



2014 WASHINGTON STATE LEGISLATURE REPORT TO THE 38th Legislative District

Spring 2014



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Dear neighbors,

We finished our business on time this year, adjourning just before midnight on the 60th day. The most-publicized matter before us was finding a compromise on the supplemental operating budget. We reached agreement on a modest no-new-taxes budget that protects our safety net and makes some significant investments, such as:

- Funding to make services available for 5,000 more people with developmental disabilities.
- \$11.7 million in additional funding for desperately needed mental health services.
- \$58 million in extra money for K-12 schools for books, technology and supplies.

We also managed to keep in place a hard cap on college-tuition increases for at least another year. And we ensured there will be funding for the University Center of North Puget Sound, located on the Everett Community College campus.

Also worth noting is passage of the **Dream Act**, a milestone in making sure that deserving, hard-working students have a fair chance to go to college. An issue of fairness, this legislation addresses an unhappy reality for thousands of students who were brought to the United States as little kids and are living here in an undocumented status through no fault of their own. Like most students, they embrace the dream of earning a higher education, but in many cases can't afford it. This new law allows them the same rights as their peers to apply for financial aid to help with tuition.

As for a big disappointment this session, the Republican-led Senate rejected a provision in our House budget-proposal that would have provided a long-overdue cost-of-living adjustment for our public-school teachers.

Thank you for taking time to read our report today. We look forward to your feedback.

Take care,

Toll-free Legislative Hotline: 1-800-562-6000 TDD (for hearing-impaired): 1-800-635-9993

Senator John McCoy

New role, new challenges

It has been my honor to represent our Everett, Marysville and Tulalip communities as a state representative in the House over the past decade. This year saw many changes as I was appointed to the Senate in late 2013.

My first session in the Senate was a busy one and had its share of challenges. I was chosen by my colleagues to serve as the ranking member on the Energy, Environment & Telecommunications Committee. This committee plays an important role in ensuring we protect the clean air and water in our state. It was a natural fit after serving as chair of the House Environment Committee.

I also now serve on the Senate Government Operations Committee and the Senate Rules Committee.



Concerns over oil transportation

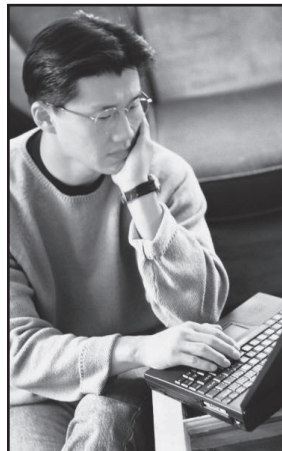
As the boom continues in the Bakken oil fields of North Dakota, we are seeing more oil trains passing through our communities here in the Washington. These trains travel through our cities and towns on their way to export terminals and refineries, but we know little more than that. What type of oil they are hauling? How much? How often? What is the level of risk

to our communities in the event of a spill? We tried hard to pass legislation that would give communities answers to these important questions, but unfortunately, we could not reach a compromise with Senate Republicans on a final bill. I will continue to work on this issue so we can prevent tragedies and ensure that our communities have the knowledge necessary to take measures to protect against oil accidents.

Native American Heritage Day a reality

I am happy to report that Native American Heritage Day is now an official state holiday. I sponsored [Senate Bill 6078](#), which makes the fourth Friday in November a state and school legal holiday. Under state law, state offices and schools are already closed the day immediately following Thanksgiving Day.

This holiday gives that day special meaning and is extremely significant to the many tribal members in our state while offering all Washingtonians a chance to celebrate the culture, traditions and languages of Native Americans.



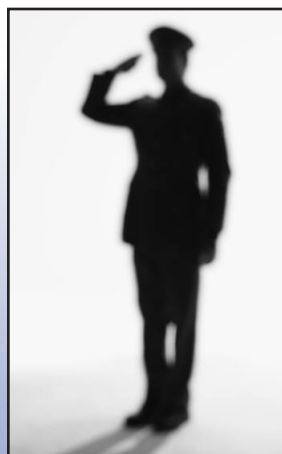
Helping students be college and career ready

One important piece of legislation we passed this session raises the graduation credit requirements for high school seniors from 20 to 24 credits. This bill has been a priority of both Democrats and Republicans in discussions about improving education. The bill will take \$97 million that was appropriated last year to increase instructional hours

and apply it directly to the implementation of the 24-credit requirement. It also maintains a requirement for increased instructional hours but allows districts the flexibility to implement this increase in a way that works best for their students.

