



Representative Tina Orwall

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Washington State House of Representatives



I want to thank you for giving me the privilege of serving as your legislator in the 33rd district. This last session was especially heart-wrenching as we made another round of deep cuts to education and other critical services in order to balance our budget within our existing means.

There was no painless way to cut \$4.5 billion from the state budget because every line item isn't just numbers on a page. It's children in our public schools, hard working teachers, vulnerable adults and the elderly in our nursing homes, moms and dads struggling to find a job, and college students trying to afford tuition.

*And yet, even though this legislative session was grueling, we do have some **good news that came out of our work in Olympia**, including expanding early learning resources, which is one of the best investments we can make. We strengthened consumer protection with the Foreclosure Fairness Act ensuring that families are able to stay in their homes whenever possible.*

*Here is a snapshot of these and other **victories for Washington families**.*

Tina Orwall
Tina

Good news for your kids' safety

Did you know that child-care work-applicants were only fingerprinted if they had not lived in Washington for at least three years? Not anymore!

I sponsored [a bill](#) that requires all first-time child-care applicants to get fingerprinted and go through a state criminal history background check regardless of how long they've lived in our state.

This new law will give parents more **peace of mind knowing that their children really are in safe hands**. It will also streamline the process for child-care providers since they'll be able to use their background check certificate for three years instead of having to get one every time they move to a different location.

By making the fingerprint and background check individual-focused instead of location-focused, we're **increasing safety, reducing costs and improving efficiency**.

Good news for homeowners

It's an American dream to own a home. But more than 75,000 Washington families have been swept from their homes by foreclosures during this recession and another 30,000 families might lose their homes this year.

If you or someone you know is facing foreclosure, help is here. The [Foreclosure Fairness Act of 2011](#), which I sponsored, helps homeowners by providing housing counselors to walk them through the process.

Homeowners also have the opportunity to meet with the lender and a mediator to determine the best course of action.



Gov. Christine Gregoire signing HB 1362, the Foreclosure Fairness Act of 2011 was joined by lawmakers, stakeholders and community members. Among those present were the bill's sponsor, Rep. Tina Orwall (D-Des Moines), and Reps. Phyllis Gutiérrez Kenney (D-Seattle), Mary Lou Dickerson (D-Seattle), Jamie Pedersen (D-Seattle), David Frockt (D-Seattle), and Senators Jeannie Kohl-Welles (D-Tacoma) and Adam Kline (D-Seattle).
Olympia, WA, April 14, 2011

To find a counselor now, please call Washington State's foreclosure prevention hotline: 1-877-894-HOME (1-877-894-4663)

Visit the [program's website](#) for more information on how to get the help you need.

Good news for education and early learning

- Rigorous studies have shown that every dollar invested in effective early learning programs saves between \$3 and \$16 in future government expenses by reducing the need for remedial education, corrections and other costs or lost opportunities. That's why, as a member of the Education Appropriations and Oversight Committee, I advocated for funding for early learning and am pleased that we **did not cut but, in fact, increased funding for the Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program** by 165 slots per year.
- We **protected the current level of funding for all-day Kindergarten**, that's 20 percent of our schools. But we added just over \$5 million to include another 1 percent each year so that by the end of the biennium state funding will provide full day Kindergarten for 22 percent of our schools.
- A preschool-to-kindergarten transition program, called **WaKIDS**, will give teachers the tools they need to assess a child's strengths and challenges, and keep parents in the loop about their child's academic needs.
- **Levy-equalization dollars**, which help level the playing field for property-poor school districts, were fully protected in the state operating budget.
- I sponsored [a bill](#) that allows students enrolled in **International Baccalaureate Diploma Programmes (IB)** to graduate by earning the IB Diploma and two other high school state graduation requirements. By streamlining their transition into higher education without requiring them to take redundant classes, this new law lifts a significant burden from the student's workload and reduces economic barriers for low income families.
- **Technology now falls under the definition of basic education.** By incorporating technology into the state's education goals, we have the opportunity to engage and prepare all students for high-demand technology jobs.

And did you know that...?

Washington, like most states, was hit hard by this Great Recession. But unlike other states, Washington is helping lead the way to recovery. The [Employment Security Department](#) reported that since April 2010, Washington has gained 41,500 jobs. And take a look at these impressive rankings:

- Forbes Magazine ranked Washington as the [5th best state for business in 2010](#).
- We're number 2 on the [2010 State New Economy Index](#).
- The Small Business & Entrepreneurship Council's [2010 Business Tax Index](#) has Washington as the **5th state with the lowest taxes**.
- In April 2011, money-rates.com ranked Washington as the [2nd best state for making a living](#).
- The [Pew Center](#) says Washington is **one of 13 states leading the way** in advancing cost-effective transportation policies.
- And we're number 6 in the [2011 U.S. Clean Energy Leadership Index](#).

The road to recovery may be long, but we're making steady strides in the right direction.



Rep. Tina Orwall at the rostrum serving as Assistant Speaker Pro-Tempore.

The best way to ensure that I'm serving you efficiently is by sharing your concerns and ideas with me, so let's stay in touch!

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