

Presort Std
U.S. Postage Paid
Olympia WA
Permit # 92

REPORT ON THE 2014 SESSION

REP. JOE FITZGIBBON

PO Box 40600
Olympia, WA 98504-0600



REPORT ON THE 2014 SESSION
34th LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT
Spring 2014



REP. JOE FITZGIBBON

Contact me

OLYMPIA ADDRESS
JLOB 305
PO Box 40600
Olympia, WA 98504-0600
(360) 786-7952

TOLL-FREE HOTLINE:
1-800-562-6000
1-800-635-9993 (TTY)

E-MAIL
Joe.Fitzgibbon@leg.wa.gov

LEGISLATIVE ASSISTANT
Yoshi Kumara
Yoshi.Kumara@leg.wa.gov

Dear friends & neighbors,

It is good to be home after a short, but tough, 60-day session. There were some important victories for our communities this year.

- We passed the Dream Act, legislation which will allow every child in Washington the opportunity to fulfill their educational dreams by giving more students access to state higher education financial aid.
- The supplemental budget contains investments in our mental health support networks, which are threadbare after years of budget cuts. This will improve community safety and help people with mental illness access the services they need.

Alas, there were some things that did not get done. The Republican controlled Senate failed to act on a capital budget that passed the House with a huge bipartisan majority. The Senate also failed to pass a transportation revenue package to invest in our roads, transit, and ferries. These measures would have brought thousands of jobs to Washington, while providing much-needed classroom space in our public schools and improving the transportation infrastructure that keeps people and commerce moving in our region.

As always, thank you for the honor of service to the people of the 34th legislative district.

Joe Fitzgibbon
Joe Fitzgibbon



Environment Committee

Late last year my colleagues appointed me as chair of the House Environment Committee. I went into this session hoping primarily to learn the ropes as chair. As I navigated my new responsibility, I am proud that the Environment Committee was successful in protecting our existing environmental laws and moving forward on emerging environmental concerns.

We passed a bill to fund the recycling program for lights that contain mercury, which works to keep dangerous mercury out of our ecosystem and out of children's sensitive developing brains. We also passed a bill that gives our beautiful state parks new tools to



generate revenue without using taxes, to ensure they are well-preserved and maintained for generations to come.

Regrettably, several important House-passed bills received cold receptions in the Republican controlled Senate. *The Oil Transportation Safety Act*, an act designed to protect our communities and environment from the dangers of increasing amounts of explosive oil being shipped across our state by rail, was killed in the Senate. *The Toxic-Free Kids and Families Act*, designed to keep our families and first-responders safe from the use of cancer-causing chemicals in furniture and children's products, met a similar fate. These measures will continue to be priorities for me and the Environment Committee in the future.

Two Bird Stone

Two huge problems facing our state remain unsolved; handling our paramount responsibility to fully fund K-12 education, and finally addressing the reality of climate change. I proposed legislation to deal with both of these problems by imposing a tax on polluters (including oil refineries) that pour tons of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere yearly, while assuming the tax payers of the state will pay for the negative outcomes that are becoming all too real in the form of historic drought, flooding, and storms. The measure would set a price on the emissions of climate change-causing carbon pollution and direct the revenue to fund our K-12 programs.

We need only look to our northern neighbor to see the possibilities for a carbon tax. British Columbia has seen the highest economic growth and the greatest greenhouse gas reductions of any province in Canada since their carbon tax was implemented. Learning from their experience, I believe we should construct an economically-advantageous carbon pollution price structure that provides badly-needed funds to K-12 education and continues our state's progress towards reducing our carbon footprint. This is a reasonable solution for two urgent problems. The longer we wait to address either, the more expensive they will become.

Transportation, Ferries, Jobs

I have worked hard to ensure that our district avoids painful cuts to our transit system. Our economy works best when people are able to get to and from work with the least hassle. While the Senate was not up to the task of passing a comprehensive transportation package, we did give WSDOT the ability to minimize the proposed transit disruptions to West

Seattle, Burien, White Center, and Vashon.

In our District, ferry service provides not just transportation, but also jobs. We passed a bill that will allow King County to achieve administrative savings by assuming the powers of the King County ferry district. This will help to increase the ferry access across the region. We also passed a

bill that will fund the construction of a new 144-car ferry. That means family-wage jobs in our district building the infrastructure the Puget Sound needs to thrive.

As always, if you have any questions, concerns, comments, or ideas on how to make Washington an even better place to live and raise a family, please contact me.