



REPRESENTATIVE
**Frank
Chopp**



SENATOR
**Jamie
Pedersen**



REPRESENTATIVE
**Nicole
Macri**

43rd District Legislative Report



Dear Friends and Neighbors,

We're pleased to bring you this update on the 2019 legislative session. Policies we passed prioritize quality education, health and wellness, strengthening our communities, and protecting our environment. Outcomes of this legislative session reflect our commitment as Democrats to provide opportunity and hope for all by putting people first.

Improving our behavioral health system

Unfortunately, most lives have been touched in some way by mental health issues, including substance use disorders; yet help can be difficult to find. Our budget funds more local care resources and state programs to help people in need. We also passed legislation to ease our behavioral health workforce shortage and build the nation's largest behavioral health teaching hospital.

Expanding higher education access and affordability

A post-secondary degree is important to compete in today's global economy. But that dream is out of reach for too many families simply due to the growing costs of higher education. This session, we increased financial aid and student success programs – including free higher education for low- and middle-income families – to give more people the opportunity to grow and thrive.

Improving our K-12 education system

Historic investments in our public school system put our state's 1.1 million K-12 students first, but there is much more to do. Our budget and new laws increase special education funding and local levy flexibility to honor our commitment to all students.

Strengthening our safety net

Many people struggle every day just to survive, let alone thrive. This year's budget increases homeless outreach and support, and bolsters the Housing and Essential Needs program to help struggling families and neighbors in need throughout the state.

Protecting our environment

Climate change threatens our very existence, and declining orca and salmon populations are the result of a damaged environment. This year we enacted innovative clean energy and clean building legislation to combat climate change and invested in efforts to help our orcas and salmon.

Reducing health care costs and expanding access to care

We passed a public option health care plan, guaranteed ACA protections into state law, and expanded access to reproductive health care services regardless of sexual identity or immigration status. To address the coming "age wave" and needs in the disability community, Democrats passed the Long-Term Care Trust Act, a first-in-the-nation social security program to ensure families have access to long-term care.

Take a look inside our newsletter for additional budget and policy highlights from this year's legislative session.

Thank you,

Rep. Frank Chopp

Sen. Jamie Pedersen

Rep. Nicole Macri



Rep. Frank Chopp



This year we made historic progress towards improving the lives of millions, by focusing on the priorities and needs of people across Washington. Working together we...

Made college free for those who need it the most

- ✓ Led the nation in creating a model to waive tuition for low-income students and reduce tuition for middle-income students
- ✓ Worked with high-demand industries to help students find good-paying jobs in health care, science, and technology
- ✓ Invested in college counselors to make sure that students take advantage of every opportunity

Took action to build a clean energy economy

- ✓ Mandated 100% clean electricity by 2045
- ✓ Brought environmental advocates and blue-collar champions together to create green jobs
- ✓ Created a first-in-the-nation energy efficiency standard for large commercial buildings to cut carbon emissions
- ✓ Invested in salmon recovery and worked to protect our Southern Resident orcas from oils spills and marine vessels

Secured funding to build homes

- ✓ Invested over \$400 million in the State Housing Trust Fund and local government efforts for affordable housing
- ✓ Allocated significant funding to Home and Hope projects to create thousands of affordable housing units with built-in early learning centers, health clinics, and other community services
- ✓ Passed legislation to protect renters from unfair landlords

Increased access to health care

- ✓ Created Cascade Care to offer a new, more affordable health care option to Washington families
- ✓ Continued to provide health care for 1.8 million people through the Apple Health program
- ✓ Launched several new strategies to confront the opioid crisis and get people into recovery

Prioritized behavioral health

- ✓ Pioneered a new model of health care that weaves behavioral health into every facet of the medical profession
- ✓ Funded a 150-bed behavioral health campus at the University of Washington to train tomorrow's health care workers and treat our community members struggling with mental health issues and substance use disorders
- ✓ Created a 24/7 tele-psych hotline to ensure that people in crisis receive life-saving assistance across the state

Invested in K-12 education

- ✓ Continued to increase state spending for public schools by billions of dollars
- ✓ Gave voters the ability to choose to spend more on enhancing their local schools
- ✓ Invested in special education to make sure all students succeed

Expanded social security

- ✓ Created a first-in-the-nation social insurance program to help protect families from the high cost of care for aging loved ones
- ✓ Expanded health care for workers with disabilities
- ✓ Began implementing our Paid Family Leave Act so workers can take the time to care for new or sick family members

More work to do...