Missed opportunities

Unfortunately, many good pieces of legislation did not become law this year because those efforts were opposed by the Republican majority in the Senate. One of those bills would have helped close the education opportunity gap for students in our state. [Senate Bill 6529](#) would have reformed school discipline to decrease the disproportionate representation of students of color, enhanced cultural competence of current and future educators, and provided English Language Learner and second language endorsements for all educators. It also would have invested in the recruitment and retention of educators of color. I will continue to work on this issue so we can establish an equal playing field for all of the students in Washington.



Veterans receive tuition help

I was glad to see the passage of a bill to allow military veterans to pay in-state college tuition without waiting a year to establish Washington residency. This legislation removes the one-year wait to establish residency for those who have left the military as well as their spouses and dependents, under certain conditions. Our veterans deserve a chance to make a smooth transition into civilian life after

sacrificing so much for our country.

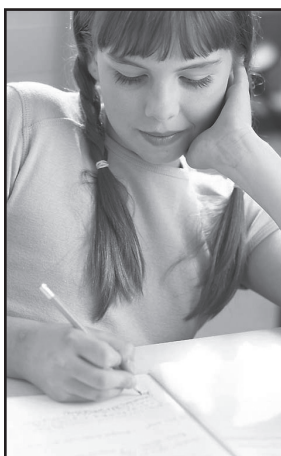
Representative June Robinson

First legislative session: Never a dull moment with busy lineup of three diverse committee agendas

It is an honor to represent our Everett, Marysville, and Tulalip communities. My first several months as a state representative certainly have been a whirlwind.

A full slate of committee agendas — as well as floor debate, and meetings with constituents and stakeholders — kept me running every one of our 60 days in session. My committees cover the gamut of local and statewide concerns: the **Capital Budget Committee**, the **Community Development, Housing & Tribal Affairs Committee**, and the **Government Operations & Elections Committee**.

My prime-sponsored bills



I convinced a majority of my House colleagues to pass five of my 10 **prime-sponsored bills**. Unfortunately, only one measure made it through the Senate.

My bill that made it to the governor, **House Bill 2276**, will allow our educational service districts (ESDs) — including our own **Northwest ESD No. 189** — to contract directly with a county for educational services for students residing in a county's detention center.

This legislation is aimed both at making sure services are provided more economically and at strengthening accountability for student-education — as well as the education-system and county officials. The goal here is to:

- Improve education for at-risk youngsters.
- Reduce costs for school districts.

Repetitive rental-screening for prospective tenants often presents a big financial hardship for folks seeking a safe, affordable home. Landlords, of course, want this screening before selecting renters. This redundant screening process, though, is very onerous for low-income people. I introduced **House Bill 2537**, which would have been a win-win for landlords and potential tenants.

The legislation directs that a potential tenant could provide the prospective landlord with a copy of a comprehensive screening report that is no more than a month old — instead of having to produce and pay for a completely new report every time.

Good Samaritans have already put their safety at risk. They shouldn't also have to put their health at risk.

House Bill 2530, my “Good Samaritan bill,” would have directed local health departments to provide free infectious-disease testing for Good Samaritans.

The bill arose from information I received from an off-duty physician who responded to an accident. This doctor wanted to increase the availability of free testing. I believe free testing should be available for folks who do the right thing.

Efficiency in local budgeting is the goal of my **House Bill 2301**, which also fell short this year. The problem is that budgets are written before the upcoming fiscal year. But transfers can occur only between January 1 and December 31. Local people can be blindsided by unforeseen events, including November and December floods slamming counties with big, unanticipated expenses.

It doesn't have to be this way. The measure would provide flexibility so Snohomish County and other counties can more easily respond to sudden demands for local resources.

