

# 2022 SESSION REPORT TO THE 21<sup>ST</sup> LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT



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May 2022

Dear Friends and Neighbors,

Over the course of this year's 60-day Legislative Session, we passed policies that prioritize working families and the future of our state. Even in the face of the ongoing pandemic and another mostly virtual session, we saw record levels of remote testimony and participation in the legislative process. Your emails, phone calls, participation in town halls, and letters make us better legislators.

This feedback allowed us to prioritize legislation that invests in education, small businesses, equity, working families, climate action and so much more.

In this report you'll find budget highlights, as well as summaries of the measures we passed that put people first - from a historic transportation package to significant investments in schools and much more.

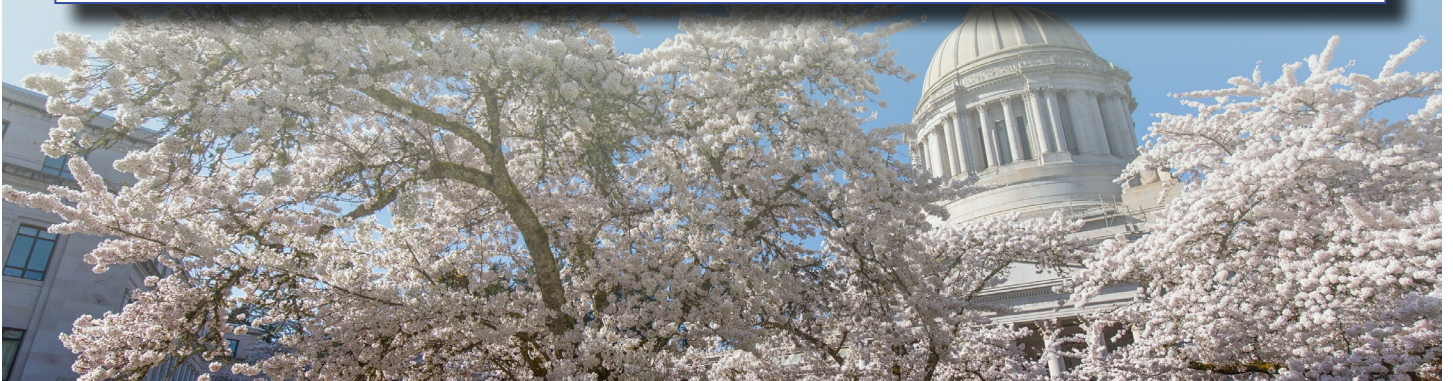
It is our profound honor to serve as your 21st District lawmakers, and we would not be able to do this work without your support and feedback. Please reach out to our offices if you have any questions or need help accessing services.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Marko Liias in blue ink.

Handwritten signature of Lillian Ortiz-Self in blue ink.

Handwritten signature of Strom Peterson in blue ink.



# 2022 REPORT TO THE 21<sup>ST</sup> DISTRICT



## SENATOR MARKO LIAS

It was my profound honor to serve another session as your state senator in the 21st District, and as chair of the Senate Transportation Committee. Your voices are a crucial part of our work in Olympia, and I am grateful for those who reached out with thoughts about legislation and the needs of our communities. In a short 60-day session, we passed policies that Put People First and invest in the needs of our communities.

### Moving Washington Ahead

In my first session as chair of the Senate Transportation Committee, we passed a 16-year, nearly \$17 billion **Move Ahead Washington** transportation package which prioritizes projects that will make commuting easier for residents in every corner of the state.

Along with exciting projects in our 21st District that will receive funding, statewide investments include allowing those 18 and under to ride free on all public transportation, funding a high-speed-rail corridor, and prioritization of renewable energy and electrification projects. Funding from this package will increase electric vehicle infrastructure across the state, further electrify public transportation, and electrify and expand our Washington State Ferries fleet – including one new hybrid-electric ferry on our Mukilteo route!

As we're working to combat the climate crisis and ensure our state remains pristine for generations to come, investments in a sustainable future will not only create more working class, family wage jobs, but will also modernize our transportation sector. Move Ahead Washington fulfills these goals **without** increasing any gas taxes or punting the cost to working families.

