

STATE REPRESENTATIVES
DAN BRONOSKE & MARI LEAVITT
28TH LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT
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2021 Legislative Report



SUPPORTING LOCAL PROJECTS

We were proud to secure funding for important projects in our community, including:

- \$1.25 million for ADA improvements and waterfront access upgrades at American Lake Park in Lakewood
- \$85,000 for the Curran House Museum in University Place
- \$814,000 for the Steilacoom Museum and Cultural Center
- Nearly \$3 million for the Tacoma Community College Center for Innovative Learning and Engagement
- \$414,000 for Lakewold Gardens Carriage House accessibility improvements
- Nearly \$17 million for Camp Murray infrastructure upgrades
- \$772,000 for the Bethel School District Spanaway Middle School community health clinic
- \$508,000 for McNeil Island Estuary restoration
- At Western State Hospital, nearly \$7 million for patient safety improvements and \$16.6 million for the Treatment and Recovery Center
- Nearly \$12 million for the City of DuPont and City of Lakewood PFAS water treatment

- \$1.4 million for Lakewood McChord Field North Clear Zone land acquisition
- \$10 million for pedestrian Safe Streets projects statewide
- \$621,000 for a Community Partnership between Western State Hospital and Lakewood for community policing efforts
- \$515,000 for the Living Access Support Alliance (LASA) Client Services Center in Lakewood
- \$171,000 for the City of Fircrest water meter replacement
- \$350,000 for artificial turf infields at Fort Steilacoom Park
- \$16,000 to resurface the Fircrest Gene Goodwin Tennis Courts
- \$2.1 million for the University Place Leach Creek Interceptor extension

TRANSPORTATION PROJECTS

- \$135 million for I-5 HOV corridor improvements near JBLM
- \$5.7 million for Pierce Transit Bus Rapid Transit to Spanaway
- \$1.9 million for DuPont-Steilacoom Road improvements

SERVING THE COMMUNITIES OF THE 28TH LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT



Dear Neighbors,

With acknowledgement of hardships faced and members of our community lost this past year, we are sharing this update on the 2021 Legislative Session, held virtually for the first time ever due to COVID-19. Our focus this year was on addressing the economic and health impacts of the pandemic, supporting small businesses, helping struggling families, and reducing tax burdens for those who need it most. Much of that work was done in our operating budget and our early action bills, which included:

- **Property tax deferrals** for businesses that lost significant revenue during the pandemic;
- **Nearly \$300 million in small business grants and \$2.2 billion in unemployment insurance rate cuts** over the next four years;
- **More than \$1.3 billion for vaccine and public health** funding for vaccine distribution, contact tracing, and testing;
- **Landlord and rental relief with \$983 million to pay back due rent** and nearly **\$200 million** in landlord and mortgage foreclosure assistance;
- **\$207 million for improved Medicaid funding for seniors and people with disabilities** to address the increased need for care during the pandemic; and
- Hundreds of millions of dollars in state funding for transportation and construction **projects important to our local communities.**

Getting our communities back on their feet was our top priority this year, which is why we supported these investments to help struggling families and businesses. We both voted for the bipartisan Working Families Tax Exemption, which puts hundreds of dollars back in the pockets of families who qualify for the earned income tax credit. We also voted to exempt businesses from paying the business and occupation tax on any federal aid funds, expand broadband access, and increase the reach of the Mainstreet Program, which helps revitalize downtowns across the state.

One of the best ways to boost the local economy is through the state capital budget, and we are proud to have secured over **\$127 million** for local projects in our district. That includes nearly **\$12 million** for new water treatment plants for the City of DuPont and Lakewood Water District, **\$3 million** for the Center for Innovative Learning and Engagement at Tacoma Community College, restoration of salmon habitat at the McNeil Island Estuary, and safety and security improvements at Western State Hospital.

Next session, we hope COVID-19 will be behind us and we will return to Olympia to advocate on your behalf. If you have questions about the session or need help accessing services, please reach out to our offices. It is our honor to serve as your state representatives.

Sincerely,

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REPRESENTATIVE DAN BRONOSKE

KEEPING OUR COMMUNITIES SAFE

Keeping our communities safe is a critical role of government. I was proud to sponsor a bill that expands Washington’s existing Good Samaritan Law by providing immunity protection to emergency services volunteers, who assist with emergencies and natural disasters **(HB 1209)**. Previously, the law only covered medical response, but now our extension will allow people the peace of mind to contribute their skills and knowledge when responding to disasters.

We know the importance of creating equitable and sustainable public safety models for our communities and that a legal response is not always the only mechanism to keep people safe, so we increased funding for diversion programs to steer people towards treatment and recovery when appropriate for certain substance use and behavioral health needs. Legislation I passed **(HB 1276)** will improve initial treatment, evaluation, and emergency care for people experiencing these crises by allowing emergency medical services personnel to work in diversion centers. This will help ensure a more appropriate care setting than jails or emergency rooms and save taxpayers’ money.



KEEPING OUR COMMUNITIES HEALTHY

In the next few years, we will see the opening of the new University of Washington Behavioral Health Teaching Facility that will provide critically needed services and prepare the next generation of behavioral health providers. A new law I sponsored will add another path to grow our substance use disorder workforce by allowing applicants for professional certification to participate in approved apprenticeship programs **(HB 1311)**. Our vision is threefold: everyone who needs behavioral health services and treatment can access it when and where they need it, they get the best care from workers with the best training, and workers have careers they can be safe and thrive in.

