



41st District

2012

Legislative Wrap-up



Rep. Judy Clibborn



Rep. Marcie Maxwell

Dear Neighbors:

As seatmates in the state House of Representatives, we're joining together to send you this Legislative Wrap-up and to announce that we've reopened our district office in Bellevue. Together, we're honored to serve the people of the 41st Legislative District.

We're happy to report the 2012 legislative sessions concluded much better than they began. The economy is improving, the jobs picture is looking brighter, and in the end legislators united to pass a solid bipartisan budget that makes no further cuts to public schools or higher education and that preserves the health care and human services safety net for the most vulnerable citizens.

You'll probably be as pleased as we are that legislators also united to pass important government reforms this year (*see story to the right*).

We hope you find this Legislative Wrap-up useful. This is our only newsletter for 2012, and we teamed up to cut costs in half. If you have questions about anything you see here, please let us know. And if there is a topic you'd like to hear about that isn't discussed, just let us know and we'll be happy to answer your questions.

Please remember we serve you all year long, and not only when the Legislature is in session. We're happy to be home and back in our district office. So please don't hesitate to email, phone, write or stop by our district office with any thoughts, concerns or questions you have about what our state should (or should not) be doing. Serving you and our 41st District is a pleasure as well as an honor.

Sincerely,

Judy Clibborn *Marcie Maxwell*

Judy

Marcie

Solving the Budget Crisis

The Seattle Times called the new state budget "a triumph of the middle." It's rare for groups ranging from the Children's Alliance to the state Chambers of Commerce to agree in praising a budget, and rare to pass an operating budget with overwhelming bipartisan support.

A modest uptick in revenues (\$87 million), reduced caseloads due to tighter eligibility requirements (saving \$340 million), and a reform of how revenues are dispersed to local governments (saving \$238 million) helped us to pass a balanced and responsible budget that cuts \$357 million from ongoing spending but makes no further cuts to education or higher education.

In addition to saving schools and colleges from hundreds of millions of dollars of further cuts that were proposed in December, we saved critical funding for:

- Adult Day care, Meals on Wheels and other supports for disabled senior citizens
- Child-care for low-income working women
- The Basic Health Plan
- The Disability Lifeline
- Youth Suicide Prevention funding
- Home care support for the disabled
- Children's health care

These and other core services were spared in the final budget. In addition, a new Four-year Balanced Budget reform will help us protect our core priorities in the future by curbing unsustainable spending.

Yes, we're concerned about some budget cuts, such as those to county mental health services. But the final budget is much better than anyone imagined possible just a few months ago.

Fortunately, the economy is slowly improving, jobs are coming back, and better times are ahead. The balanced, responsible, sustainable—and bipartisan—budget we enacted will help.

Toll Free Legislative Hotline:

1-800-562-6000

Hearing Impaired Hotline:

1-800-635-9993



**State Representative
Judy Clibborn**

Olympia Office:

415 John L. O'Brien Bldg.
PO Box 40600
Olympia, WA 98504-0600
(360) 786-7926

District Office:

1611 116th Ave NE Ste 206
Bellevue, WA 98004
(425) 453-3075

Email:

Judy.Clibborn@leg.wa.gov

Committees:

Transportation
(Chair)

Health Care & Wellness

When I'm not listening to citizens and advocating for our district, much of my time is devoted to chairing the House Transportation Committee. No one knows better than our district that we're in a time of transition in transportation. SR-520 tolling is now working more smoothly, I-90 commuters are beginning to see fewer traffic diversion problems, and local investments are having an impact. March was a big month for us:

- Opening the new 24-hour HOV lane from Mercer Island to Bellevue will improve safety, shorten commute times and prepare the way for future light rail.
- Launching the final phase of the Rainier Avenue South Improvement Project promises faster and safer travel on the major north-south route through downtown Renton.
- Work on the new SR-520 Bridge reached into Lake Washington. My bill to continue work during permit appeals helped by preventing delays, keeping 900 workers on the

job and avoiding as much as \$165 million in higher costs due to delays.

The New Transportation Budget

The supplemental transportation budget was another March milestone. I'm proud Washington's Chambers of Commerce called it a session highlight and that *Mike Armstrong (R-Wenatchee), the top House Republican on transportation, said the bipartisan budget process I led "shows the best of what we can do here in Olympia. It shows what the citizens of Washington state expect us to do, and that is work across the aisle, forget our differences, and try to find the common ground that we know exists."*

Unlike state operating budgets, transportation budgets are funded almost entirely from federal and state dollars that

are dedicated solely to transportation. The challenge is that federal dollars are drying up and high- and no-gas-mileage vehicles mean we're now getting much less gas-tax revenues per mile driven. The Connecting Washington Task Force said we'll need an additional \$21 billion for transportation over the next decade to preserve the system and support our economy.

Solving these funding challenges is vital to job creation, our economy and quality of life. For example, the \$9.8 billion we invested in 2011-12 supported more than 43,000 jobs while making needed repairs and improvements in highways, ferries, transit, rail, the State Patrol, Safe Routes to Schools, and city and county roads.

This year, we made a down payment on long-term needs by raising modest revenues, such as a \$4 annual hike in the cost of a drivers' license (but they'll last *six* instead of *five* years). Our priority was to focus limited resources where they'd have the most impact. For example, local commuters will like the \$40 million we invested in a new HOV flyover to address the awful backups where SR 167 HOT lanes enter I-405. The whole interchange will flow more smoothly.

State and business leaders also like the seed money we included to do preliminary work on major projects such as fixing I-5 near Joint Base Lewis McChord and building new interchanges at 124th St. and 148th on SR-520. This seed money will make sure these projects are ready to go when the funding to move forward becomes available.

