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Committees

- Education
- Government Operations and Elections
- Judiciary
- Rules

Legislative Update

October, 2013

Dear neighbors,

With the summer behind us and our kids back in school, this is a good time to provide you with a recap of the 2013 legislative session. But it's also a great opportunity to start looking ahead at the issues we should address next year.

The 2013-2015 Operating Budget

Though the 2013-15 budget process was long and challenging, I'm proud that we produced a responsible budget that includes a \$1 billion down payment in education including expanding all-day Kindergarten, extends health care coverage to 300,000 more people in our state, holds the line on higher education tuition costs, and protects our most vulnerable citizens.

This budget does not raise new taxes; however, the state will get \$85 million in net revenue over the next two years from closing the telecom tax loophole, which helps in allocating more money into schools, per the [Supreme Court's McCleary decision](#).

Without other new sources of revenue, it's really remarkable that we were able to make some important investments in education, such as:

K-12 / Public School

- \$374 million for MSOC (Materials, Supplies and Operating Costs)
- \$143 million for the Learning Assistance Program (LAP) expansion
- \$131.7 million for pupil transportation
- \$103.6 million to reduce early elementary class size (K-1)
- \$89.8 million to expand all-day Kindergarten
- \$15 million for teacher and principal evaluation training

Higher Education

Determining in-state undergraduate tuition policy and the level of support for colleges and universities was challenging. The compromise we reached was to not increase tuition in the 2013-15 biennium, but provide sufficient state support to higher education institutions to make up for the lack of tuition revenue.

In the first year of the biennium, there is a “hard” cap on tuition, meaning that there can be no increase in tuition. In the second year, there is a “soft” cap, which allows institutions to raise tuition if they provide the requisite increase in State Need Grant support. We also made sure the GET program was salient and available to families as it has provided a great way for parents to invest in their kid’s college tuition and keep costs lower.

My Bills

Policy-wise, I am proud that six of my prime-sponsored bills were signed into law.

- **Helping victims of the sex trade:** [HB 1291](#) requires that fees from impound vehicles used in prostitution offenses go towards reducing the commercial sale of sex and rehabilitative services for the victims.
- **Helping troubled youth in our schools:** [HB 1336](#) requires school districts to adopt a plan for recognition of emotionally distressed youth, initial screening of their warning signs, and appropriate responses to crisis. This bill will equip school personnel with the necessary tools to ensure the safety of our children.
- **Compensating those wrongly convicted:** [HB 1341](#) provides modest compensation for time spent imprisoned due to a wrongful conviction, giving the victims an opportunity to get back on their feet.
- **Following up on suicide prevention:** [HB 1376](#) clarifies the requirement in my 2012 bill (ESHB 2366) that certain health professionals complete training in suicide assessment, treatment, and management.
- **Giving adoptees the right to learn about their background:** [HB 1525](#) allows adult adoptees access to their original birth certificate, unless the birth parent has filed a valid affidavit of nondisclosure.
- **Bringing more clarity to the social work licensure requirements:** [HB 1213](#) makes a few revisions to the existing statute that clarify requirements and help newly graduated social work students find the supervision they need to become licensed.



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Accomplishments

My colleagues and I worked very hard on policies that promote strong families, a secure middle class, and a better world for our children. Here are some of the highlights of what was accomplished this year:

K-12 Basic Education

- **\$89.8 million in the budget to expand all-day Kindergarten**
- **Supporting Successful Schools (SB 5329)** — provides support to struggling schools to help make improvements in student outcomes.
- **Boosting Academic Acceleration (HB 1642)** — provides greater opportunities for all students to participate in high-rigor, dual-enrollment courses. (Running Start not included.)
- **Opening the door for more potential teachers (HB 1178)** — there's a serious lack of diversity among the educators in our classrooms. Diversity makes us stronger and increases student achievement, this bill will help recruit more diverse candidates for our schools.
- Also, this year's budget fully funds a state approved **Individualized Graduation and Degree Program** located in the Kent School District in Kent Hill Plaza that provides education and services to older youth, ages 16-21.



Higher Education & Workforce Development



- **Early registration for Veterans (HB 1109)** — requires public institutions that offer early registration based on academic standing or other measures also implement an early-registration process for veterans.
- **Increasing vocation rehabilitation education options (HB 1887)** — In 2007, the legislature created the Vocational Rehabilitation Program - a pilot project to retrain injured workers. Legislation passed this session directs the program's oversight committee to develop a plan that allows injured workers to complete their rehabilitation program at four-year universities.
- **Making it easier for small businesses to take advantage of the Job Skills Program (HB 1247)** — The JSP assists small businesses by providing short-term employee training programs. This adds greater flexibility for employers and makes training programs more accessible, which benefits both small businesses and workers.

