



SENATOR
**Jamie
Pedersen**



REPRESENTATIVE
**Frank
Chopp**



REPRESENTATIVE
**Nicole
Macri**



43rd District Legislative Report

Dear friends and neighbors,

The Legislature has passed major progressive victories in the last several years and that work continues as we head into the 2024 Legislative Session. We are especially pleased to have voted to create and expand the Washington College Grant, a best-in-the-nation free or reduced college tuition program available to working families. Through the Washington College Grant, students are going to 2 and 4-year institutions, obtaining certificates, getting job training, or completing their apprenticeships for free or with significantly lower costs.

We also voted to protect and expand the rights of the LGBTQ+ community, through protecting transgender youth who are not supported at home, making it easier for people to change their names to avoid harassment, shielding private and personal health data and giving people more authority to protect their data, increasing access to HIV and AIDS medication, and providing more funding for programs that support LGBTQ+ youth.

Finally, we continue to invest in our behavioral health system to ensure that our neighbors and loved ones in crisis get the care they need and deserve. From statewide network adequacy standards to creating certified crisis relief centers (alternatives to emergency rooms and jails), we are working hard to improve outcomes for people in crisis. We also are funding more infrastructure, including buildings, beds, and the workforce staffing to support our growing behavioral health needs.

This upcoming 60-day session, we plan to continue our work on these areas and do our best to tackle the challenges of housing, rising rents, and expanding access to health care. Hearing from you helps us ensure that the policy and budget items we pass are those that benefit everyone in Washington, so please reach out to us, schedule a visit when you are in Olympia, and come to our town hall (see inside for more details).

Thank you,

Jamie Pedersen
Sen. Jamie Pedersen

Frank Chopp
Rep. Frank Chopp

Nicole Macri
Rep. Nicole Macri

SCAN THE QR CODE TO LEARN MORE ABOUT FREE COLLEGE TUITION!



PRIORITIES OF THE PEOPLE: HOUSING, HEALTHCARE, WORKFORCE

COVENANT HOMEOWNERSHIP ACCOUNT – A REMEDY FOR RACIAL DISCRIMINATION

First state in the nation!

We enacted HB 1474 this year, to help remedy decades of racial discrimination by real estate “covenants” that banned “any person not of the white or Caucasian race” to own a home in many parts of the state. This historic effort will provide significant down payment assistance for homeownership for people of color who lived in our state when those “covenants” were common practice and to their descendants. Close to \$2 billion will be invested over the next 20 years to help build generational wealth.

STATE HOUSING TRUST FUND – INVESTMENT IN AFFORDABLE HOMES!

Over \$400 million, a historic level!

Non-profit housing projects across the state will see a major increase in funding to acquire, construct or renovate homes for people in need, including \$25 million for those with developmental disabilities, \$100 million for Apple Health and Homes, and more.



APPLE HEALTH AND HOMES – A PRESCRIPTION FOR A HOME!

A new dynamic to help the homeless!

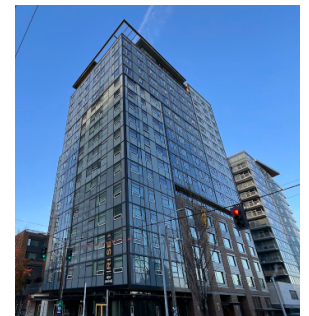
We began implementation of HB 1866 (enacted last year) to carry out this approach: if you are chronically homeless, and have a medical condition (mental illness, substance use disorder, or a major physical disability), then you shall have a home as part of your medical treatment. That saves lives and saves money! The federal Medicaid administration recently approved federal funds to pay for the actual housing, for up to six months per person. We are working to expand this approach.



HOME AND HOPE – PUBLIC PROPERTIES FOR PUBLIC PURPOSES!

6000 new homes at 30 sites in development!

A catalyst for creating housing, childcare centers, and community facilities on surplus or underutilized public land, the Home and Hope effort is securing sites and promoting legislation to develop projects for low-income people in need. Non-profit ownership and operation ensures that rents are controlled and permanently affordable. Completed projects include the 17-story high-rise with 350 apartments at Madison and Boylston on First Hill. There are several projects under construction including 250 units at the Pacific Tower campus on Beacon Hill.



WORKFORCE EDUCATION INVESTMENT – AN ANSWER TO WORKFORCE SHORTAGES.

The best financial aid in the nation... and more!

In 2019, we enacted the Workforce Education Investment Act, HB 2158, ensuring free college and university tuition for all low-income students. We are building upon that commitment in many ways, including a brand-new Behavioral Health Teaching Hospital, to be operated by the University of Washington, under construction right now at Northwest Hospital. With 150 beds, a full range of care will be provided, as well as the capacity to train the next generation to help meet the critical workforce shortage in behavioral health.



“Heading into the 2024 legislative session, I remain focused on how we can best support all our neighbors through access to health care, a strong health care workforce, and housing for everyone.”