To address the challenges facing our state, we are working in positive and productive ways. For example, I am leading efforts to develop thousands of affordable homes at specific sites for low-wage workers and low-income people in need. The list of projects include housing and services for homeless youth on Capitol Hill and in the University District. Please give me a call if you'd like to get involved.



Sen. Jamie Pedersen

COMMITTEES: Senate Law & Justice Committee (Chair),
Early Learning & K-12 Education, Rules, Ways & Means

Preventing gun violence

After decades of inaction, the tide is turning in favor of common-sense gun safety measures. Washington voters are responsible for much of the progress, passing statewide ballot measures to extend background checks to private sales and allowing family members to seek court orders to keep guns away from those who are at risk of hurting themselves or others.

In 2018, the legislature banned bump stocks, added domestic violence harassment to the list of conditions that prevent people from buying a firearm, and adopted a first-in-nation measure enabling people struggling with mental illness to place themselves on a firearms do-not-purchase list. The voters capped 2018 by passing Initiative 1639, an ambitious ballot measure increasing the purchase age and requiring enhanced background checks for semi-automatic weapons, as well as requiring safe storage of all firearms. In 2019, the legislature passed additional firearms safety bills to save lives by keeping guns out of the hands of people who pose a threat to themselves or others.



- SB 5181, which prohibits possession of a firearm for six months by someone placed in involuntary treatment for a 72-hour period. That individual may petition the court after six months to regain access to his or her firearms.
- HB 1225, which facilitates the removal of firearms after reported incidents of domestic violence;
- SB 5205, which prohibits possession of a firearm by someone found by a court to be incompetent to stand trial and who has a history of violent acts.
- SB 5027, which improves the state's extreme risk protection order law, passed by voters in 2016. The bill clarifies the law's applicability to minors and adds a prior conviction for a hate crime to the list of factors the court must consider when determining whether to issue an extreme risk protection order.
- HB 1739, which prohibits the manufacture, sale, or possession of undetectable firearms, such as 3D printed firearms. These weapons would not be detected by airport or courthouse screeners and so present a significant public safety risk.

Improving education

Public schools in Washington state serve more than 1.1 million K-12 students. About 52 percent of the next biennial state operating budget is dedicated to educating our children, including an increase of \$4.7 billion from the last two-year budget. The 2019 Legislature also recognized the importance of giving school boards the flexibility to set local priorities and fund enrichments to the program of basic education by giving local communities more flexibility to raise local levy money for enrichment. This policy change will allow Seattle Public Schools to raise about \$3,070 per student, or \$160 million, in 2020 to fund targeted investments such as additional nurses, librarians, and counselors. The Legislature also made changes to the formula that determines how much additional special education money is directed to school districts. As a result, this year's budget includes \$155 million for special education over the next four years. The 2019-21 capital budget includes \$1 billion for school construction to modernize our facilities and give our kids more room to learn, including a special allocation of \$20 million to ease overcrowding in Seattle Public Schools.



Advancing LGBTQ rights

Washington state has been fortunate for many years to have courageous champions in the state Legislature who stand up for historically-marginalized communities. Their work on behalf of communities of color, immigrants, and the LGBTQ community helped our state advance civil rights protections long before other states or the federal government. The nine LGBTQ members in the House and Senate work closely together to address inequities affecting the LGBTQ community. This year we celebrated the passage of several important bills:

- SB 5332 modernizes the state's 1950s-era vital records statutes, which govern birth, death, and marriage records. The revised statute will conform to our updated Uniform Parentage Act, recognizing that families come in many configurations. It also confirms in statute the right to have a non-binary gender marker on records.
- HB 1732 replaces the term "malicious harassment" with the better understood "hate crime" and increases the punitive damages that a victim may seek.
- SB 5602, the Reproductive Health Access for All Act, guarantees access to reproductive health services regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity or expression for all plans regulated by the state.
- SB 5356 creates a Washington State LGBTQ Commission and designates June of each year as LGBTQ month.
- SB 5689 requires the state school directors association and the state superintendent of education to develop and update a model transgender student policy to eliminate discrimination based on gender expression in public schools.
- SB 5027 adds a prior conviction for a hate crime to the list of factors a court must consider in determining whether to issue an extreme risk protection order.

Rep. Nicole Macri

COMMITTEES: Health Care & Wellness (Vice Chair), Appropriations, Finance

Affordable homes and stable communities for all

All corners of our state and everywhere in between are facing affordable housing and homelessness crises. At the same time, eviction rates have skyrocketed, and most people who are evicted go right into homelessness because they can't find a place to live that they can afford. This year, I was proud to champion a bold eviction reform aimed at truly and justly balancing the relationship between tenants and landlords by increasing the pay-or-vacate notice timeline from three days to fourteen days. This change gives most folks time to earn another paycheck to come up with rent money.