### Addressing gun violence

Nearly six years ago our community was changed forever by a preventable tragedy. Three beautiful lives were lost—Jordan Ebner, Jake Long and Anna Bui. Will Kramer was seriously injured, and dozens of young people went through something no person should ever experience.

Since that day I heard one thing loud and clear from the families affected by this tragedy - the only reason others were able to get away was because the shooter needed to reload. This session we took a massive step towards ensuring no other families experience the tragedy of gun violence, and while there is work yet to be done, I am grateful to the advocates and families who championed action.

I was proud to sponsor legislation to limit the sale of high-capacity magazines that carry more than ten rounds of ammunition ([SB 5078](#)). This legislation will save lives by limiting the amount of damage a shooter can inflict. Additional bills were passed to restrict the printing of untraceable 'ghost guns' ([HB 1705](#)) and ban the open carry of firearms at certain public meetings, as well as prohibit weapons at election offices ([HB 1630](#)).

Our neighbors deserve to feel safe in their communities, and with these bills we are closer to making that reality.



### Investing in higher education

In the Senate Higher Education & Workforce Development Committee, we passed policies that will increase opportunities for students across Washington. **We know that college is a powerful pathway to opportunity, but it's not the only path and that's why we made significant new investments in apprenticeships to ensure everyone can find a good-paying career.**

I championed legislation to begin to address the crisis of student loans in Washington by making the Public Service Loan Forgiveness Program more accessible ([SB 5847](#)). More students will be able to access higher education programs thanks to modifications made to the Washington State Opportunity Scholarship Program ([HB 1805](#)), and other bills to expand access to apprenticeship pathways ([SB 5600](#)) for students will ensure they have more career opportunities ([SB 5764](#)). Additional legislation will ensure students are safe both on and off campus by prohibiting hazing and investing in hazing prevention measures ([HB 1751](#)).



## REP. LILLIAN ORTIZ-SELF

### Supporting children and youth

We passed the Fair Start for Kids Act in 2021 to make childcare more affordable and accessible for families. This year, we are following up with bills that help ensure young people have access to safe, stable housing and mental health supports, such as:

**HB 1747** - Protecting children from experiencing trauma is at the core of my Keeping Families Together legislation, which prioritizes preventative measures to keep children with their relatives throughout child welfare proceedings. This is also a racial justice issue, as Black and Indigenous children are more likely than white children to be separated from their families by the child welfare system.

**HB 1905** - No young person should be released into homelessness after they've been in a publicly funded system of care, such as foster care, behavioral health treatment, or juvenile rehabilitation. This measure provides more services and resources to ensure young people have safe, stable housing when leaving a system of care.

**HB 1890** - We're in the middle of a youth mental health crisis that's only gotten worse during the pandemic. This bill creates an advisory group to help develop a comprehensive, statewide plan to expand access to behavioral health care so kids, young people, and families can get help when they need it.



### Fair opportunities for all students

All students deserve a fair opportunity to learn and grow. These are some of the policies we passed this session that prioritize student well-being, as well as expanding accessibility and cultural competency:

**HB 1153** – Because parental involvement is critical for students' success, we are increasing language access and family engagement in public schools. Students and families who need interpretation deserve the same opportunities as their peers in a language they can understand.

**HB 1664** - By bringing more counselors, nurses, and social workers into our schools, we are investing in our children's physical and emotional growth to help every student work toward a bright, promising future.

**HB 1878** – Hungry kids struggle to learn, so we are expanding free school meals to more than 92,000 students by requiring all eligible schools to participate in the Community Eligibility Program. This is an important step on our path to ending childhood hunger in Washington.



**HB 2078** - When kids spend time learning outdoors, they don't just learn biology from tidal pools and math from calculating the sun's angle. They learn the value and history of the land we stand on, as well as our responsibility to be good stewards and preserve the healing power of nature. This bill gets students away from screens and into nature so they can stay healthy and thrive in school.

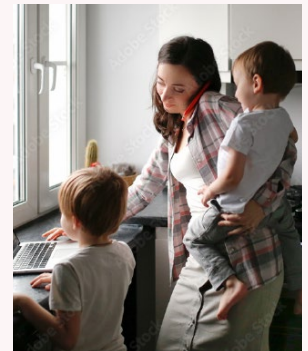
### Committed to working families

We are putting working families first with policies that encourage diversity, fairness, equity, and justice:

**HB 1888** - Last year we expanded the Working Families Tax Credit (WFTC) to provide a sales tax credit between \$300 and \$1,200, giving greater financial stability to hundreds of thousands of families in Washington. This year we made technical changes and ensured the WFTC is adjusted annually so families don't face a steep drop-off in benefits.

