

# 24<sup>th</sup> LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT REPORT - 2012



*Senator*  
**JIM HARGROVE**

Jim.Hargrove@leg.wa.gov

411 Legislative Building  
PO Box 40424  
Olympia, WA 98504-0424  
(360) 786-7646

535 East 1<sup>st</sup> Street  
Port Angeles, WA 98362  
(360) 457-2520

311 7<sup>th</sup> Street  
Hoquiam, WA 98550  
(360) 533-9477

**Senior Legislative Assistant:** Patsy Feeley  
**Legislative Assistant:** Shawn O'Neill



*Representative*  
**KEVIN VAN DE WEGE**

Kevin.VanDeWege@leg.wa.gov

PO Box 40600  
Olympia, WA 98504-0600  
(360) 786-7916

64 Village Lane  
Sequim, WA 98382  
(360) 582-9830

**Legislative Assistant:**  
Linda Barnfather



*Representative*  
**STEVE THARINGER**

Steve.Tharinger@leg.wa.gov

PO Box 40600  
Olympia, WA 98504-0600  
(360) 786-7904

64 Village Lane  
Sequim, WA 98382  
(360) 582-9830

**Legislative Assistant:**  
Laura O'Neal

**TOLL-FREE LEGISLATIVE HOTLINE**  
(800) 562-6000

**TTY**  
(800) 635-9993

**WASHINGTON LEGISLATURE WEBSITE**  
[www.leg.wa.gov](http://www.leg.wa.gov)

Dear Neighbors,

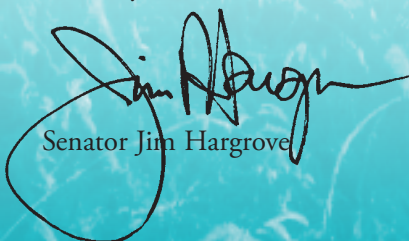
Thank you for giving us the opportunity to serve as your state legislators. It's an honor to work for you and to be a voice for rural communities in our state capitol.

The three of us work together to represent all residents of the 24<sup>th</sup> District, a large geographic area that includes all of Clallam and Jefferson counties, and parts of Grays Harbor County. Teaming up for a single joint newsletter saves printing and postage costs, and cuts down on the amount of mail you receive. This 2012 report contains three main features:

- Our individual reports to you
- A list of reforms that save money, cut red tape, and improve customer service
- Great news about the jobs package that will put thousands of people back to work

We hope this report is useful and informative. As always, please don't hesitate to call, write or email us if you need more information, have questions or concerns, or want to provide feedback.

Sincerely,

  
Senator Jim Hargrove

  
Representative Kevin Van De Wege

  
Representative Steve Tharinger



## Senator Jim Hargrove

Website: [www.sdc.wa.gov/senators/hargrove](http://www.sdc.wa.gov/senators/hargrove)

### 2012 SENATE COMMITTEES:

- Human Services & Corrections (*Chair*)
- Judiciary
- Natural Resources

## 2012 LEGISLATIVE HIGHLIGHTS

### CHANGING THE WAY THE STATE DOES BUSINESS



While making reductions in spending was certainly necessary in 2012, I had the privilege of coordinating efforts to ensure that successful, cost-saving programs were preserved and that bills which would introduce cost-saving reforms were passed. Over the last four months:

- A caseload forecast has revealed savings of \$340 million this biennium due in large part to past reforms to state programs.
- More than 20 reform bills have been passed with savings of more than \$70 million this biennium and more than \$350 million over the next five years.

### PUBLIC SAFETY IS A PRIORITY FOR GOVERNMENT



In my 28 years of working in Olympia, I have worked to improve public safety by reducing the likelihood of someone becoming a criminal. 73 percent of adults in Washington State prisons did time in the juvenile

justice system, so attacking juvenile crime is key to lowering the crime rate and saving money in adult corrections. In 2012, the Legislature advanced public safety by:

- Reforming community supervision to sanction offenders who violate the terms of their release. The swift and sure punishment approach in this bill is proven by research to reduce recidivism
- Establishing gang courts which allow for meaningful intervention with youth in the early stages of gang involvement.
- Reforming Juvenile Disposition Orders to ensure that juvenile offenders complete treatment and pay restitution.
- Reforming the way we manage and treat an individual who has committed a crime and is believed to be mentally ill. Local jails may save over \$9 million each year as defendants move more quickly to trial or treatment.

