



REPRESENTATIVE

Lillian Ortiz-Self

END OF SESSION REPORT TO THE 21ST LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT



Spring 2018

Dear friends and neighbors,

The 2018 legislative session was very productive and reached its end on time. With Democrats now leading the Senate, we were able to pass numerous wins both policy and budget-wise that **put people first**.

For instance, we were able to pass a one-time **\$391 million property tax cut** for 2019 to help homeowners who were hit hard with last session's GOP property tax hike. Next year, they will see a reduction in both their state property tax and their local school levy property taxes.

In this newsletter, you'll find information on some of the other measures passed that will make a difference in communities in our district and throughout the state, as well as highlights of our investments in education and transportation.

Since there isn't enough room to talk about every issue, if there's something specific you're interested in, or you want more information on any of the bills discussed here, please contact my office at your earliest convenience.

Always honored to serve you,

STAY IN TOUCH!

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Committee assignments:

- Early Learning & Human Services
- Education
- Rules
- Transportation

EQUAL PAY OPPORTUNITY ACT



Women make up almost half of the workforce yet, in Washington, over the course of 40 years of work the average woman will earn almost half a million less than her male counterpart will. After receiving Democratic support over the last few years, **HB 1506**, finally made it to the governor's desk. This new law updates, for the first time since 1943, the Washington State Equal Pay Act by:

- Prohibiting pay secrecy policies
- Allowing discussion of wages
- Preventing discrimination by gender in providing opportunities
- Banning retaliation against workers who file complaints, discuss wages or seek advancement opportunities
- Ensuring workers are entitled to remedies in the event of violations



K12 EDUCATION/MCCLEARY

Our most significant investment in 2018 was **\$1 billion additional dollars for public schools** to fully fund teacher salaries by the 2018-19 school year as ordered by the Supreme Court. I believe these funds will finally resolve the McCleary litigation. Our education bill ([ESSB 6362](#)) also includes:

- \$100 million for special education.
- \$51 million to recruit and retain talented educators.
- \$8 million for Science Standards Pro Learning.
- 4 percent increase in state salary for highly qualified teachers beginning in 2019-20.
- Creating greater stability high poverty districts by using a three-year average to determine eligibility for extra funding.
- Providing more transparency about how public education dollars are spent.



TRAUMA INFORMED CARE

Many early learning providers do not have the knowledge or resources to provide care to high-needs children, such as those who experience trauma early in life. I sponsored [HB 2861](#) to develop a five-year plan expanding training in trauma-informed childcare and reducing childcare expulsions. This is a first step toward making sure vulnerable kids can remain in stable early learning environments.



STUDENT MENTAL HEALTH

While school counselors, social workers, and psychologists are on the front lines of working with students' emotional needs, there are few opportunities for them to work with mental health professionals. I sponsored [HB 1377](#) to provide additional clarity around the roles of school professionals and to create a Professional Collaboration Lighthouse Grant program to help develop partnerships between schools and community mental health professionals.





TRANSPORTATION BUDGET

Our state's transportation network ties together every corner of the state to get people to work and school and get goods to market. The supplemental [transportation budget](#) we passed made changes to the \$9.3 billion (state, federal and local funds) budget we approved last year. These are some of the projects in our district:

- Edmonds Street Waterfront Connector
- City of Everett - Wireless Electric Bus Riverfront to Waterfront Connector
- Mukilteo Terminal improvements
- Multiple I-5/I-405 improvements



ADDRESSING STUDENT LOANS



Nearly 800,000 Washingtonians are currently paying off their college education; each of them, on average, has a student loan of around \$24,000. We passed three measures to help both, borrowers who are struggling

to keep up with their payments, and current students who may not fully understand the extent of their loans until it's time to start paying them back.

• *Student Opportunity, Assistance, and Relief Act*

When people default on their loan payments, the state can revoke their professional license, or garnish 25 percent of their paycheck. These actions make it even more difficult - if not impossible - to pay back the loan. [HB 1169](#) repeals provisions allowing professional license

suspension due to student loan default, lowers the interest for unpaid private student loan debt, and increases bank account and wage garnishment exemptions.

• *Student Loan Transparency Act*

[SB 5022](#) protects student borrowers who, in many cases, struggle with confusing information and often end up taken advantage of by scammers. The new law requires institutions of higher education to provide notices to students detailing their loan balances and estimated monthly payments each time a financial aid package that includes a new or revised student loan is offered.

• *Student Loan Bill of Rights*

[SB 6029](#) establishes a range of provisions designed to protect Washingtonians from deceptive or predatory practices and require student loan servicers to obtain licenses to operate in the state. It also establishes a Student Education Loan Advocate to aid borrowers, compile data, provide information on student loans, and receive, review, and take action on complaints from borrowers.



PREVENTATIVE HEALTH

Because of the federal Affordable Care Act, preventive care has increased for all age groups. Access to routine health care services like immunizations and health screenings saves lives and improves health throughout all stages. However, there is uncertainty on what the federal government will do with the ACA. We passed [HB 1523](#) this year to ensure that health plans will continue to provide the same coverage of preventive services no matter what happens at the federal level. Ensuring that every family can access basic health care, regardless of their income, keeps people healthy and avoids many of the expenses of preventable diseases.

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REPORT TO THE 21ST LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT

COMMON-SENSE GUN LAWS



The February shooting at a high school in Parkland, Florida, has brought back the devastating memories of the Marysville Pilchuck High School shooting in 2014, where I served as counselor after that terrible event in which four students were tragically killed.

I believe that while we may not have all the answers, we must at least try to do something to reduce mass shootings. So I am grateful that we were able to pass [SB 5992](#) to ban bump fire stocks, and two other bills addressing some of the most common occurrences of gun violence – domestic violence and suicide. [SB 6298](#) prohibits people convicted of domestic violence harassment to own firearms. And [SB 5553](#) creates a tool for people to take a step toward safety by allowing them to voluntarily place themselves on a “no-buy” list for firearms.

FAIR CHANCE ACT (BAN THE BOX)



It's true that America is the land of second chances, but for job seekers with a criminal history, second chances are hard to come by. Checking the “yes” box on a job application indicating a prior arrest or conviction often eliminates a person from consideration. I sponsored [HB 1298](#) to help people start over by requiring public and private-sector employers to delay background checks and inquiries about job applicants' conviction records until they have the opportunity to present their qualifications for the job.