Getting people, businesses back to work

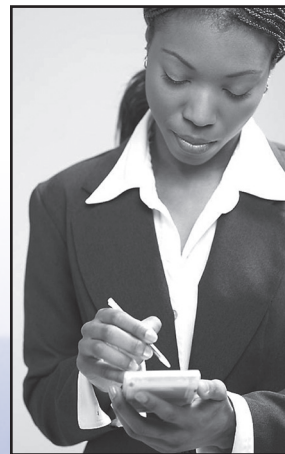
The Great Recession is showing promise of freeing us from its clutch. And yet, the downtimes linger for too many folks who make their homes in our Everett, Marysville, and Tulalip neighborhoods.

I supported bipartisan measures — **House Bill 2244** and **House Bill 2797** — that I believe would have:

- Promoted job-growth.
- Hastened economic progress.
- Strengthened business opportunities.

The first bill aimed to restore our capital budget to its appropriate standing as a key investment strategy. Reviving our state's Public Works Assistance Account (PWAA) is the urgent objective. The PWAA money over the years has helped with many important local projects. Our Snohomish County communities are full of this job-creating, infrastructural development needs that could benefit from state-capital dollars.

The second measure I mentioned at the top of this section also would have provided significant new funding for school construction. Our schools must have sufficient capacity to meet important targets for all-day kindergarten and K-3 class-size reduction. Our children's future is riding on it and this bill was an important first step in delivering on the promise that all children will have access to a world-class education here in Washington state.



Representative Mike Sells

Losing pay over the flu

Workers shouldn't have to fear losing their pay checks or their jobs when they get the flu, and parents shouldn't have to choose between staying home to care for a sick child or putting food on the table. But that's a reality for 1 million Washingtonians. **House Bill 1313** would have allowed all Washington employees to build some paid sick and safe leave. The legislation passed the House, but the Senate refused to put it up for a vote.

Wage theft is alive and well

The House approved four bills (**House Bills 2331, 2332, 2333, 2334**) aimed at discouraging wage theft, leveling the playing field for honest employers, and recovering state revenues lost due to the deliberate misclassification of workers as independent contractors. Every day in our state, there are workers who are not paid overtime, are fired for speaking up to protect their rights, and are denied benefits such as workers' compensation and unemployment when they are misclassified. These bills would have provided stronger protections and policy tools to ensure workers are paid fairly and have recourse when denied just compensation. But the Republican-led Senate once again chose not to stand up for workers.

Giving L&I more effective tools

One measure (**Senate Bill 5360**) that will help with the collection of unpaid wages did make it to the Governor's desk. The legislation allows Labor & Industries to electronically serve a financial institution with a Notice and Order to withhold and deliver on an employer's account for unpaid wages, thereby strengthening the Department's ability to collect unpaid wages

owed to employees. Currently, L&I uses a paper process, which is slow and inefficient.

Defending Washington's workers

Insisting on weakening our Workers' Compensation system, the Senate passed **Senate Bill 5127**, which would have removed all age restrictions on letting injured workers receive cash payments without any financial planning assistance or job-training plan. Currently only workers 55 and older can negotiate a structured settlement.

Far from creating jobs, these maneuvers would shift the responsibility to tax payers at large when workers who settled for pennies on the dollar need further financial and medical assistance from the state. Instead of ending up with a scenario where workers poorly manage their money and need to rely on a range of public assistance programs, it makes sense to keep the current system as is, with relatively low costs for the employer and good benefits for injured workers.

Another legislation (**Senate Bill 5158**) passed by the Senate would have set up a defense allowing employers to claim that they relied in "good-faith" on their own interpretation of minimum wage laws, which they could use to pay workers less than legally required. During the Labor and Workforce Development hearing on this bill, it became abundantly clear that these policies would endanger the livelihood of workers and would end up costing the state money by having workers turn to using public assistance programs.

Last year we protected working families from severe attacks from the Senate, this session we once again held the line and prevented these bad bills from moving forward in the House.

Update on 2011 Workers' Comp Reform Savings

Washington created our **workers' compensation** system in 1911. When it turned 100 years old, in 2011, we figured it was time for some changes aimed at improving outcomes and reducing costs. Here's the latest available data on how we're doing:

| 2011 Workers' Compensation Reforms | Savings through 6/30/13 | Projected FY 2014 Estimated Savings |
|--|--------------------------------|--|
| | (Millions) | |
| Structured Settlements - option for some older workers. | \$101 | \$21 |
| Stay at Work - Employers who provide light-duty or transitional work allowing an injured worker to keep his/her job can be reimbursed for half of the workers' wages and other costs. | \$56 | \$46 |
| Prior Permanent Partial Disability awards on a claim can be deducted from pension benefits. The Department and self-insurers no longer pay 8% interest. | \$105 | \$15 |
| Medical Provider Network & COHE (Centers of Occupational Health and Education) expansion to all injured workers by 2015. | \$59 | \$46 |
| COLA Freeze for 2012 - The legislature eliminated the July 1, 2011 COLA for those who receive time-loss compensation or pension benefits. | \$62 | \$30 |
| TOTAL | \$384 | \$158 |