### IMPROVEMENTS TO CHILD WELFARE



In the last 20 years, our state has seen a drop in juvenile crime and recidivism by emphasizing early intervention and treatment and using proven programs. It is my hope, that the passage of bills that apply similar practices with measurable outcomes to child welfare will improve program efficiency and, most

importantly, maintain the safety of children and keep families together. Those bills will:

- Utilize the Family Assessment Response to transform the way Washington responds to allegations of child abuse or neglect.
- Provide tools to ensure that reforms in child safety continue over time. This allows the state to break the link between removal and funding by saving money when children stay safely at home and reinvesting those funds in successful family interventions.
- Requires the use of performance-based contracts for child welfare services, which link payment to positive results for the children served.
- Build on the past successes by requiring the agencies responsible for child welfare, juvenile justice and child mental health to expand the use of evidence-based practices.

### IMPROVING EFFICIENCY IN NATURAL RESOURCES PERMITTING

Senate Bill 6406, one of the final bills passed by the Legislature in 2012, will make project permitting more certain and allow permits to work for the people who are trying to improve their properties.

The reforms are divided into three sections: issuance of permits for projects that impact fish-bearing waterways, integration of those permits into forest practice permitting, and removing redundancy in environmental analysis.

By lengthening the effective dates of certain regulatory permits and making adjustments to the State Environmental Policy Act, we hope to make those permits and applications more efficient for applicants, while ensuring strong standards for the protection of the state's natural resources, including fisheries.





Photograph courtesy of Linda Barnfather

## Representative Steve Tharinger

Website: [www.housedemocrats.wa.gov/roster/rep-steve-tharinger](http://www.housedemocrats.wa.gov/roster/rep-steve-tharinger)

### 2012 HOUSE COMMITTEES:

- Capital Budget
- Environment (Vice Chair)
- Local Government

## 2012 LEGISLATIVE HIGHLIGHTS

### STANDING UP FOR RURAL HEALTH CARE OPTIONS



Health care costs are rising everywhere. This squeezes family budgets and businesses' bottom lines. Lack of affordable health coverage means more people seek care in our emergency rooms, which in turn raises everyone's costs even further. It's an unsustainable spiral.

Here's how I'm pushing for affordable, accessible health care in our district:

- I supported legislation leveling the playing field for thousands of Olympic Peninsula residents who are losing their individual and family KPS health insurance coverage later this year. They won't have to complete a standard health screening questionnaire when they apply for new insurance. Without this bill, getting comparable coverage could be unaffordable, or even impossible, because of a pre-existing condition. As one grateful Port Angeles resident put it, *"At least we have a fighting chance."*
- I fought against proposed deep cuts to state Medicaid payments for critical access hospitals, which are hospitals with fewer than 25 beds that provide 24-hour emergency care in rural areas. These cuts could have meant major service reductions or even hospital closures. Along with 33 other legislators from both sides of the aisle, I signed a letter to the governor expressing my strong opposition to these proposed cuts. I'm pleased to say that our final state budget protected rural access to emergency health care services by preserving the necessary funding.
- During a press conference on February 29 of this year, I spoke about the need to look closely at certain tax exemptions that have been on the state's books since the 1930's and were originally meant to benefit rural communities but no longer serve that purpose. I favor allowing some of these exemptions to sunset, and using the revenue to invest in better, affordable health care options to serve our rural populations. This is an issue I will continue to push in the coming year.

