

Rep. Patty Kuderer

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Olympia, WA 98504-0600



2016 PRE-SESSION REPORT

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December 15th Open House – You're invited!

The legislative session is right around the corner and I need to know what issues concern you the most. Please join me at my open house so we can get to know each other better.

Open House

Tuesday, December 15

5 – 7 p.m.

1611 116th Ave NE, Bellevue

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48th Legislative District

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State Representative **Patty Kuderer**

2016 PRE-SESSION REPORT

Dear neighbor,

I'm honored to have the opportunity to serve as your state representative in Olympia. I was recently appointed to fill the seat vacated by Rep. Ross Hunter - a strong voice for kids and families. I wish him all the best in his new role and will be picking up where he left off advocating for our community in Olympia.

You may know me from my work in the community and in the schools. I am a mom, attorney, and community advocate. I have lived on the Eastside for over 16 years and my children attended Bellevue public schools.

While I am new to the Legislature, I am not new to the issues facing our community and state. I volunteered in the schools for many years as well as with many charities and nonprofits focused primarily on women's and children's issues.

The 2016 legislative session is just a few weeks away. Although this will be a short 60-day session, we have a lot of work to do! There are no "silver bullet" answers but there are common sense solutions we can adopt to work toward solving our often complicated and inter-related issues.

Our primary focus will be on approving a plan that **fully funds K-12 schools** so that ALL students have opportunities to learn. A summary of where our state is at on two big issues – education and transportation - is included in this newsletter.

But there are other important issues that need our attention, too, and I want to know what matters most to you. Please contact me at patty.kuderer@leg.wa.gov with the issues that you want the Legislature to work on this next session.

I'd also encourage you to attend my district office open house on **Tuesday, December 15, 5 – 7 p.m.** (See details on the back page of this newsletter.)

Sincerely,

Patty Kuderer
State Representative



Education is the Great Equalizer

My commitment to you: Work to create a public education system and economy that benefit everyone.

My first priority – and the top priority of the state Legislature – is fixing our basic education funding problem once and for all, as laid out by the Supreme Court’s “McCleary” decision. We can’t keep putting a bandage on a broken leg and expect things to get better.

This process is well underway. The state has invested more than two billion additional dollars toward K-12 schools and our McCleary obligation. Washington is on pace to fully fund student transportation, supplies, operating costs, K-3 class size reduction, and statewide full-day kindergarten by 2018. This is a major win for kids.



But these accomplishments, while significant, only get us half way to the finish line. The other half that needs to be addressed is underfunding teacher salaries by the state – an expense that may require up to \$4 billion to fix.

Why so much? The state is constitutionally responsible for paying educator salaries, yet it currently underfunds the actual costs needed to pay teachers. Local districts end up funding the difference through local levy dollars.

In other words, voter-approved local levies that are supposed to pay for things like afterschool programs, building maintenance, or music pro-



grams are instead being used to pay teacher salaries, all because the state has failed to do its job.

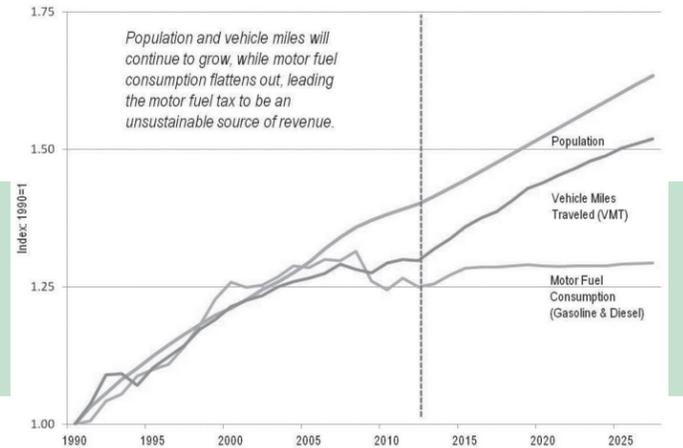
This practice isn’t new – it’s been used over the last 30 years by Republicans and Democrats alike to balance the state’s budget. Regardless, it is unconstitutional and has to change. That will require across-the-aisle cooperation to fix the problem.

Reaching a compromise solution won’t be easy, but I’m confident we will get there. I’d love to hear your thoughts on this issue and how you’d like to see lawmakers solve this shortfall. Let me know at patty.kuderer@leg.wa.gov.



Population, Vehicle Miles Traveled, and Motor Fuel Consumption Trends and Forecast (1990-2027)

Each year, we get less and less value from our gas tax dollars, which makes the gas tax an increasingly unsustainable source of revenue to fund transportation projects. We must find alternative revenue sources to ensure we can build and maintain a transportation system that meets the growing demands of our state.



Keep Washington Moving

My commitment to you: Strengthen our economy through critical investments in our state’s transportation infrastructure that connect our communities and build a better Washington.

Across our state bridges are aging, commuters are stuck in traffic, and businesses are struggling to get their products to market. Last session, the Legislature took a major step toward fixing our crumbling infrastructure by passing a \$16.1 billion bipartisan transportation package.

This means 100,000 new jobs over the next 16 years will be added to our economy to fix traffic gridlock and build a better Washington.

Modernizing our transportation network is how we build an economy that works for everyone. This package will also cut down on gridlock by investing in transportation choices like rail, transit, bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure.

The transportation package is a tremendous victory that was years in the making. Yet we can’t rest on that success. More people are moving to our great state, and that means more traffic. In fact, it is estimated by 2020 another 500,000 people will be living in Washington state. We must get creative to keep up with all those new stresses on our transportation system. That means finding other ways to fund transportation aside from the gas tax, which isn’t viable much longer.

We need to fund transportation differently, and more fairly, while investing more in alternatives to highways, which are the most expensive option and sometimes not an option like in Seattle, where there’s no room to build extra lanes downtown.

I’m looking forward to working with other lawmakers to solve these difficult challenges ahead. And I’m particularly interested in your creative ideas to address the transportation needs of our community and our state.

If you have ideas, please send them my way at patty.kuderer@leg.wa.gov.

Together, we can work together to make getting places faster and more enjoyable throughout the great state of Washington.