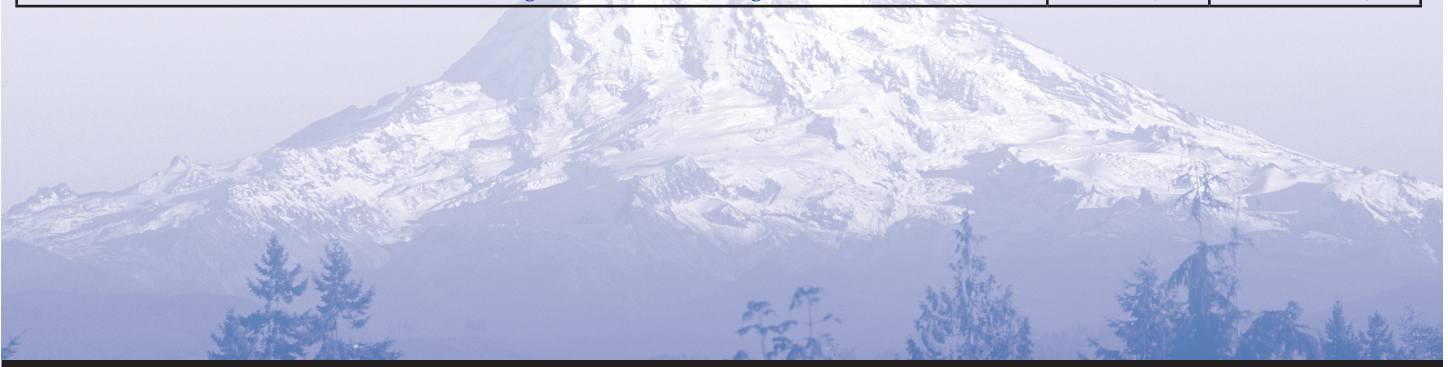
2014 Report to the 38th Legislative District

Transportation and Capital Budgets

For the first time in many years, the legislature did not pass a Capital Budget. The House version would have created hundreds of construction jobs across the state, but it did not find support in the Senate.

The Senate also said no to a transportation package, even though the business community keeps saying that we need significant investments in transportation. But the budget that went to the governor's desk includes funding for these ongoing projects:

| PROJECTS 38th LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT | PRIOR | 2013-15 |
|---|----------------------|--------------|
| | Dollars in Thousands | |
| I-5/SR 526 to Marine View Drive - Add HOV Lanes - 100543M | 220,018 | 32 |
| I-5/172nd St NE (SR 531) Interchange - Rebuild Interchange - 100553N | 33,120 | 52 |
| Current Biennium Regional Mobility Grants: | | 8,218 |
| Community Transit, Double Decker Buses - 20130022 | 0 | 3,978 |
| Skagit Transit, Everett Connector - 20130030 | 0 | 940 |
| Community Transit, Mukilteo Park and Ride Plus - 20130111 | 0 | 1,000 |
| Island, Skagit and Whatcom Transits, Tri County Connector - 20130031 | 0 | 2,300 |
| I-5/South Everett Freeway Station/112th St SE - Transit Direct Access - 100545D | 24,886 | 0 |
| SR 529/BN Railroad Br to North Access Road - Paving - 152902P | 1,094 | 0 |
| SR 529/Ebey Slough Bridge - Replace Bridge - 152908E | 31,486 | 2,675 |
| Traffic Ops - CVISN, WIM, & Weigh Stations: | 2,756 | 1,444 |
| CVISN-CVISN-Deployment Stations along I-5, I-90, and I-82 - 000510Q | 2,756 | 444 |
| Expanded CVISN-automated Infrared Roadside Screening - 000515Q | 0 | 1,000 |
| Traffic Ops - ITS & Operation Enhancements: | 6,155 | 31 |
| I-5/Marysville to Stillaguamish River - ITS - 100552W | 3,817 | 1 |
| I-5/North Everett to SR 528 - ITS - 100555Q | 2,338 | 30 |
| Contingency (Unfunded) Highway Preservation Projects: | 0 | 2,098 |
| I-5 SB 88th St Off Ramp Vicinity to SR 531 SB On Ramp Vicinity - Paving - 100551B | 0 | 151 |
| I-5/NB SR 531 Vic to Portage Creek Bridge Vic - Paving - 100553X | 0 | 67 |
| I-5/SB SR 531 I/C Vic to SR 531 SB On Ramp - Paving - 100553Y | 0 | 516 |
| SR 526/SR 525 to Boeing Access Rd Vic - Paving - 152601B | 0 | 1,364 |
| Freight rail Port of Everett (FRIB 2013) - L1100064 | 0 | 900 |
| Passenger rail Everett- Storage Track (ARRA) - 754021A | 1,857 | 1,682 |