### HOLDING DRUNK DRIVERS ACCOUNTABLE – KEEPING COMMUNITIES SAFER

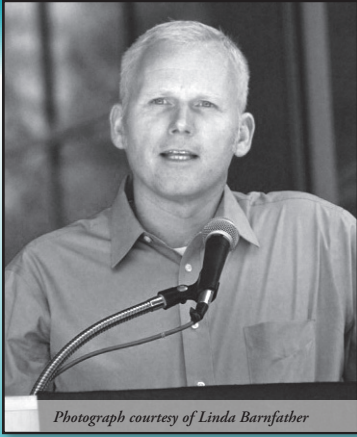
Drunk driving destroys lives, as we have sadly witnessed in our communities. One of the top questions I get from constituents is, *"Why aren't there harsher penalties for drunk driving?"* This year, the legislature passed some major reforms to drunk driving laws that I was pleased to co-sponsor or support:



- Increasing the penalty for vehicle homicide while driving drunk to manslaughter, which automatically increases jail time for offenders (*co-sponsored and voted yes*).
- Increasing financial penalties for those who drive drunk when children are in the vehicle, and tripling the amount of time an ignition interlock device is required to be installed in an offender's vehicle (*co-sponsored and voted yes*).
- Strengthening Washington's ignition-interlock program by adding cameras to the devices—at no cost to the state—to prevent offenders from gaming the system. Also increasing offender liability for emergency-response costs, preventing felony DUI offenses from being vacated by courts, and adding "huffing" chemical vapors to the conditions that fall under DUI laws (*voted yes*).

### THE POLSON MUSEUM IN HOQUIAM – A NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE

Deep cuts to the state's Heritage Grants program means very few community historical and cultural projects that applied for state grants were approved. I'm pleased that a small grant was awarded to Hoquiam's Polson Museum this year to help prepare the Railroad Camp exhibit for public use. This museum is a National Historic Site showcasing our region's proud timber history and supports the local economy by drawing tourists to the area.



Photograph courtesy of Linda Barnsfather

## Representative Kevin Van De Wege

### MAJORITY WHIP

Website: [www.housedemocrats.wa.gov/roster/rep-kevin-van-de-wege](http://www.housedemocrats.wa.gov/roster/rep-kevin-van-de-wege)

### 2012 HOUSE COMMITTEES:

- Agriculture & Natural Resources
- General Government Appropriations & Oversight
- Health Care & Wellness
- Rules

## 2012 LEGISLATIVE HIGHLIGHTS

### MAKING THE DISCOVER PASS WORK BETTER



Thank you for all your emails, phone calls, and letters regarding the Discover Pass, which was implemented last year in order to keep our state parks open. While the majority of you support some kind of user fee in order to fund maintenance and operation of parks, you also expressed dissatisfaction with certain aspects of the pass.

The Discover Pass is an annual vehicle pass that is required for parking at state parks and recreation lands.

I sponsored legislation this year based on your feedback which will make the Discover Pass more user-friendly:

- Transferability of the standard pass between two vehicles
- A “family pass” that is transferable among multiple vehicles, similar to a Northwest Forest Pass
- Allowing the effective date of the pass to be different than the purchase date
- No Discover Pass required for attendees of events – such as weddings – held at a state park if a rental fee has been paid for use of a park facility

It is hoped these consumer-driven changes will make the pass more appealing and increase the number of passes sold in the coming year.

Our state parks system is facing severe financial challenges as it shifts from relying on state general fund monies to being self-sustaining. By instituting the Discover Pass, Washington joined 44 other states that charge a fee to access parks.

### WHAT IS AN “ASSISTED LIVING FACILITY”?



For over 50 years, the state has been licensing and regulating what it officially calls “boarding homes.” These are facilities that provide housing and basic services to seven or more residents. People who live in state-licensed “boarding homes” generally do so for reasons of age or disability.

In the last couple of decades, the care provided by these facilities has evolved. Services provided to residents include housekeeping, meals, laundry,

and activities, but can also include health support or occasional nursing services. These days, the term “boarding home” carries negative connotations and isn’t commonly recognized by consumers and policy makers.

A bill I sponsored this year makes a long-overdue change by replacing the term “boarding home” with “assisted living facility” across state law. Not only is this a more accurate and respectful term, but it brings our state in line with the nationwide trend of this shift in terminology.

Organizations like Senior Services of America and the AARP strongly supported this change.

