

2012 Legislative Report

Roger Goodman 45th LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT



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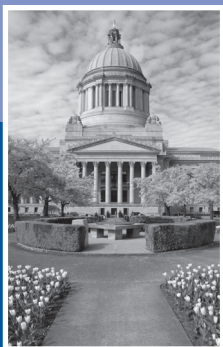
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COMMITTEES

- Judiciary (Vice Chair)
- Early Learning & Human Services
- Public Safety & Emergency Preparedness
- Rules
- Statute Law



Dear Friends and Neighbors,

I hope my report on the 2012 legislative sessions finds you and your loved ones well. To save mailing costs in a tough budget climate, I'm only sending this one report this year. But I hope you'll remember that listening and responding to the people I serve is my top priority, so please feel free to contact me with any questions, suggestions or concerns you might have.

I'm happy to report the legislative sessions ended much better than they began. After a bumpy ride caused by the economic downturn and revenue shortfalls, Democrats and Republicans united to pass a budget that spares education and higher education from further deep cuts and preserves the safety net for our most vulnerable citizens.

You can see all the details about the new budget at my legislative website.

While all eyes were on solving the budget crisis, we also passed good laws to encourage jobs and economic growth, promote justice and public safety, and solve problems that affect day-to-day life in Washington. This report touches on some of the key new laws we passed, including my priority legislation. It also describes some unfinished business that we still need to get done to help our schools, families and future.

Now that the session is over, I'm happy to be home in Kirkland and our 45th District. We've reopened our district office, and I hope you'll find time to stop by.

Let's keep in touch!

Roger Goodman



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CRACKING DOWN ON DRUNK DRIVING

My Kirkland neighbor, Steve Lacey, a father of two, was driving to Costco when a drunk driver killed him. It could have been any of us. After Steve died, his wife told me she spends her days “watching my children miss their dad,” and she asked for stronger DUI laws.

I worked with police, prosecutors, Mothers Against Drunk Driving and many others to pass landmark DUI reforms to bring more justice to victims and more accountability to offenders. Key changes will:

- Add cameras to alcohol-detecting ignition-interlock devices—at no public cost—to prevent DUI offenders from cheating by having someone else give the breath sample.
- Allow law enforcement to administer alcohol tests for felony DUI arrests without the suspect’s consent—and prevent courts from sealing or vacating felony DUI records.
- Expand DUI laws to cover “huffing”—inhaling chemical vapors to get high.
- Increase penalties for all DUI crimes when a child is in the vehicle. This includes tripling how long offenders must use ignition-interlock devices in their vehicles.
- More than double the minimum sentence for vehicular homicide, from 31 to 78 months in prison.

There’s more to do. The House of Representatives voted 95-3 for my bill (HB 2405) to allow judges to order drunk drivers who kill a parent to pay child support. But it didn’t pass the Senate this year. We need to put this reform into law.

SEATTLE TIMES FACT CHECK

March 17, 2012

“The claim: More people are killed by drunken drivers in Washington state than by all other criminals combined. That’s what state Rep. Roger Goodman, D-Kirkland, told his legislative colleagues recently while arguing for wide-ranging changes to the state’s drinking-and-driving laws.

What we found: Mostly true.

Drunken drivers kill a surprising number of people in Washington state — 2,042 over the past decade, according to statistics collected from the FBI’s Uniform Crime Report.

That’s more than the 2,028 people who were the victims of an intentional killing during that same 10-year period from 2000 to 2010.”

(The Times adds that in five of those 10 years intentional killings exceeded drunk driver killings. “But each year, deaths from both causes are in the triple digits.”)

KEEPING VICTIMS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE SAFE.

Domestic violence has killed more than 750 Washingtonians since 1997. Many other victims live in fear that their abusers will track them down. I’m grateful that lawmakers voted unanimously for a new law I wrote (HB 2363) that will bring more safety and peace of mind to domestic-violence victims.

We focused on dangerous cases where victims found it necessary to flee and hide from abusers, often with children in hand. They’ll be safer now, because we increased penalties for violating “no contact” orders and protected the confidentiality of information that could lead abusers to the victim’s place of refuge. Incredibly, this information was sometimes made available in court papers. We solved that problem and also made it a crime to maliciously release confidential information about the location of domestic-violence refuges.

