

## SPOTLIGHT: GLEN TANA LAND ACQUISITION FOR CONSERVATION AND EXPANSION

Protecting and conserving nature areas in our community is something I care about deeply. Working with the Inland Northwest Land Conservancy, the Spokane Tribe, state parks and many others, we secured \$3 million in state funding to aid in the purchase of the Glen Tana property in North Spokane.

Glen Tana is 1,060 acres and the missing link connecting Waikiki Springs Nature Preserve and Riverside State Park. This could be the last opportunity to protect a piece of land this large and this close to an urban center in the State of Washington. This builds on my work to secure \$1.5 million in funding to protect 95 acres of the Waikiki Springs Nature Preserve and 1,700 feet of shoreline on the Little Spokane River. Once connected, these lands will serve as a protected recreation-trail corridor, and eventually a significant expansion of Riverside State Park.

There will also be educational opportunities for our children and the public to learn more about salmon and the cultural significance for our tribes. It was very meaningful to hear from Spokane Tribal elders and conservation leaders and participate in a release of salmon in both newly safeguarded areas.



Rep. Riccelli with Sen. Billig presenting a ceremonial \$3 million dollar check to the Inland Northwest Lands Conservancy.

## Representative **Marcus Riccelli** - 2024 End of Session Update

Representative

# Marcus Riccelli

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### HEALTHIER AND SAFER COMMUNITIES

Addressing the fentanyl crisis was a bipartisan priority this year, with bills passed to create **public awareness campaigns, education, outreach and prevention in our schools and colleges**, and increased requirements for insurers to cover treatment. The Legislature funded \$215 million for opioid and fentanyl response. That pays for treatment to get people care and out of active addiction, and supports families and safety of children. In our Capital Budget, two treatment centers received funding: \$2 million for the Seven Nations Healing Lodge Youth Expansion and \$5 million for the Kalispel Tribe Camas Health Inpatient Treatment Center.

I also continued to focus on protecting our community and prioritizing public safety through legislation that ensured law enforcement has increased tools needed to keep our communities safe, supported victims of crime, and protected trafficking survivors. Over the last two sessions, we invested in additional police training classes and facilities including \$1.4 million for upgrades to the SPD training facility. We also passed nation-leading gun violence prevention legislation.

My work as **chair of the Health Care & Wellness Committee** continued to prioritize access to care and addressing critical

workforce shortages. I wanted to highlight these two bills I sponsored and passed.

**HB 2041** allows physician assistants greater autonomy to serve patients using collaboration agreements, setting up a way for experienced physician assistants to collaborate with at least one physician without supervision. We used collaboration agreements during the pandemic to strengthen our workforce and this bill maintains those to help people in our communities struggling with access to primary care.

**HB 1678** created the Dental Therapists profession in Washington state in certain limited settings. A dental therapist is supervised by a dentist and can provide fillings, preventive services, and emergency services such as adult teeth extraction if a dentist authorizes it. Increasing oral health access has been a top priority for me because there are so many unmet needs in Spokane, resulting in significant health consequences. Everyone deserves a happy health smile.

Attacks on reproductive care continue in the country. I sponsored and passed two bills (**HB 1340 and HB 1954**) to ensure providers licenses are protected when providing reproductive health care. I will continue to vigorously protect the rights of Washingtonians to access essential health care.

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# Representative **Marcus Riccelli** - 2024 End of Session Update



Dear Friends and Neighbors,

Inside you will find an update on the work I have done the last few years and projects that were funded in the budgets. I remained focused on ensuring healthier communities through access to food, working toward safe and affordable housing for all families, expanding access to health care in our rural and underserved areas of Washington, and prioritizing public safety. If you have questions or feedback to share, please reach out to my office. I value your input and look forward to hearing from you.

I also want to acknowledge the retirement of Senator Billig from the Legislature and thank him for his many years of service. Andy has been a good friend and seatmate and I value the time we have spent working closely together. Andy has significantly improved the lives of people in our community and throughout our state.

It's my honor to serve you!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Marcus Riccelli".

Representative Marcus Riccelli

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## INVESTING IN SPOKANE'S FUTURE

Last year, I strongly opposed efforts to reduce funding for the North Spokane Corridor and worked hard to ensure funding to finish what we started. A pause in construction would cost taxpayers significantly more money in the long-run and delay the positive benefits of this project for our region. The project will pay for itself in economic impact, but also benefit our state with significantly reduced travel time and emissions. This year's Transportation Budget includes \$192 million to continue work on the project through the next year, as the work continues to complete the section from Francis Avenue to I-90.

I was also pleased to support multi-modal investments that promote transportation options for livable communities. I helped secure funding for STA's free youth ridership program for everyone 18 and younger, and ongoing funding for the Division Street Bus Rapid Transit project. It was also fantastic to participate in the opening of the Central City Line, a project to which we committed \$15 million in state dollars.

Highlighted projects from recent capital construction budgets include:

- \$4 million to expand community-based behavioral health services
- \$3.96 million for investments in the Museum of Arts & Culture (MAC)
- \$1.5 million for the Spokane Civic Theatre
- \$1.03 million for supportive housing for survivors of domestic violence through Casa MiA
- \$1 million for the American Indian Community Center
- \$350 thousand for the Latah Valley Fire Station

## ENDING HUNGER IN WASHINGTON

Food is health and hungry kids can't learn. Universal access to school meals improves academic performance and health outcomes, and reduces absences and disruptions in the classroom. I have passed laws ensuring **more than half of Washington students get free breakfast and lunch in our schools**. Because of my bills and significant state funding, Spokane Public Schools has been offering all students free meals in the district. Free school meals can also reduce the financial burden on families throughout our community as prices for groceries have risen.

Food insecurity is also faced by many families and seniors. Use of food banks and state food programs have increased since the pandemic. Last year, we passed **\$95 million in new funding for food programs and this year we added another \$64 million** for food assistance for seniors, EBT cards for summer meals for children, and food bank support.



## PROMOTING HOUSING ACCESS

Everyone in our community deserves access to affordable housing. The Legislature provided over \$1 billion in funding last year and another \$230 million this year, including a new program to provide **credits to low- and moderate-income households on their utility bills this fall**. With new laws, we've made the permitting process for new homes more efficient, made it easier to build condominiums, and expanded the types of homes that can be built statewide to meet our need for more housing. But we must still do more to address excessive, unaffordable rent increases.



I was pleased to work with the community to fund these investments:

- \$4 million for a grant to the City of Spokane to provide temporary emergency shelter for homeless individuals and for costs associated with transitioning people from large shelters.
- \$1 million in operating dollars for VOA's Crosswalk shelter which serves Spokane's most vulnerable youth by providing life-saving services for homeless teenagers. I also worked to help secure \$2.5 million in capital dollars for a new building for Crosswalk that will add increased capacity and access to stabilizing and support services for homeless teens.