



## Representative

# Eric Pettigrew

### 37th Legislative District

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Agriculture & Natural Resources  
Appropriations  
Public Safety  
Rules

Dear neighbors,

This year, with the House and Senate controlled by Democrats, we were able to find agreement on many important pieces of legislation that have been stalled for years under the Republican-controlled Senate. We passed the Washington Voting Rights Act and other measures to make our governments more representative. We passed the Equal Pay Opportunity Act, a big step in closing the wage gap between men and women. We passed a ban on bump-stocks. And we passed a budget that meets the Supreme Court's mandate that we fully fund basic education. You can read more about the many successes we had with measures that put people first in this newsletter.

But, our work is not done. Banning bump-stocks will reduce the carnage during a mass shooting, but we need to do more to keep guns out of the hands of potential school shooters and there is so much more that needs to be done to address the gun violence that many of our communities face every day. I am so proud of the students all across the state and the country who are speaking up and speaking out against gun violence. It is time for legislators to listen and take more action to reduce gun violence in our schools and in our communities.

Our work is not done in education. We may have met the Supreme Court's mandate to fully fund education, but that is just the floor. The truth is that there are still differences in the educational opportunities that students get depending on their zip code or the color of their skin. We need to keep focusing on making sure that every student has the support and opportunities that they need to be successful.

And our work is not done to address so many issues - including affordable housing and homelessness, the opioid crisis, health care costs, the barriers that children in foster care face, to name just a few. I am committed to continuing to work on behalf of our community to keep advocating for putting people first and making sure that everyone in our state has the chance to thrive.

In service,



## Creating an ombuds for the Department of Corrections

For years, former inmates and family members of inmates have raised concerns about how the current Department of Corrections grievance process does not work. Currently, the formal grievance process requires that inmates bring their issues or concerns about prison operations to people who work for the prison.

One of the needed tools is an independent office, the Correction Ombuds. Last year I sponsored House Bill 1889, which creates the office. This year we were able to pass this bill in both the House and Senate. The Ombuds will provide a way for inmates and their families to bring forward concerns about conditions, programs and treatment of inmates. The Ombuds will also provide information to the Department of Corrections so that the Department can find solutions to persistent problems. It is hoped that the Ombuds will also be able to resolve issues within the Corrections system that often result in costly lawsuits against the state.



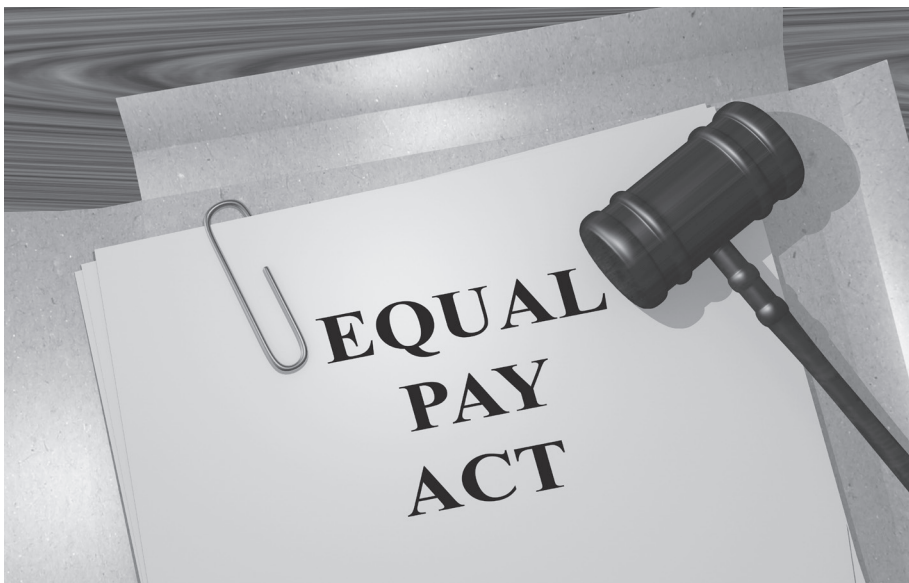
### Affordable housing

It is easy to see in our changing city that the homelessness and affordable housing crisis will continue to be an issue for the foreseeable future. The legislature is taking steps to try and make Washington a place where everyone has a safe, secure place to call home. This year the legislature took action on the document recording fee, finally making one of the most effective tools in the fight against homelessness permanent. Additionally we passed other measures that will help in our ongoing effort to combat homelessness and increase

the inventory of affordable housing, including a bill I sponsored, HB 2015, which provides roughly \$4 million per year to King County for affordable housing.

