candidates note that their request comes amid sustained national attention to election integrity and the accuracy of official election information, as voters, candidates, and lawmakers across the country press election offices for greater transparency in how contests are presented to the public. The Skagit matter raises that question in its most concrete local form: whether an official government election publication should match the government?s own election records.
Because the County has said it will defer to state guidance, the Secretary of State?s answer is expected to reach beyond Skagit County, potentially shaping how certified write-in candidates are publicly identified in all 39 Washington counties, in this election and those to come.

The candidates have also placed the matter on record with the Voting Section of the U.S. Department of Justice?s Civil Rights Division and with the District Election Officer at the U.S. Attorney?s Office for the Western District of Washington. The candidates emphasize that they are not alleging election fraud and are not seeking to overturn any result; they are asking officials to give voters accurate information while voting is under way. Ballots for the August 4 primary are arriving in Skagit County households now.

A press kit, the correspondence, the stamped declarations of candidacy, the County?s written responses, and the pamphlet pages at issue, is available on request. https://skagitresidents.com/

About the candidates:
Cody Hart (Sheriff), Derrill J. Fussell (Coroner), Tim Garrison (Treasurer), and Amanda Toscano (Clerk) are the four certified write-in candidates for Skagit County office in the August 4, 2026 primary election. Each filed a declaration of write-in candidacy that was accepted by theSkagit County Auditor?s Office.
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For more information about Candidate Cody Hart, contact the company here:Candidate Cody HartCody

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Candidate Cody Hart

Candidate Cody Hart is on the ballot running for Sheriff.

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