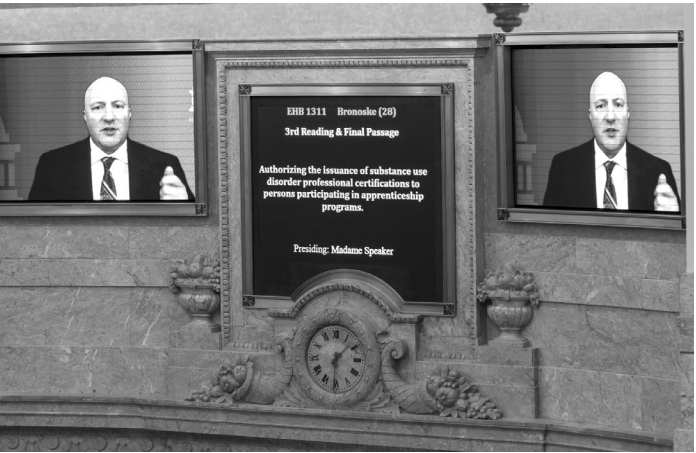
Almost every session, the Legislature is challenged with ensuring reimbursement rates for nursing facilities are keeping up with the cost of providing care. We delivered on this challenge by crafting a budget that continues temporary COVID-19 rate increases for long term care and developmental disability providers, increases developmental disabilities waiver capacity, provides funding to implement the nursing home rate methodology, and funds community investments in long term care throughout the state. The pandemic showed the critical necessity of telemedicine to keep our neighbors healthy – particularly in rural communities where health care services may be hours away. I was proud to support legislation to expand access to audio-only telemedicine **(HB 1196)** and allow respiratory therapists to provide care through telemedicine **(HB 1383)**.

LISTENING TO OUR CRITICAL WORKFORCE

Most deserving of our appreciation are the educators, health care workers, and many others who have put their lives on the line to keep us safe. This year, we adjusted the funding formula for student transportation to ensure staff and bus services can now be used to deliver meals, homework, and supplies to students during a local, state, or national emergency **(SB 5128)**.

Health care professionals who can no longer work due to contracting or being exposed to COVID-19 or another disease subject to a public health emergency will now be eligible for presumptive benefits. These workers also now qualify for unemployment insurance if they had to leave work to quarantine **(SB 5190)**.

Our district is home to Camp Murray, where the Washington National Guard has been at the forefront of the pandemic by administering vaccines, supporting local food banks and pitching in at the Employment Security Department. This year, we secured over **\$17 million** for new infrastructure at Camp Murray to support their work for our communities.



REPRESENTATIVE MARI LEAVITT

SUPPORTING FAMILIES & STUDENTS

Many families were worried about making ends meet before the pandemic. But with COVID-19, things have only gotten worse. That is why I sponsored a bipartisan law to bolster our economic recovery and provide food and cash assistance to those in need **(HB 1151)**. This change, along with the **\$124 million** for food assistance programs we passed in the budget, will help address the rise in food insecurity we have seen during the pandemic so families do not go hungry.



Our students are also having a hard time, especially students experiencing homelessness and those previously in foster care. That is why I passed legislation building on existing pilot programs at community and technical colleges and four-year institutions to help struggling students with basic needs, like housing, laundry facilities, reduced-priced meals, and more so they can focus on finishing their programs **(HB 1166)**.

Another way we helped our students is ensuring they have the right support to guide them through their programs.

Guided Pathways is a nationally recognized way the state helps students get the support they need to pursue their career, whether that requires a certificate or a two- or four-year degree. This program received an additional **\$16 million** in the state budget, which means students get access to more advisers, career counselors, and success supports.



STANDING WITH MILITARY FAMILIES

Military families and veterans deserve our support now more than ever. I was proud to join all of our colleagues to pass a new law designating Washington a Purple Heart State to honor those who have received the Purple Heart **(HB 1250)**. It was also my honor to support a great bipartisan bill that passed with unanimous support expanding the eligibility for the property tax deduction available to senior citizens and military veterans **(HB 1438)**.

I also supported getting crucial dollars for military and veteran members suicide prevention in the budget to ensure services are provided and a network is built to assist. Eliminating the enlistment age restriction for the Washington State Guard is one way we can ensure capable individuals can serve the state if they are able and willing. I will continue to support this measure in hopes of passing increasing the age next year.



Picture from 2020 session prior to masking requirements.

HELPING LOCAL BUSINESSES

Helping our local businesses survive the pandemic is something I take very seriously. I voted for hundreds of millions of dollars in small business grants and more than **\$2 billion** in unemployment insurance tax rate cuts, as well as business and occupation tax waivers and property tax deferrals for struggling businesses. On top of that, I sponsored a new law extending a tax credit used by businesses to increase job opportunities and expand employee skills by partnering with community and technical colleges **(HB 1033)**. Giving our small businesses stability and extending this tax credit shows Washington is willing to invest in workforce training that benefits businesses and families.

PROTECTING OUR RAILWAYS

After the Amtrak derailment near DuPont in 2017, it became clear more needed to be done to ensure our railways are safe. Building on my past work on rail safety, I introduced a bill this year that will help build a safer, stronger railway network. The bill was rolled into the state transportation budget, and I was able to secure funding to compare rail safety governance in other states and work with interested parties to identify what we can do to improve our railway network safety.