Jobs, Businesses and Workers

- The **Capital Budget preserves and creates jobs** with construction projects across the state. To see the ones in the 33rd Legislative District:
 - Go to <http://fiscal.wa.gov/BudgetC.aspx>
 - Select “Legislative District” in the “Group By” field
 - Select the 33rd district in the “List” field
 - Click on the “View Report” button on the right
 - Click on the “-” sign to see the list of projects
- **Improving the Shared Work Program (HB 1396)** — allows payment of partial unemployment compensation benefits when employers want to keep workers at reduced hours instead of laying them off. It assists employers who are struggling to keep workers employed and allows workers to make livable wages instead of losing their jobs.
- **Maintaining the Privacy of Employees’ Social Networking Accounts (SB 5211)** — known as the “Facebook Bill”, it protects workers’ privacy by prohibiting employers from requiring or coercing employees or job applicants to disclose login information to their personal social networking accounts.
- **Protecting Workers’ Compensation.** A series of bills (HB 1463, HB 1464, HB 1465, HB 1672, SB 5112, SB 5127, and SB 5128) introduced this session were aimed at eroding the benefits our workers’ compensation system by lowering payments to injured workers, ceding control of claims to private companies, and cutting loose injured workers from the system. We successfully argued that earlier reforms were showing great promise and should have a chance to be fully enacted before making further, unwarranted changes.
- **Defending Family-Wage Jobs.** HB 1249, HB 1255, HB 1672, SB 5107, SB 5684, and SB 5686 were introduced to create a “death by a thousand cuts” to Prevailing-Wage programs in Washington State. We **prevented** any erosion of this valuable program to ensure that construction workers continue to earn a living wage.



Children and Families



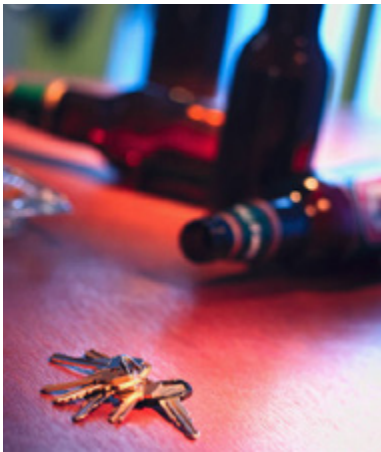
- **Foster care beyond age 18 (SB 5405)** — expands the eligibility for extended foster-care services, giving more foster youth the opportunity to remain in care beyond their 18th birthday if they are involved in post-high school education or job training.
- **Supporting educational success for foster youth (HB 1566)** — Research has demonstrated that foster children have disproportionately poor academic outcomes due to traumatic life experiences and multiple school and family transitions. This bill creates the role of an education liaison for foster youth and clarifies the specific responsibilities of both the state and school districts regarding a foster child’s education.
- **Protecting children, reuniting families (SB 5147)** — gives shelters and other organizations that provide services to homeless and runaway youth 72 hours to contact the youth’s parents or child protective services. This gives shelters adequate time to gain the trust of a runaway youth, and allow for parents and children to work out their differences.
- **Performance measures for our child welfare system (HB 1774)** — requires the Department of Social and Health Services to work with a university-based child welfare research entity to develop metrics for measuring the outcomes, safety and well-being of kids served by the child welfare system.

Health Care

- **Medicaid Expansion is one of the biggest wins in health care this year.** More than 300,000 Washington people will gain coverage by 2020.
- **Healthy lifestyles for seniors.** The Program for All-Inclusive Care for the Elderly (PACE) helps seniors regain and maintain their health. This measure allows DSHS allow clients enrolled in PACE to elect to remain in the program, even when their health status improves, so they don't lose the services that are keeping them healthy.
- **Health care, public safety ([HB 1114](#))** — fills the gap between the criminal justice system and mental health care providers. It ensures that violent mental health offenders get the treatment they need, instead of ending up on the streets.



Safety



- **Tougher DUI law ([SB 5912](#))** — We set smarter and tougher standards for repeat offenders, including mandatory arrest and booking, faster ignition interlock installation, increased penalties for driving drunk with a child in the car. We also increase access to alcohol and drug treatment for those with substance abuse problems.
- **Stalking Protection Orders ([HB 1383](#))** — establishes a type of protection order specifically designed to protect victims of stalking, giving a judge the authority to issue a protection order similar to what is already available to sexual assault and domestic violence victims.
- **Marital Rape Loophole gone ([HB 1108](#))** — removes from law the exemption in the 3rd-degree rape statutes for spousal rape.
- **Preventing Alcohol Poisoning Deaths in Youth ([HB 1404](#))** — prohibits a person under the age of 21 years from being charged or prosecuted for being a minor in possession of alcohol when acting in good faith and seeking medical assistance for themselves or someone else experiencing alcohol poisoning.
- **More Penalties for Internet Ads that Facilitate the Commission of Sex-Trafficking Crimes ([SB 5488](#))** — imposes an additional \$5,000 fee when a person is convicted of Commercial Sexual Abuse of a Minor, Promoting Commercial Sexual Abuse of a Minor, or Promoting Travel for Commercial Sexual Abuse of a Minor if an Internet advertisement was instrumental in facilitating the offense.

As always, I thank you for your feedback, comments and ideas because your input is extremely important to me. Please know that although session is over, I am your representative year 'round, so don't hesitate to contact me with your concerns.

Sincerely,