

STATE REPRESENTATIVE
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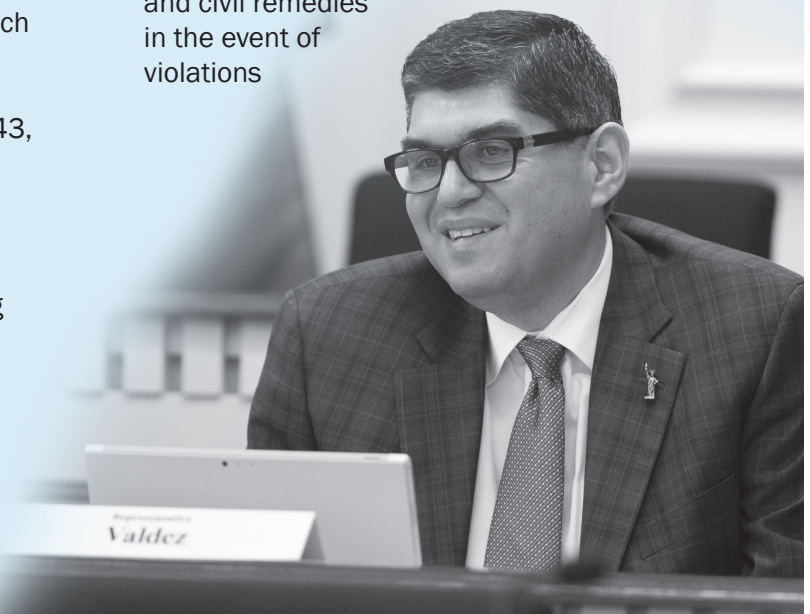
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Equal Pay Opportunity Act

Women make up almost half of the workforce, yet they continue to earn less than men do for similar work. In Washington, over the course of forty years of work, the average woman will make \$497,280 less than her male counterpart will. Because of this disparity, women save less toward retirement, which means more women end up living in poverty and struggling to survive in their senior years. This bill updates, for the first time since its passage in 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 administrative and civil remedies in the event of violations





STATE REPRESENTATIVE **JAVIER VALDEZ**

46th LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT

Spring 2018

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Dear Friends and Neighbors,

The 2018 session concluded on March 8. This second session of the biennium was short - just 60 days. We packed a lot of work into that condensed schedule and I'm proud of the work we accomplished together.

The Legislature tackled many important issues including the state budget and some major new laws, including:

- Action on gun safety
- Reforms to strengthen our democracy
- A new, balanced state budget with billions in reserves
- Property tax cuts coming in 2019
- Funding for our public schools
- Equal Pay
- Dream Act 2.0
- Net Neutrality

I want to thank everyone who took the time to call, write, email or make the long drive to Olympia during the session. Your contribution to the democratic process is invaluable.

I appreciate how people of all ages, backgrounds and political philosophies agree that we have to work together to solve our common problems and give our children, grandchildren, and working families opportunities to succeed.

It is an honor to serve you as your State Representative. I hope to hear from you soon.

Javier Valdez
State Representative

STATE REPRESENTATIVE JAVIER VALDEZ

A balanced budget that invests in education

\$1 billion for schools—The new state budget is completely balanced (SB 6032) while investing another one billion dollars for our public schools. This new funding should complete our duty under the state Supreme Court's decision in the McCleary case to fund public education, with the state shouldering more of the burden now compared to local school districts.

There's also increased spending for students receiving special education instruction in the new budget, along with funding for Breakfast after the Bell to provide nutritious meals to school kids so they can start the day ready to learn.

Funding in the new budget makes college more affordable by putting the state on a path toward fully funding the State Need Grant, so that every eligible student will receive grants by the end of the four-year budget outlook.

Cutting your property taxes

This session, I voted for Senate Bill 6614, which will give property owners relief from the Senate Republican Property Tax of 2017.

There's more to be done on tax reform and relief. Washington state has one of the most unfair tax systems in the nation, with the middle class and small businesses paying far more than their fair share while the wealthiest families and biggest corporations pay less. It's time to restore some common sense when it comes to taxes.

Automatic Voter Registration

We get better government when we have better participation.

Automatic Voter Registration will further diminish barriers to ballot access by providing for the automatic voter registration of individuals who have received an Enhanced Driver's license from the Department of Licensing. The agency will collect voter data from these already eligible, but unregistered voters, and provide that information to the Secretary of State.