**SB 5761** - This bill continues our work in pay equity by requiring employers to provide the wage scale or salary range in job postings. Not disclosing this information perpetuates disparities in offers and negotiations, negatively impacting women and people of color, which effectively maintains existing pay gaps.

**HB 1795** - This measure prohibits the use of non-disclosure & non-disparagement agreements (NDAs) to block workers from speaking out about harassment, discrimination, retaliation, and wage-theft in the workplace. This bill is about empowering workers and giving them a voice.



# 2022 REPORT TO THE 21<sup>ST</sup> DISTRICT

## REP. STROM PETERSON

### Housing, Human Services & Veterans Committee

The HHSV Committee, which I chair, worked hard this session—both Democrats and Republicans—to make sure people who experience domestic violence or sexual assault are not stuck with a financial burden from damage to rental homes caused by the violence inflicted on them (HB 1593), support human trafficking victims by ensuring their eligibility for critical services (HB 1748), and to establish programs to help prevent suicide among veterans and military members (HB 1181).

This year I was proud to pass legislation that will help increase the supply of affordable housing, and to create an alternative to typical security deposits.

- **Increasing funds for housing through the Housing Finance Commission (HB 1738)**

The Commission leverages federal and private resources to fund numerous affordable housing projects. However, the Commission is reaching its debt limit and cannot finance more great shovel-ready projects. House Bill 1738 raises the commission's debt limit from \$8 billion to \$14 billion. Raising the Commission's debt limit will allow the state to access billions of dollars for housing with no risk, cost, or liability to state.

- **A new option for rental security deposits (HB 2064)**

I brought landlord and tenant advocates together to work on a proposal to create a new option for a fee in lieu of a security deposit. The new law allows renters to opt into making smaller monthly payments instead of larger up-front deposits, while still providing basic protections. This gives renters and landlords more options to protect tenancies and maintain properties.



### Lessons learned from the pandemic

We have learned a lot in the last two years of economic hardship from the pandemic. The legislature has made numerous policy and funding changes that will help us prepare for future economic downturns, and I know we will continue looking back to see how state government can serve Washingtonians better.

One reform I sponsored this year allows for time limit extensions of Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) during times of high unemployment (HB 1755). This will ensure that the state does not create an artificial benefits cliff when economic conditions make it nearly impossible to find work.

Here are a few other bills we passed that will help us get through the next catastrophe:

- **HB 1708**—Audio-only telemedicine: While many medical visits could be shifted online, many people lack broadband connectivity. Having an audio-only option is important to make sure people can get the care they need.
- **HB 2007**—Nurse educator loan program: The pandemic has put a tremendous strain on nurses, and health providers can't simply recruit their way out of it. We need to train more nurses and grow the profession, not simply replace those who leave.
- **HB 2078**—Outdoor learning: Our students have been stuck in front of screens for too long. Let's get them outside to provide new learning opportunities and support their mental health and emotional wellbeing.



### The best ideas come from YOU

I met with a constituent in our district ahead of this year's legislative session, and I learned that fees for official name changes can be prohibitively expensive. For a transgender person, the decision to adopt a chosen name provides life-affirming dignity. For someone fleeing domestic violence, it is a matter of safety.

Unfortunately, county auditors are unable to waive fees for those who are unable to pay them, creating a barrier for people trying to start a new life. So, we passed a new law (HB 1961) that allows auditors to waive these fees if a person can demonstrate financial hardship.

The legislation didn't grab headlines, but the quiet work of supporting people in our community is the highest honor for me as your representative in Olympia.

**Get in touch with me and let's see how we can make a difference together!**



## CAPITAL BUDGET

### Supporting families, jobs and economic growth

Our work this year focused on jobs, economic growth, and supporting Washington families.