Seattle, King County, and local governments around the state are already putting to use another new law we passed allowing them to keep a portion of their sales tax revenue to help ease homelessness and build affordable housing.



Universal health care

Universal health care has long been a progressive policy goal, and this year we made our greatest stride yet by convening a workgroup to chart a path to universal health care in our state. We'll bring together patient advocates, large and small businesses, labor, health care providers and facilities, insurers, and state agencies to make recommendations for the legislature on how best to create a universal health care system that is sustainable and affordable for all Washingtonians.

Additionally, the Reproductive Health Access for All Act and budget investments will improve access to family planning services for immigrants and trans people.



Washington State LGBTQ Commission

This year I was very proud to sponsor the House companion to SB 5356 to create the Washington State LGBTQ Commission. This will be only the second cabinet-level commission in the nation focused solely on LGBTQ affairs. The Commission created under our bill will allow the LGBTQ community a formal, permanent seat at the table to provide input into legislation that might affect LGBTQ communities. It will also assist in coordinating state programs to address the needs of LGBTQ subgroups. The membership of the Commission will be balanced, based on different criteria such as race, gender, and socioeconomic positions.

Cleaning up our own House

As with many workplaces, the problem of sexual harassment and bullying in the Legislature festered for decades. Last year, more than 200 women in the legislative community came together to sign a "Stand With Us" letter. Since then, the legislature has taken significant steps to end this culture of harassment. We passed a resolution that I introduced establishing the legislature's Code of Conduct and a bill that will make sure lobbyists get training on respectful workplace practices. As a legislator, I feel a moral responsibility to end the culture of harassment in Olympia.



*Credit: Dennis Wise
Courtesy Burke Museum of Natural History & Culture*

People First Budget

The economy has done well over the last two years, which resulted in overall revenue growth for the state. However, Washington's broken and outdated tax structure cannot keep up with the needs of our state's rapidly growing population.

Our tax structure is also incredibly unfair, especially for low- and middle-income families and small businesses. It's clear our revenue system is upside-down when low-income families pay more than 17% of their household income in taxes, while Washington millionaires and billionaires pay less than 3% of their income in taxes. At the same time, national and multi-national companies are making record profits, which have increased significantly thanks to the Trump corporate tax cuts.

It's a question of fairness. Working families pay their fair share. We think Big Oil, Big Banks, and Big Tech companies should, too. These corporations at the very top of our economy have received state tax incentives and large tax cuts at the federal level. They benefit from an educated workforce, stable communities, diversity, and an excellent quality of life.

While the operating budget supports hundreds of important state services, our primary focus this year was on improving our state's behavioral health system, expanding access to higher education, fully funding K-12 schools, strengthening our safety net, and protecting our environment.

Community investments

Our state's capital budget puts people to work building public schools, colleges, state parks and infrastructure like rural broadband.

We prioritized investments that will allow all residents in Seattle to thrive. These investments include affordable housing, K-12 education and higher education facilities construction, toxic cleanup, behavioral health facilities, job training for formerly homeless people, childcare, community centers that serve low-income communities and communities of color, preservation of Native American culture, and accessible arts programming, among others.



Seattle highlights:

- ✓ Bellwether Housing
- ✓ Capitol Hill Housing Broadway
- ✓ Seattle Public Schools
- ✓ FareStart
- ✓ University Heights Center for the Community
- ✓ Seattle Opera
- ✓ Seattle Symphony
- ✓ Seattle Theatre group
- ✓ Roosevelt Childcare Center
- ✓ Northwest Native Canoe Center
- ✓ Green Lake Dock Replacement
- ✓ AIDS Memorial Pathway
- ✓ Volunteer Park Amphitheater



Statewide highlights:

- ✓ \$1.1 billion to build public schools, including \$43 million for rural and distressed schools
- ✓ \$973 million for projects at public colleges and universities, with \$408 million for community and technical colleges and \$34 million for a new behavioral health teaching hospital at the University of Washington
- ✓ \$154 million for projects at state mental health facilities, including the design of a new forensic hospital and the design and construction of new 16-bed and 48-bed behavioral health facilities
- ✓ \$585 million for orca, salmon recovery, and water quality projects

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

If you are between the ages of 14 and 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](http://leg.wa.gov/House/Pages/Default.aspx) or contacting our offices.

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 the application process by visiting <http://leg.wa.gov/Internships/Pages/default.aspx> or contacting our offices.