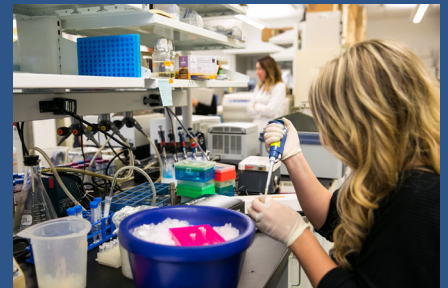
ENSURING ACCESS TO AFFORDABLE HEALTH CARE

- √ In the last ten years, we have seen countless attempts to limit, overturn, and ban the right to an abortion and gender-affirming care in Washington state. Thanks to my colleagues in the House and Senate Democratic Caucuses, we have not only stopped those bills from passing but have strengthened YOUR right to determine your own reproductive future.
- √ When the Republican-appointed United States Supreme Court justices struck down *Roe v. Wade*, we took action. Democrats introduced and passed new laws to protect your private reproductive health data (HB 1155), shielded health care providers from legal and disciplinary action from other states (HB 1340 and HB 1469), eliminated co-pays and deductible requirements for abortion care (SB 5242), ensured that the state could distribute mifepristone if the Supreme Court took that away from the FDA (SB 5768), and we protected youth seeking protected health services, such as gender-affirming treatment or reproductive health services (SB 5599).



SUPPORTING AND STRENGTHENING OUR WORKFORCE

- √ Nurses are leaving the profession in droves due to stress and being overworked and underpaid, which is why we passed a new law to establish hospital staffing committees. These committees are there to make sure nurses aren't being overworked and can even financial penalize employers who violate staffing plans.
- √ Better workplace standards alone won't solve our workforce shortage problems. That is why, as Vice Chair of the House Appropriations Committee, I advocated for more health care workforce and training funding and better wages and rate increases for all our state care workers, including pediatricians and primary care providers, workers in long term care and developmental disabilities, home care, adult family homes, nursing homes, assisted living facilities, supported living, behavioral health providers, and other care providers.
- √ This year, we've expanded our investments in behavioral health workers with \$1.1 billion that includes a 15 percent increase in rates to providers, additional bed capacity, more funding for crisis, outreach, and diversion programs, and expanded funds for youth behavioral health programs.



HOMES AND SUPPORTIVE HOUSING FOR NEIGHBORS IN NEED

- √ This past year, we passed a variety of housing bills to help address our supply issue. The biggest victory for Washington residents is the Middle Housing bill, which will increase the types of housing in cities and towns across the state. With more duplexes, triplexes, and fourplexes, we provide more diverse housing options that help keep families in homes.
- √ Supply isn't the only housing-related problem. Stability is a quickly escalating reason for displacement, sending families further away from their communities and jobs, and even resulting in homelessness. Escalating rental rates and predatory practices are forcing tenants out, and it's wrong. This coming session, I will work with my colleagues to reintroduce a bill that gives renters stability in their rent and stops excessive rent hikes.
- √ Despite policy improvements, we must support struggling community members with the most need. I ensured that our state budget added \$519 million in housing and homelessness funding increases which included emergency housing and rental assistance, expanded the Housing and Essential Needs program, and supported our construction budget's \$400 million to the Housing Trust fund, a state program that builds affordable housing, and included \$95 million for rapid permanent supportive housing.

INVESTING IN K-12 EDUCATION

Our biggest victory in public school funding last session was a substantial investment in services for kids with disabilities. Schools are receiving \$372 million in additional funding during the 2023-25 biennium, thanks to the passage of House Bill 1436.

However, we still have not come close to full funding of special education. Put simply, special education is basic education. Providing ample funding for basic education is our state's paramount duty. Until we have fully funded the special education system, this issue will remain my top education priority.

I will be working to provide ample funding for all students, including students with disabilities, in the 2024 supplemental budget. I will also continue my long work to increase state support of school construction through our capital budget, to make sure that every student has a safe and healthy place to learn.

REDUCING GUN VIOLENCE

Reducing gun violence in our community and state has been one of my primary objectives in the Legislature since the Sandy Hook shooting more than a decade ago. We made great progress in the 2023 session, passing bills to prohibit the sale, manufacture, and import of assault weapons; requiring a 10-day waiting period and comprehensive safety training for purchases of all firearms; and requiring gun manufacturers and dealers to impose reasonable controls to prevent their products from getting into the hands of dangerous individuals.

In 2024, I will be working with advocates to strengthen last session's law on gun manufacturers and dealers by detailing the code of conduct we expect them to follow that would constitute "reasonable controls". We will also be working to establish a "permit to purchase" system, which is a proven and effective means of reducing gun violence in the states that have adopted it.



ADVANCING LBGTQ+ RIGHTS

As the senior member of our Legislature's LGBTQ+ Caucus, I coordinate with my colleagues well before the session starts to ensure we prioritize legislation that will improve lives and advance civil rights. In 2023, we passed a law protecting transgender youth who are not supported at home and are seeking gender-affirming care or reproductive health care by providing them safe accommodations; made it easier and safer for transgender people (and refugees and domestic violence survivors) to change their names legally; protected people in Washington seeking or providing reproductive health care services and gender-affirming treatment from out-of-state efforts to pursue criminal or civil cases against them; and gave Washingtonians control over who shares and sells their health data, and the freedom to demand that businesses delete their sensitive health data.

