



Washington State Legislative Report to the 38th District

Spring 2018



Friends and neighbors,

The 2018 legislative session ended, on time, after a short 60 days. In this newsletter, you'll find information on the policies and investments that the three of us have been advocating for on behalf of our constituents in Everett, Marysville, Tulalip, and Snohomish County.




For the first time in many years, the Senate is under Democratic control, which meant that many great bills that have been stalled for years could finally get through the legislature, including some important reforms to increase voter access, protect workers, and turn the tide on the opioid epidemic.

There is still a lot of work ahead on these and other issues that are important to our communities. We are honored to have the opportunity to serve the 38th Legislative District.

Sincerely,




Senator
John McCoy


Representative
June Robinson


Representative
Mike Sella

Budgets

The supplemental operating budget we passed updates the two-year budget approved last year. This session we made critical new investments to keep families safe, provide quality teachers, and address other emergent needs like mental health and tax relief.

We also approved a two-year capital construction budget, with the largest-ever investment in K-12 school construction, thousands of jobs, and needed infrastructure projects across the state.



There were several wins in both budgets for our district. These are some of the projects that got funding from the state:

- The Snohomish County Diversion Center for a pilot program to help homeless people who also struggle with addiction
- The Cocoon House in Everett to help build a new youth services and housing building - the first shelter in the county to cater exclusively to people ages 18 to 24
- The HopeWorks Project: 65 affordable apartments for low-income residents
- School construction projects for Everett and Marysville school districts
- Repairs to Viola Oursler Park and Wiggums Park

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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. We 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 for 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.

This package is a milestone for our state, but it's not the end of the conversation. Now it's time for lawmakers to turn our attention to other essential education issues like the teacher shortage crisis, creating more pathways to career and college, and closing the achievement gap.



Addressing the Opioid Epidemic

The opioid crisis is an epidemic – our area has been especially hard hit. It isn't just affecting individuals, it is impacting our communities, contributing to rising homelessness and putting pressure on our social safety net. Addressing opioid use disorder is a priority for Democrats. This year we passed [HB 1047](#), a **statewide Drug Take-Back Program** to encourage the return of unused prescription drugs – keeping these drugs away from people who might misuse them. Additionally, our budget increased funding for treatment and prevention related to substance abuse disorders.

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 in the OTHER Washington about the future of the ACA. Rep. June Robinson

sponsored [HB 1523](#) this year to ensure that, at least in this Washington, 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.

Property Tax Reduction

We passed a **property tax cut** to give households relief from the Republican Property Tax increase that was part of the 2017 McCleary funding.

Property taxes in our area spiked and many families are facing real hardship. Next year, property owners will see a reduction in both their state property tax and their local school levy property taxes.



Mental Health

One of our top priorities this year was to invest in our state's underfunded mental health care system, both in our state institutions and at the community level, including funds to settle a federal court case. This session's major investment of nearly **\$300 million for mental and behavioral health care** will fulfill the state's obligations at our state hospitals and in our communities. This funding will help address two of the primary drivers of our current homelessness crisis: untreated substance abuse and mental health issues. The money will support patients in our state hospitals and provide more community support for those who are facing a crisis and often feel they have nowhere to turn.

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Common-Sense Gun Laws

The recent devastating shooting at a high school in Parkland, Florida, has brought attention to the growing group of communities affected by gun violence. Unfortunately, after the Marysville Pilchuck High School shooting, we know what it's like to be in this club that no one wants to join.

To reduce the carnage of mass shootings, like the one in Las Vegas last October, the Washington Legislature passed [SB 5992](#) to **ban bump fire stocks**. We also passed two 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 possess firearms. [SB 5553](#) creates an important tool for people to take a step toward safety by allowing them to voluntarily place themselves on a **“no-buy” list** for firearms.

While these changes are good steps forward, we must do more to stop school shootings – and to address the gun violence that many of our communities face every day. We are encouraged by the young people across our state and the nation who are speaking out against gun violence. It is time for legislators, like us, to listen and take more action to reduce gun violence in our schools and our communities.

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, the **Equal Pay Opportunity Act**, [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



Access to Democracy Package

We are excited that the governor signed election reforms to improve ballot access, increase campaign finance transparency, boost turnout, give local communities the opportunity to elect more reflective and responsive leadership, and ensure the security and integrity of our elections.

[SB 6002](#) - Washington Voting

Rights Act: Gives historically underrepresented communities tools to help elect more reflective and responsive representation.

[HB 1513](#) - Youth Voter Pre-

Registration: Allows 16 and 17 year olds to pre-register when they get their driver permit or license so they can vote when they turn 18.

[HB 2595](#) - Automatic Voter Registration: Registers eligible voters automatically through interactions with government agencies, like getting an enhanced driver's license. When Oregon enacted automatic voter registration, they added nearly 300,000 new voters in just one year.

[SB 6021](#) - Same Day Registration: Allows citizens to register to vote on the day of the election. States with same-day voter registration have higher participation rates.

[SB 5991](#) - The Disclose Act: Shines a light on unaccountable campaign dollars, bringing transparency to the political spending of non-profit organizations in elections.



Tribal Rights

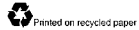
Sen. John McCoy sponsored [a bill](#) to strengthen the teaching of tribal curriculum called “Since Time Immemorial: Tribal Sovereignty in Washington State.” The curriculum materials, developed by state, tribal and local leaders are free to educators. The legislation requires future teachers learn this curriculum when studying at publically funded universities.

If we have any hope to bring peace to our increasingly polarized country, we must focus on teaching our children an accurate narrative of our collective history, including tribal treaty rights and the history of our 29 federally recognized tribes.

Sen. McCoy also sponsored [SB 6115](#) to clarify a gray-area concerning tribal compacts and tribal youth in juvenile custody. The bill allows DSHS to contract with Indian tribes to provide services in a state juvenile rehabilitation facility for youth adjudicated and sentenced in tribal court.

Senator John McCoy
Representative June Robinson
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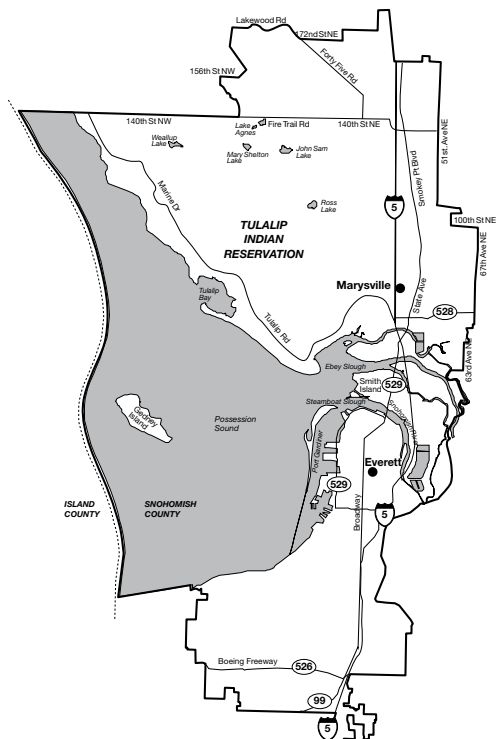
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