### URGENT RENOVATIONS TO HISTORIC JEFFERSON COUNTY BUILDINGS

Last year, it was heartbreaking to have to tell Jefferson County and Port Townsend officials that because of cuts to the state Heritage Grants program, no state money was available for urgent renovations at the Jefferson County Courthouse and the Carnegie Library Building. While the news was disappointing, I told them there was a chance funding would be available in 2012. I’m happy to report BOTH projects will receive Heritage Grants through the Washington State Historical Society this year:

- \$300,000 to Jefferson County so the courthouse roof can be tied in a stable manner to the building walls
- \$375,000 to the City of Port Townsend for help with a seismic upgrade of the library – a project that will support up to 80 potential jobs



# 24<sup>th</sup> Legislative District

## 2012 Legislative Report

### SAVING MONEY. CUTTING RED TAPE. IMPROVING SERVICE.



“Reform” means to change for the better. In tough economic times, reform maximizes limited dollars.

Here are some of this year’s government reforms at the state level:

- **Leading by example** – Several administrative and support functions of the state House and Senate are being consolidated to avoid duplication and save money
- **Less paperwork for businesses** – The state offers more options for online filing of business forms
- **Cracking down on Medicaid fraud** – New civil penalties for false or fraudulent claims, and whistleblower protections for those who report them
- **21<sup>st</sup> Century courseware** – Say goodbye to pricey, out-of-date paper textbooks as more public school classrooms shift to newer online courseware and digital textbooks
- **Supporting new businesses and entrepreneurs** – Certain qualified people who are on unemployment can keep receiving it as they work to develop their own start-up business
- **Less frequent driver license renewal** – Extending the renewal period for driver's licenses from five to six years saves motorists time and money
- **Good old-fashioned competition** – New requirements for competition in state procurement ensure the wisest use of taxpayer dollars
- **Responding to citizen feedback** – Changes to the Discover Pass are better for both outdoor enthusiasts and our parks system (*see page 4 for more info*)
- **More efficient environmental permitting** – Forest and hydraulic permitting gets a user-friendly overhaul that helps both property owners and project managers (*see page 2 for more info*)
- **Streamlined permitting for boatyards** – New expedited permitting for required stormwater treatment systems
- **Reducing unfunded mandates to local governments** – Less reporting requirements for cities and counties provides regulatory relief
- **Responsible budgeting** – We’re the first state requiring that two-year balanced budgets also fall within anticipated revenues for the next four years

*No legislature in our state’s history has cut or reformed more than we have since 2008.*



### THIS STATE BUDGET IS BALANCED RESPONSIBLY:

- **NO cuts to public schools or higher education**
- **Safety net SAVED** – health care for the working poor, subsidized child care for working moms and dads, housing and essential needs assistance to mentally and physically challenged adults
- **JOBS for thousands of Washingtonians** (*see page 6*)

# 24<sup>th</sup> LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT REPORT - 2012



*Peninsula College's new Maier Hall, completed last year, was built with the help of the state construction budget. The 62,950 square foot building houses classrooms, labs, and a 131-seat performing arts space. Photo courtesy of Doug Scott, Peninsula College*

## **JOBS. NOW.**

One of the biggest wins of this year's legislative session is passage of a jobs package.

Across the state, people are ready to work. Here's what the 2012 Jobs Now package does:

- Puts 20,000 people to work on shovel-ready construction projects in every single county
- Gives a boost to our construction workers and contractors who have been hurt by the recession
- Fixes our infrastructure – our schools, public buildings, water and sewer systems
- Benefits our strapped cities and counties through sales tax revenue

## **THESE PROJECTS IN THE 24TH DISTRICT ARE READY TO MOVE FORWARD:**

- Nearly \$20,000,000 in public works assistance programs, including the Satsop Business Park Sewer Line Extension Project. This project will help create 150 immediate jobs and secure hundreds of jobs at the park in the future.
- Over \$10,000,000 in improvements to 24th District hatcheries.
- \$1,000,000 in Stormwater Retrofit and LID Competitive Grants to be used for the 4th Street Stormwater Project in Port Angeles.

pg. 6

**24<sup>th</sup> Legislative District** | Sen. Jim Hargrove • Rep. Steve Tharinger • Rep. Kevin Van De Wege

PRESORTED  
U.S. POSTAGE PAID  
OLYMPIA, WA  
PERMIT NO 92

**2012 Legislative Report**  
24<sup>th</sup> Legislative District

**Sen. Jim Hargrove**  
**Rep. Kevin Van De Wege**  
**Rep. Steve Tharinger**

PO Box 40600  
Olympia, WA 98504-0600  
Printed on recycled paper