

# Kristine Reeves



## 2018 LEGISLATIVE WRAP-UP

Friends,

For the first time in years, the Legislature ended on time with a bipartisan budget and property tax cuts. In this budget is the final step to fully funding K-12 basic education: fairly compensating our hard-working teachers. Keeping our promise to our kids and getting basic education amply funded is what I came down to Olympia to do.

I was proud to vote **YES to cutting property taxes** for all home and property owners, **YES to expanding the property tax exemption for seniors, those with disabilities and veterans**, and **YES to cutting your car tab taxes**. Too many South Sound families are struggling to pay the bills while watching their budgets break, and a tax cut is desperately needed for working and middle class families in our communities. That is why **I voted NO to last year's property tax increase**. Our communities deserve better.

Inside is a snapshot of the work I have done for you this past year, which includes my work to improve affordability and access to childcare, support veterans and military families, expand voting rights for citizens, and boost funding for important projects in our area.

Sincerely,

*Kristine*



### Keeping in Touch

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## LOCAL PROJECTS FUNDED



This past year, I worked on the Capital Budget Committee to secure tens of millions in state funds for our region. Because of that work, our communities have funded projects in areas like higher education, STEM classrooms in K-12, conservation efforts, housing for the homeless, and a lot more. For a complete list, see below:

- \$23 million to Highline Community College; and
- \$2.8 million in Federal Way School STEM facilities; and
- \$750,000 for Weyerhaeuser Campus Land Preservation; and
- \$250,000 in funding for the Federal Way Safe City Camera replacement project; and
- \$175,000 for the Federal Way Senior Center; and
- \$250,000 for the Federal Way Chamber Economic Development Project; and

- \$1 million for the Performing Arts & Events Center; and
- \$900,000 for Healthpoint Federal Way dental clinic capacity grants; and
- \$763,000 for the Auburn Valley YMCA; and
- \$500,000 to the FUSION Transitional Housing Program; and
- \$250,000 for Habitat for Humanity Homeless Veterans Housing; and
- \$2 million for the Regional Conservation Partnership Program to improve water quality and habitats for at-risk species.



## EXPANDING YOUR RIGHT TO VOTE

All citizens deserve equal access to the ballot and elected officials that represent them. Washington is a leader in voting rights now with a series of new laws to remove barriers to voting. Now, citizens can register to vote on Election Day (**SB 6021**), automatically register to vote when getting an enhanced drivers license (**HB 2595**), and 16- and 17-year olds can pre-register to vote when getting their drivers license for the first time (**HB 1513**).

Modeled after the Federal Voting Rights Act, communities that are systemically disenfranchised in local government elections can now work collaboratively with local governing bodies to fix problems without court involvement. If that process fails, and local governments don't correct the problem on their own, then communities can seek relief in the state court. This will be quicker and less costly to local governments, empower communities and governments to work together, and create a stronger and more meaningful voice for underrepresented voters (**SB 6002**).



STANDING UP FOR WORKING FAMILIES



Increasing Affordability  
& Access to Childcare

Last year we sent out a survey asking our neighbors about some of the factors causing middle class and working families to struggle. We heard loud and clear that access and affordability to childcare is breaking household budgets. For many South Sound families, the cost of childcare is too high and there are too few providers. Many of my colleagues have heard the same thing from their constituents. Clearly, there is a need to address this problem and I proposed several bills to begin that conversation and provide some options.

I believe any conversation about solutions has to include employers, so bringing members of the business community, childcare providers, children advocates, lawmakers, and parents to the table is my first priority. My new law, signed by the governor in March, brings those people together in the childcare collaborative task force to begin the conversation about how we develop public-private partnerships that tackle the costs of childcare. I believe that by getting everyone at the table together we can ensure that working families can keep their jobs and continue caring for their families **(HB 2367)**.

Expanding access and affordability of childcare is a major priority for me and I'll continue this work next year as the collaborative task force convenes and works to find solutions that help our working and middle class families.

Looking Out for  
Military Family Members

Given my background as a family member of military service members and veterans, serving those who have served continues to be a personal and professional priority. As a working mom, I view our military families through a different lens. An issue that doesn't get the attention it deserves is how many women veterans and military spouses struggle with issues like childcare. I've heard from several veterans regarding the need for support from the Department of Veterans' Affairs.

As the co-chair of the Joint Committee for Veterans' and Military Affairs, my focus is on how the Legislature addresses the needs of service members, veterans and their families. I'm proud to have sponsored legislation to provide Gold Star family members a higher education textbook stipend **(HB 2009)**, increased consumer protections for military members **(HB 1056)**, and a law to make sure we don't double charge first responders for their military service when they have to take leave from their day jobs **(HB 2851)**. However, there's a lot of work be done to ensure military family members have the tools to succeed and I'm committed to continuing to fight for families who have fought for us.



PROTECTING CONSUMERS AND EMPLOYEES

Free Credit Freezes to Keep YOUR Credit Safe

Every time there is a security breach that results in a release of private financial data, your financial future is in jeopardy. Whether it be credit card transactions at a major store, or private information stored by a major credit agency, criminals can try to use that information to run up huge bills in your name. That's why it's important that families have access to tools to keep themselves safe. One tool available to you is a credit freeze, which stops any new accounts from opening in your name. In the past, credit agencies could charge a fee to freeze your credit. Why should families pay credit agencies to fix a security breach for which those credit agencies are responsible? That's not right. I am proud to have voted to pass a bill to make credit freezes free when your information is compromised **(SB 6018)**. Your credit score is your financial resume. Ensuring you can continue to protect your financial reputation is important to you and your family's economic future and I'll keep fighting to hold corporations accountable to keeping your record clean.



Ensuring Access to a Free and Open Internet



For years, the internet has been governed by a set of rules called "Net Neutrality." Those rules ensure that lawful content can't be slowed down or blocked, and internet providers can't favor certain content over others through paid prioritization. The concept is simple: Giant corporations shouldn't get to limit your access to information. Unfortunately, those rules were overturned at the federal level. That's why Washington became the first state in the nation to use our state's consumer protection authority to maintain a free and open internet. In the 21st century, we need more access to the internet, not less **(HB 2282)**.

Updating Equal Pay Laws After 75 Years

Washington's women in the workforce still lag behind their male counterparts in terms of salary. In fact, the average woman will make nearly \$500,000 less than their male colleagues will. Study after study shows that there is a persistent wage gap and there are tools to address it. This year, the Washington State Equal Pay Act was updated for the first time in 75 years in a new law that:

- Strengthens rules around pay secrecy policies and discussion of wages among coworkers,
- Bans retaliation against workers who file complaints regarding wages, and
- Ensures workers have the necessary remedies when violations occur.

The Equal Pay Opportunity Act is a great step forward in helping ensure financial stability for women everywhere **(HB 1506)**.