### DADS funding

I was able to secure \$125,000 in funding through the operating budget to help a great organization in our community continue their work supporting fathers transitioning from incarceration. The DADS organization provides fathers with support and resources to help create positive reunification with their children.



### The Equal Pay Act

Despite the march toward equality, women continue to make less than their male coworkers. Too often, women don't even know that they are taking home smaller paychecks. This year House Democrats led the way as the legislature passed the Equal Pay Act, which will ban pay secrecy policies, allow discussion of wages, and prohibit retaliation against workers for discussing their pay or asking for equal pay and career opportunities.



## Helping struggling families

For families that are struggling to get by, public assistance can be the lifeline that gets them through periods of unemployment, unexpected expenses, or other financial challenges. But, what if in order to be eligible for this help, a family cannot also keep their dependable car? With the passage of House Bill 1831, families will no longer be disqualified from assistance if they have a vehicle valued up to \$10,000. The bill also revises other asset limits upwards because families should not be forced into total destitution before they are eligible for public assistance. Before this change was made, Washington State had some of the most restrictive requirements for public assistance in the country.

## Paid Family and Medical Leave

No one should struggle to take time off work to care for themselves or a family member, including a new baby. Although 25 years ago, the federal Family and Medical Leave Act was passed, this act only guaranteed unpaid leave, meaning that for many workers, taking leave was not an option. Last year, the Washington Legislature passed the Paid Family and Medical Leave Act, which will provide most Washington state workers up to 12 weeks of paid leave to care for themselves, a baby or an ailing family member.

## Investing in our community

The capital budget creates construction jobs and invests in infrastructure in every community in the state. This year, I was able to secure funding for projects in our community, including the Cherry Street Fellowship, a Mt. Baker Housing project, and a Black Panther exhibit that the Northwest African American Museum.

The **Cherry Street Fellowship Hall** provides a clean and sober environment for people recovering from drug and alcohol abuse. The funding they are receiving will assist them in updating the building, and remodeling their kitchen and meeting spaces.

**Mt. Baker Housing** is working on a new mixed use project that will include affordable and market rate housing as well as retail and commercial space. The site that they have chosen is contaminated from the dry cleaners and gas station that used to be at the location. Funding from the Model Toxics Control Account is being provided to clean up this environmental contamination so that the construction can begin.



In 2018, the **Northwest African American Museum** will present an exhibition celebrating the 50th anniversary of the Seattle Chapter of the Black Panther Party. This exhibition will highlight the history of the Seattle Chapter of the Black Panthers, and discuss the impact it has had on the local community.



## 37<sup>th</sup> DISTRICT LEGISLATIVE REVIEW

# Rep. Eric Pettigrew

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## 37<sup>th</sup> DISTRICT LEGISLATIVE REVIEW 2018

### Get an inside view of the legislature as a page or intern

If you are between the ages of 14 to 16 next January, why not consider being a page for a week in Olympia? Being a page is a great opportunity to participate in the legislative process and learn more about our state government.

While all 14-16 year olds are eligible for the page program, many students in the past have been unable to take part in this unique program due to financial restraints. There is now a scholarship available to help offset the costs of living in Olympia for the week.

You can find out more information about the page program and the application process by visiting: <http://leg.wa.gov/House/Pages/HousePageProgram.aspx> or contacting my office.



A legislative internship offers college juniors and seniors the opportunity to get paid work experience and get a close-up view of the legislative process. Interns work in Olympia for the legislative session, working directly with legislators and staff.

The internship is a great way to begin a career in public service or just find out more about how your government works.

You can find more information about the internship program and how to apply by visiting:

<http://leg.wa.gov/Internships/Pages/default.aspx>.