

49th LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT



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Sharon Wylie

Committees:

- Government Accountability & Oversight (Vice Chair)
- Higher Education
- Technology & Economic Development

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Speaker Pro Tempore

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- Rules
- Transportation

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Annette Cleveland

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- Early Learning & K-12 Education
- Energy Environment & Telecommunications
- Health Care

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Dear neighbors,

The 2014 regular legislative session began on Monday, January 13. While all 147 state lawmakers may not agree on numerous issues, we do share a common goal: to steer a good course for Washington. How we get there is a different story, but be assured that your 49th Legislative District delegation is committed to making Washington a thriving home:

- For strong families.
- For a secure middle class.
- For safer, healthier communities.

A November special session and the Boeing Package

The November special legislative session approved two aerospace-industry measures targeted toward keeping Boeing's 777X work here in our state. The package includes:

An extension of existing aerospace tax preferences from 2024 to 2040 ([Senate Bill 5952](#)). Strong accountability measures specify Boeing must keep the 777X jobs here in Washington; otherwise, the tax breaks will be revoked.



- Funding for an additional 1,000 aerospace training slots in our community and technical colleges ([House Bill 2088](#)),
- Funding for training current composite wing fabricators,
- Funding to help streamline the large facility permitting process, and capital investments to complete training and research centers.

What about the bridge?

The Columbia River Crossing project is not included in the latest Senate transportation plan. We are determined that people in the 49th Legislative District and other parts of Southwest Washington receive value for their tax dollars. At this point there aren't any new infrastructure projects listed in the Senate Republican's proposed transportation package. We need to reinvest in our communities by supporting transportation infrastructure improvements that will make it easier to move our people and our goods.

Make no mistake: We will all work hard to ensure that anything coming out of the Legislature this year holds value and relevancy for citizens in our district and the rest of Washington.

Investing in our community and our children

Last year, as a result of the State Supreme Court's McCleary ruling that ordered the Legislature to put more money into K-12 education, the Legislature put nearly \$1 billion back into our state's basic education system. Despite our work, we are far from fulfilling our obligation; there is more to do and we must continue on the course we began last session. Our state's school kids deserve a world-class education that will help ready and prepare them for their future. One way to help achieve that goal is to make greater investments in our youngest learners through funding more early learning opportunities throughout the state.



Establishing a "Sales-Tax Holiday"

A key objective in [House Bill 1329](#), the "Sales-Tax Holiday" bill, is to put money back into the pockets of working-class families. By setting up the "holiday" a couple of days right before a new school-year, parents would be relieved from having to pay the state sales tax on school items such as clothing under \$100 and every school supply under \$10.

Small businesses and other retailers, as well as city and county officials have worked to help develop this "people's tax break." Since we've recently gone out of our way to woo Boeing, we should write a genuine, reliable tax break for average families. This strategy will greatly benefit our area, because every year businesses in our own Clark County lose a ton of profits to their Oregon competitors. This fair tax policy will help families and encourage job growth and economic development.

Leveling the playing field: fairer taxation

Washington's small businesses create jobs and deliver goods and services in communities throughout our state. They represent 98.1 percent of all Washington employers, and they employ 53.7 percent of the private-sector labor force. Small businesses are clearly anything but small when it comes to our state's economy.

Unlike big corporations, small companies are often at a disadvantage when complying with federal and state regulations. Since these small businesses are the ones most responsible for job creation, they are key stakeholders in our work toward tax reform. In listening to their views, we absolutely agree that a fairer taxation system must be established that doesn't ignore their significance. This session we will work on increasing the fairness and sustainability of our tax system. It's time to level the playing field.

Stronger public disclosure

We need to make it easier for citizens to follow the political-money trail. That is exactly the goal of [House Bill 1005](#), which has support from the League of Women Voters and other citizens and groups all over our state. Consider that:

- Hundreds of registered lobbyists are employed here in the state of Washington.
- Upward of a thousand private employers have retained lobbyists to work here.
- 150 public agencies also employ lobbyists to work here.
- Millions of dollars are spent on lobbying every year in the state of Washington.

The [Public Disclosure Commission](#) (PDC) was created four decades ago in a citizen-initiative passed by more than 70 percent of voters. Its current outdated system makes it difficult for the public to really know who's giving what to whom—and why. It's time for Washington to expedite speedier, user-friendlier public access to information about the financial-doings of lobbyists, and the people who hire them. This bill is a perfect example of an open-government "sunshine law."

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Protecting consumers

We need to update our response to some emerging consumer issues. Washington has a vulnerable aging population that is striving to function independently and deal with residential upgrades, healthcare systems and complex technology issues. We already see more elder fraud and abuse cases, so we must coordinate efforts to protect consumers—especially vulnerable populations—and update our laws to meet today's challenges. We want people to be safe and as independent as possible. Now is the time to gather our resources and improve the way we provide essential protections and recourse for the people of our state.

Incorporating Mental Health Services into mainstream care

Mental health care is an important aspect of health care that was not always included in health plans before the implementation of the Affordable Care Act. The expansion of Medicaid and the various qualified health plans offered on the exchange will create more opportunities for primary care doctors and mental health specialists to coordinate care for their patients, many for the first time. We need to open up the dialogue even further to make sure that those who need mental health care are able to receive the care they need through a better integrated system in order to succeed.

Thank you for taking the time to read this letter. If you have any feedback, questions, concerns or ideas for legislation, please get in touch with us. And if you want to keep up with the happenings in Olympia this session, please visit our web-sites to join our electronic updates lists.

Sincerely,


Sharon Wylie


Jim Moeller


Annette Cleveland