We definitely face challenges ahead on transportation. But if we continue to focus on real needs and work together in a bipartisan spirit for the common good, I'm certain we'll rise to the challenge and make our great state even greater!



The future SR-167/I-405 HOV lane flyover



Education Funding

A few days into the session, the Washington State Supreme Court's McCleary decision found that the state must comply with its constitutional duty to make ample provision for education of all students in Washington. The Court also confirmed that education reforms I helped lead to passage in 2009 and 2010 (HB 2261, HB 2776) are the right strategy for providing our children with a quality education. Those reforms consisted of redefining basic education and implementing a new formula to fully fund basic education in our public schools.

I'm pleased to report that in this legislative session, we made no cuts to K-12 education and no cuts to higher education, despite facing a \$1 billion state budget deficit. We held true to our promises and commitments to fund education, giving every child in this state an opportunity to learn and be successful.

Teacher Principal Evaluation Program (TPEP)

Legislation enacted in 2010 directed development of revised evaluation systems for teachers and principals, including eight new evaluation criteria for teachers, eight criteria for principals, and a four-level rating system. The revised evaluation systems have been piloted first in eight school districts plus one consortium of small rural school districts, beginning with a design phase in 2010-11 and with collaborative implementation in 2011 - 2012.



Initial reports have indicated the new evaluation system is working well, and this session, the Legislature approved SB 5895, which provides training, support, and accountability in the Teacher Principal Evaluation Program. The new program will roll out statewide beginning in the 2013 - 2014 school year. It's based on a professional growth model that builds upon the strengths of each teacher and principal in Washington schools. Safeguards are in place that accurately reflect performance and account for diverse characteristics of classrooms and communities. With this new evaluation program, our goal is to ensure that a great teacher is in every classroom supported by great principal leadership in every school building.

Leading in high-tech and aerospace

Washington has enjoyed being a leader in the high-tech and aerospace industries for many decades. But without continued investment in high-tech education, we won't have the skilled workforce needed to fill these good jobs that are vital to our region's economic success. This session, I worked with the governor and business leaders, sponsoring two bills that improve policies and investments in the areas of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM).

House Bill 2159 creates a competitive STEM grant program that will award grants for:

- Entry-level aerospace assembly training for high school students.
- Enhanced manufacturing skills programs for skill centers.
- Specialized STEM courses for high schools as part of Project Lead-The-Way.

This legislation will help ensure that the aerospace, technology, and innovative jobs of today and in the future are going to well-prepared students in Washington state. Another bill I sponsored – **House Bill 2160** – will incorporate additional STEM knowledge and skills into the Professional Educator Standards Board teacher certification process. We must better prepare our teachers in STEM content, including elementary school teachers who nurture their students' early creativity and curiosity. These two bills passed with large bipartisan majorities in both the House and the Senate.



State Representative
Marcie Maxwell

Deputy Majority
Leader for Education
& Opportunity

Olympia Office:

327 John L. O'Brien Bldg.
PO Box 40600
Olympia, WA 98504-0600
(360) 786-7894

District Office:

1611 116th Ave NE Ste 206
Bellevue, WA 98004
(425) 453-3037

Email:

Marcie.Maxwell@leg.
wa.gov

Committees:

Community & Economic
Development & Housing
Education
Education Appropriations
& Oversight
Rules

Rep. Judy Clibborn



Rep. Marcie Maxwell

Major Victories

Job creation: House Democrats worked with the Senate on a bipartisan construction budget that will pump over \$1.1 billion into our economy. These construction projects will not only help build a better Washington, but will also add 18,000 jobs to the workforce.

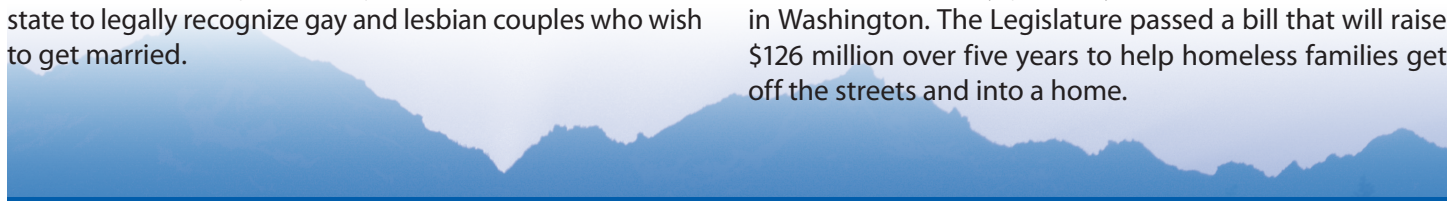
Cracking down on drunk drivers: Drunk driving continues to be a serious problem on our roadways. This year the Legislature passed bills that increase penalties for vehicular homicide while driving drunk, increase penalties for driving drunk with children in the vehicle, and strengthen our ignition-interlock program.

Marriage equality: If SB 6239 survives an expected referendum challenge, Washington will become the seventh state to legally recognize gay and lesbian couples who wish to get married.

Helping wage-earners: In an effort to fix our out-of-date wage garnishment laws, the Legislature passed a bill that provides much-needed relief for struggling families to keep more of their paychecks – up to \$145 more – as they work to pay off their debts.

Discover Pass: Critical improvements were made to the Discover Pass program. When the program was initially established, a pass was required for each vehicle. The new \$50 “family pass” will make it easier and more affordable for families to enjoy our beautiful state parks.

Washington’s homeless children and families: The recession has pushed many vulnerable families into homelessness. On any given day, 23,000 people are homeless in Washington. The Legislature passed a bill that will raise \$126 million over five years to help homeless families get off the streets and into a home.



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P.O. Box 40600
Olympia, WA 98504-0600

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