This law builds on the sweeping 2011 domestic-violence reforms I sponsored (HB 2777). And we’re not done yet. Police, prosecutors and the Washington State Coalition Against Domestic Violence agree we must find better ways to reduce repeat domestic-violence offenses. The new law requires a study of domestic-violence treatment alternatives to guide further reforms.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS: THE HIGH-QUALITY EARLY LEARNING ACT

My proposal for universal voluntary preschool—the High Quality Early Learning Act—won widespread support from educators, fiscal conservatives and many others who understand that quality preschool is the most cost-effective investment we could make to help kids. But even though this investment would ultimately save school districts thousands of dollars per child in remedial and other costs, we didn’t get it enacted in this challenging budget year. Wealthy and very poor families already have access to quality preschool. Making high quality early learning affordable for the middle class will be a top personal priority until we get it done!

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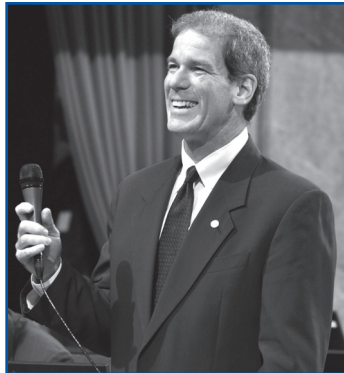
HELPING WAGE-EARNERS AND SMALL BUSINESSES

The amount of a worker's wages that a creditor can't touch is set by a wage-exemption to garnishment that hadn't been changed in 25 years. My House Bill 1552 rewrote Washington's garnishment law and increased that exemption from 30 to 35 times the federal minimum wage. That translates into an additional \$145 a month that struggling wage earners can keep as they pay off their debts.

When the bill passed, Marcy Bowers, the executive director of Statewide Poverty Action Network, said: "This law will provide immediate relief to struggling families across the state. More money in people's bank accounts will mean that low-income families can better meet their basic needs in these hard economic times."

The reforms will also help small businesses save time and money, because we cleaned up useless and confusing paperwork requirements that added costs but helped no one. I owe a shout-out to the small business leaders on the garnishment reform group. They had great suggestions for helping small businesses. Everyone won in this reform.

OTHER SESSION HIGHLIGHTS CITIZENS ASK ME ABOUT



Rep. Goodman speaking on the house floor.

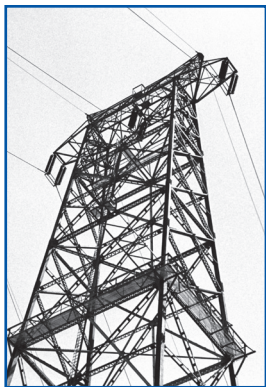
Job creation: Passing the Jobs Now Act and making smart investments in the state construction budget will help to jump-start job growth in the hard-hit construction industry. The Association of Washington Business estimates the new investments will create 43,000 jobs for K-12 construction and other projects.

Marriage Equality: I supported marriage equality because I believe in equal legal rights for people living in committed relationships, and I also believe discrimination is wrong. If the law we passed survives a potential referendum challenge, it will end marriage discrimination against gays and lesbians in Washington.

Discover Pass: In response to citizen complaints, a new law makes the Discover Pass more family-friendly by allowing the pass to be valid for two vehicles. In addition, a new \$50 "family pass" was created that is transferrable to any vehicle.

Higher Education Efficiencies: A tip-of-the-hat to my seatmate Rep. Larry Springer for his higher education efficiency reforms. They'll allow Washington's colleges to direct more money to academic services by reducing expensive state paperwork mandates.

PROTECTING THE PUBLIC FROM METAL THEFT



Metal theft is about more than copper or brass. Power outages and electrocutions tied to metal thefts are fast-growing threats to public safety—97 percent of the nation's utilities were hit by metal thefts in 2010. Thieves are even ripping brass plaques from graves and dismantling irrigation systems to resell the metal.

I wrote the new law (HB 2570) that adds the cost of any damage resulting from a metal theft to the value of the stolen metal when determining criminal sentences. This will help to deter these crimes. The bill also creates a task force—funded by stakeholders, not taxpayers—to coordinate efforts to prevent metal theft and identify stolen metals. Listening with an open mind to all sides of issues is the best way to create good laws with the fewest unintended consequences.



Rep. Goodman spending time with his family on Children's Day.

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A NEW TOOL TO REDUCE JUVENILE CRIME

It sounds like common sense: Young offenders who accept responsibility for repairing the damage their crimes have done to victims are much less likely to reoffend and hurt others. It's also a proven fact: The Washington State Institute for Public Policy (WSIPP) showed that "restorative justice" programs could save victims and taxpayers more than \$7,000 per case in reduced crime and criminal-justice costs.

When lawmakers heard the facts, they voted unanimously for my proposal (HB 1775) to create a restorative-justice option that brings together crime victims, offenders and their families to help the juveniles understand how their crime affected others and what they must do to make sufficient restoration. Importantly, this option is only available for non-violent offenses and only when participation by all parties—including the crime victims—is voluntary.

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