Nothing will change the requirements for voting. One still has to be 18 years old, a resident of the state of Washington, and a U.S. citizen.

Analysis shows automatic voter registration boosts numbers of registered voters as well as turnout in elections.

Reproductive Parity Act

Reproductive health decisions should be left to the individual, not a workplace, a health insurance carrier, or a government.

Ensuring reproductive freedom is protected is a long-term Democratic goal. While many states and even the federal government are taking steps to try to limit reproductive rights, we approved the Reproductive Parity Act. This new law protects a woman's right to make her own health care decisions and requires insurance plans offer full coverage for reproductive health.

Democrats in Washington are ensuring women have opportunity to choose the reproductive options that are best for them.

Protecting Children's Privacy

Protecting children, especially when they are dealing with their most vulnerable moments, is a value we all hold dear.

The bi-cameral unanimous passing of my bill, HB 2700, speaks directly to this shared value. This measure protects child forensic interviews that describe or depict allegations of child abuse, child neglect, or exposure to violence from disclosure under the Public Records Act.

A child going through such trauma in their lives does not need their privacy further invaded by having these records becoming public at a later time. We must do all we can to protect the most vulnerable among us.

Child trauma is hard enough to cope with, without having to relive it. HB 2700 not only protects certain records from becoming public, but ensures advanced notice is given to child witnesses who have since become emancipated minors, or attained the age of majority, of any other disclosures.



2018 LEGISLATIVE UPDATE • FOURTY-SIXTH DISTRICT

Voting Rights Act

Communities should reasonably expect their elected bodies to reflect the values and populations of those who elected them. At a minimum, our election systems must ensure that communities have an equal opportunity to have their voices heard. However, too often that is not the case.

SB 6002, modeled after the Federal Voting Rights Act, allows communities that are systemically disenfranchised in local government elections to work collaboratively with their local governing bodies to fix the problem. If this collaborative process fails, a process that is not available under the Federal Voting Rights Act, communities can then seek relief in state court. The measure also authorizes local



governing bodies who are aware that they have a problem to fix the problem on their own.

This new state process is quicker and less costly. By empowering the people and these jurisdictions to work together, and by empowering jurisdictions to

fix problems on their own initiative, it will lower costs for local governments and taxpayers. Municipalities that make meaningful change will be protected from future lawsuits.

The result will be an improved process for addressing systems that perpetually disenfranchise significant segments of a jurisdiction's voting population. Underrepresented voters will have a stronger, more meaningful voice in the government closest to them.

Action on gun safety

After the devastating shooting at a high school in Parkland, Florida, people across our state and nation are rightfully demanding more than thoughts and prayers to prevent future mass shootings. While we made progress this Legislative session, I was disappointed that we didn't go further. I wish we could have moved Sen. Frockt's measure (SB 6620) which would align the age and background check requirements for the purchase of certain rifles with those already existing for handgun purchases.

Below are the bills that the Washington Legislature passed this session to address gun violence.

Banning bump fire stocks: SB 5992

The destructive potential of bump-fire stocks came to national attention when a gunman opened fire on a crowd of concertgoers in Las Vegas last October. The gunman utilized bump-fire stocks to fire over 1,100 rounds, killing 58 and injuring hundreds. This bill prohibits the manufacture, sale, purchase, possession, transfer or transport of bump-fire stocks in Washington state. The prohibition on the manufacture and sale begins on July 1, 2018, while the other provisions of the bill will become effective in 2019, allowing time for those who own bump-fire stocks to forfeit them to law enforcement and receive reimbursement.

Allowing those in crisis to protect themselves from firearms: SB 5553

When people are in a crisis and struggling with impulsive thoughts of suicide, having access to firearms significantly increases the risk of harm. This bill created an important tool for a person to take a step toward safety by allowing them to waive their firearm rights. It also created an easy process for someone to take themselves off the "no-buy" list for firearms.

Protecting victims of domestic violence: SB 6298

Domestic violence calls are often the most dangerous for law enforcement. Almost half of women killed last year were killed by a family member; more than one in three women in our country have experienced some form of domestic abuse at some point in their life; and a person is five times more likely to be murdered if there is a firearm in the home. This bill makes it unlawful for a person to possess a firearm if they have been convicted or found not guilty by reason of insanity of the crime of harassment when committed against a family or household member. Conviction of other domestic violence crimes in our state already means loss of right to firearms, but harassment wasn't included - until now.