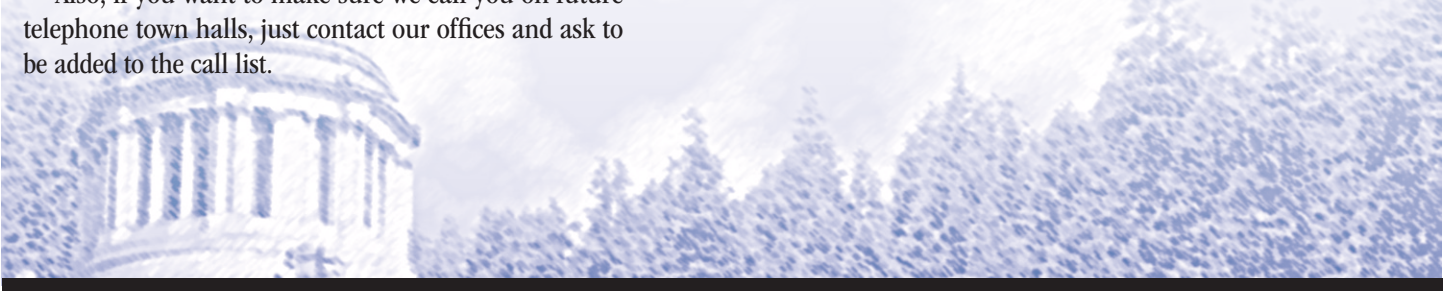
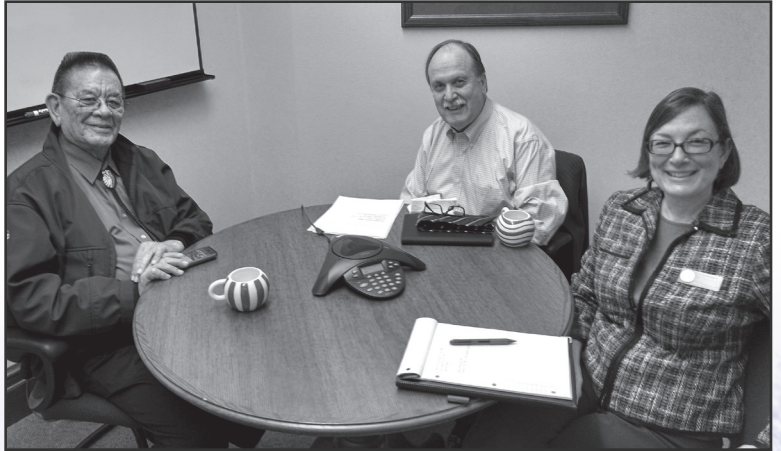
2014 Report to the 38th Legislative District

Hearing from you

Earlier this year we held a telephone town hall in which many of you participated. We thank you for staying on the line and getting involved with your state government. We believe these teleforums are growing increasingly popular because they are comfortable for constituents and they are also very affordable. If you were on the phone with us that evening, what did you think? Is there anything we can do to make the next one better? And if you were not on the call, the entire audio file is posted on our websites so you can listen to it at your leisure.

<http://tinyurl.com/38LDTownHall>

Also, if you want to make sure we call you on future telephone town halls, just contact our offices and ask to be added to the call list.




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