In the 2024 session, we will be working to require insurance companies to cover fertility care for all folks who want to start families, including LGBTQ+ couples.



Celebrating the passage of **SB 5599** with fellow Senate LGBTQ+ Caucus members Marko Liias (Everett), Emily Randall (Bremerton), and Claire Wilson (Federal Way).

DEATH PENALTY OFFICIALLY ABOLISHED

Our state's long journey to abolish the death penalty came to a happy conclusion in 2023. I was proud to sponsor Senate Bill 5087 and watch the Legislature, with bipartisan majorities in both chambers, finally vote to make Washington one of 23 states without a death penalty in law. In my view, repeal of capital punishment represents a profound statement about our values in this state. I am happy to report that there is nothing more to be done on this issue in 2024.



LOCAL COMMUNITY INVESTMENTS

Each year the state makes hundreds of new investments to improve public spaces around the state. Thanks to persistent and effective advocacy by community members and nonprofits, many projects in the neighborhoods of the 43rd district will receive state funding over the next two years.

From facilities that support our most vulnerable neighbors to historic entertainment venues, the new investments we secured in this year's capital budget will create benefits throughout our community. Here are a few highlights:

- \$1 million for foundation repairs and a renovated basement at Lambert House, which serves more than 1,000 at-risk LGBTQ+ youth annually. The new space will enlarge the clothing and hygiene banks and include new art and music studios.
- \$1.5 million to support homeless youth services at YouthCare.
- \$1.8 million to expand dental care capacity at Neighborcare Health's 45th Street Clinic.
- \$539,000 to replace the roof of the Eagles Building, home to the ACT Contemporary Theatre and residents of 44 affordable housing units.
- \$515,000 to replace Pike Place Market's 30 year-old elevator and to build safer, high-capacity stairs to ensure an accessible and ADA-compliant link between the new waterfront and Western Avenue.
- \$3 million for Seattle Aquarium's Ocean Pavilion, which is scheduled to open in June 2024.
- \$425,000 for renovations at the Wallingford Food Bank.
- \$320,000 to help restore the exterior of the historic Stimson-Green Mansion.
- \$745,000 for restoration of the Steamer Virginia V, one of last operational examples of the Mosquito Fleet.
- \$1 million to support Cascade Public Media, home of KCTS 9 and Crosscut, as they move to the 316 Broadway building on First Hill.
- \$250,000 to support the Seattle Symphony Orchestra with improvements to the Benaroya Hall Auditorium.
- \$550,000 for The 5th Avenue Theatre to make accessibility upgrades, create a new costume shop, install new HVAC in the orchestra pit to provide heat for musicians, and replace outside signage.
- \$491,000 for the Paramount Theater to refurbish all 2,875 seats and upgrade stage and pit lighting systems.
- \$3 million for restoration of the ASUW Shell House.

We hope that you share our excitement to watch these projects take shape in the coming months and years. These investments will benefit generations to come.

**43rd LEGISLATIVE
DISTRICT**



43rd DISTRICT LEGISLATIVE REPORT

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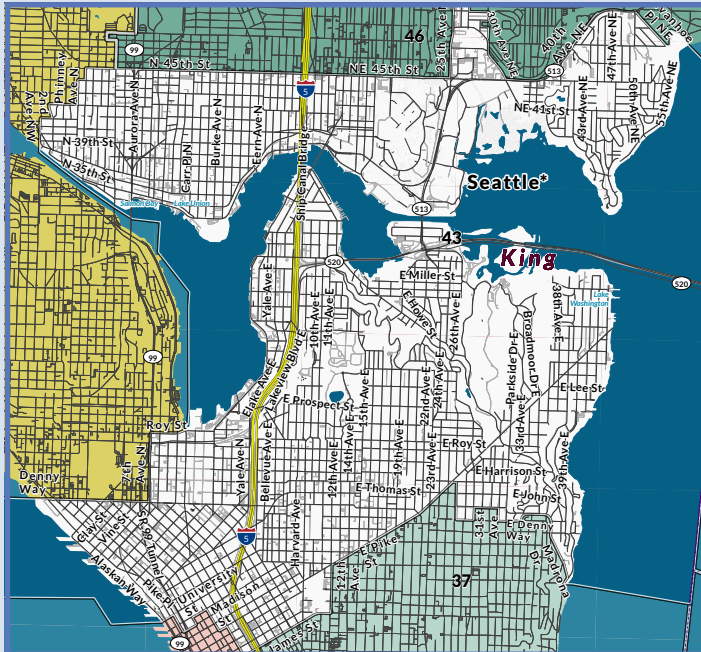
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Legislative District 43

TOWN HALL

Please join us for a town hall
on Saturday, February 17th at
1 p.m. @ Seattle First Baptist
Church, 1111 Harvard Ave.

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out more!