The Capital Budget, also known as the construction budget, generally provides funding for buildings and physical infrastructure projects throughout the state. This year, with some help from one-time additional federal revenue, we were able to assist our state in overcoming the COVID-19 pandemic while addressing the many challenges Washington families face every day with investments in affordable housing & shelter for families (\$439M), broadband grants (\$100M), schools (\$224M), behavioral health (\$111M), clean energy (\$101 M), natural resources (\$271M), and much more.

We were proud to secure \$206K for the Edmonds Boys & Girls Club Feasibility Study, \$113M for the Housing Trust Fund, and \$775K for the Weld Collaborative Reintegration Resource Center to support recovery and reintegration for people with substance use disorder or a history of incarceration.

*For more information on the Operating, Capital and Transportation budgets, go to [leap.leg.wa.gov](http://leap.leg.wa.gov)*

## Moving people and goods safely and efficiently

**Move Ahead Washington**, our transformational \$17 billion, 16-year package, creates a sustainable, achievable future for our transportation sector. This package reflects our focus on meeting the needs of every community across Washington.

A commitment to our values, the Move Ahead Washington package puts people first:

- \$5.4 billion for electrification, expanding affordable, accessible multimodal options, and reducing our carbon footprint.
- \$3 billion for maintenance and preservation of our existing infrastructure.
- \$3 billion for public transportation.
- Free fares for passengers 18 and younger on all public transportation.
- \$2.4 billion to fund fish passage barrier removals.
- \$1.3 billion in active transportation, including Safe Routes to School and school-based bike programs.
- \$836 million to build four new hybrid-electric ferries.
- \$50 million for walking and biking infrastructure in underinvested communities, and to increase opportunities for good jobs in the transportation sector.

On top of necessary statewide investments, major transportation projects in the 21st Legislative District will also receive funding:

- \$46 million: SR 525 Bridge Replacement – Mukilteo
- \$20 million: I5/164th St SW Lynnwood Link Improvements
- \$22.5 million: SR 99 Revitalization Project – improvements along the southern portion of Edmonds frontage along Highway 99.
- \$25 million: SR 99 Business Access & Transit lanes – 2.3 miles of 14-foot BAT lanes in both directions on SR 99 from 148th St SW to Airport Road.
- \$30 million: Adding three new rapid transit lines across our county



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**SENATOR MARKO LIAS • REP. LILLIAN ORTIZ-SELF • REP. STROM PETERSON**

**Budgeting with our values for a better Washington**

In 2021, we passed a two-year Operating Budget to support people hit hardest by the pandemic, prioritizing the needs of essential and frontline workers, and Black, Brown, and Indigenous communities that have suffered the most and face the greatest barriers to recovery.

This year, we built on that budget to continue supporting those hurt most during the pandemic. Things won't change overnight, and problems won't go away without hard work, but our Supplemental Operating Budget will turn these values into reality.

In this table you'll see the amounts appropriated in the biennial 2021-23 budget passed last year, as well as the supplemental budget approved this session:

Issue Area	Allocated in 2021	Additional investments in 2022	Total investments for 2021-2023
K-12 Education	\$2.3 Billion	\$808 Million	<b>\$3.1 Billion</b>
Higher Education	\$158 Million	\$283 Million	<b>\$441 Million</b>
Children, Youth & Families	\$827 Million	\$245 Million	<b>\$1 Billion</b>
Homelessness & Housing	\$1.7 Billion	\$318 Million	<b>\$2 Billion</b>
Healthcare	\$1.3 Billion	\$837 Million	<b>\$2.1 Billion</b>
Behavioral Health	\$520 Million	\$277 Million	<b>\$800 Million</b>
Human Services	\$1.2 Billion	\$211 Million	<b>\$1.3 Billion</b>
Long-Term Care	\$1.2 Billion	\$1.2 Billion	<b>\$2.4 Billion</b>
Public Safety	\$189 Million	\$215 Million	<b>\$404 Million</b>
Natural Resources	\$342 Million	\$620 Million	<b>\$1 Billion</b>

We also made investments to help our **economic recovery** with Business and Occupation tax credits, \$100 million for restaurants and hospitality businesses, \$75 million for disaster response, and \$25 million for arts programs.

All of these investments prioritize the needs of our neighbors and will move our state forward to ensure an equitable and lasting economic recovery.