

1st Legislative District 2024 Session Report

Dear neighbors,

This session saw headline accomplishments for the people of Washington — increasing support for public education, accelerating the transition to the green economy of the future, addressing the fentanyl epidemic, and more — as well as many significant policies that flew below the radar but are just as important to making sure our government works to put people first.

What’s more, 95% of those bills were bipartisan. You wouldn’t know it from the media coverage, but on most issues, we work across the aisle to find solutions that work for all Washingtonians, while still standing firm for our values.

In this pamphlet, you can read about some of those headlines and below-the-radar accomplishments to achieve success for every child, ensure safety for all, build healthier communities, foster a healthy planet and strong economy, and more.

It’s an honor to serve our communities in the Legislature. Please reach out anytime if we can be of assistance to you and your family. We look forward to seeing you around the district over interim!

Sincerely yours,

  
Sen. Derek Stanford Rep. Shelley Kloba Rep. Davina Duerr



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Committees

- Business, Financial Services, Gaming & Trade (Chair)
- Agriculture, Water, Natural Resources & Parks
- Labor & Commerce

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Committees

- Regulated Substances & Gaming (Co-Chair)
- Agriculture & Natural Resources
- Capital Budget

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- Local Government (Chair)
- Environment & Energy
- Transportation

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Increasing funding for education

Our state government's paramount duty is to provide a high-quality education to every child. This session, we followed through on that promise by increasing state support for many aspects of K-12 education. One of the largest investments came through a bill I sponsored, [SB 5882](#), which puts \$72 million toward putting more paraeducators in classrooms — staff who provide important one-on-one and small group instruction that tailors education to each student.

Another \$45 million will expand the number of students eligible for free meals, and \$43.6 million will increase support for materials, supplies and operating costs. We also increased the special education “cap” from 15% to 16%. Over the last two years, the state has increased special education funding by nearly \$450 million, but we have more work to do.

The Legislature also made historic investments in school construction, adding \$306 million for public schools in the capital construction budget. Strong revenues from the capital gains tax, which are dedicated by law to school construction, made these investments possible.

Protecting workers

In 2019, we passed landmark legislation to ban employer-imposed noncompetition agreements in Washington for workers who make less than \$100,000 a year (now less than \$120,000 after inflation adjustments). This year, I sponsored [SB 5935](#), which increases workers' protections against noncompetes in response to real-life situations that have arisen since the 2019 bill. Consumers benefit too, as they will be able to follow their favorite car mechanic, doctor, or other service provider who moves to a new location. Noncompete clauses in contracts hurt workers and stifle competition. Workers should have the freedom to seek or accept a new job without undue interference.

Protecting consumers

As chair of the Senate Business, Financial Services, Gaming & Trade Committee, one of the important areas I focus on is consumer protections. Over the past two years, we have passed legislation to ensure a fairer financial marketplace, provide peace of mind for homeowners, safeguard your data, protect pets, and more. You can read about that legislation, as well as find information about how to file consumer protection complaints with the state Attorney General, in the Consumer Protection Report on my website here: <https://senatedemocrats.wa.gov/stanford/consumer-protections-pamphlet/>.

Childcare access and affordability

Addressing affordability for Washington's working families was a key focus of the 2024 legislative session, including ensuring access to childcare. This session, we passed legislation providing a dedicated revenue source to build more high-quality early learning facilities (**HB 2195**) and cut through administrative barriers to streamline eligibility for subsidized childcare and early childhood education programs for families receiving food assistance (**HB 1945**). In addition, the supplemental operating budget invests an additional \$115 million for increased caregiver and provider rates and reimbursements to childcare and early learning centers to address inflated costs; expanding childcare eligibility; and offering more support for infants and toddlers.

Behavioral health and the opioid epidemic

Another priority issue we worked to address this session is the growing fentanyl and opioid crisis ravaging our state. Fentanyl has already taken the lives of too many of our loved ones, neighbors, and community members, and an alarming increase in toxic drug poisonings and deaths in children made it critical that we act.

With education, prevention and awareness being a crucial first line of defense against fentanyl and other substance use by children and youth, we passed legislation to create a statewide prevention and awareness campaign for our K-12 schools (**HB 1956**). We also made sure that colleges and universities will be required to provide fentanyl test strips, naloxone, and education, prevention, and awareness programs so that their communities are prepared to deal with this harmful epidemic (**HB 2112**). In terms of recovery and support services, we passed legislation making sure young adults who are discharged from inpatient treatment programs have access to crucial support and housing, so they don't risk falling into homelessness (**HB 1929**). And to support Washington's behavioral health infrastructure, we passed a bill to streamline the licensing for Indian health providers (**HB 2075**). Not only will this lead to improved accessibility for tribal communities on the front lines of the fentanyl crisis, but it will help all Washingtonians as tribal communities are leading the way with treatment centers and model programs that remove barriers to treatment and serve non-tribal patients.

Finally, our supplemental operating budget invests \$215 million specifically for opioid and substance use disorder response and prevention, while the supplemental capital construction budget invests \$82.7 million to build behavioral health care facilities in communities across Washington.

Protecting our environment

Buildings are the second leading cause of greenhouse gases. I'm happy to say we passed my law (Buy Clean, Buy Fair, **HB 1282**) to collect data on embodied carbon with building materials used in our state, the first step toward a solution.

When you buy a new car, there's a sticker on the window with the price, features, and miles per gallon. Why not have the same kind of label for homes for sale? It's probably the biggest purchase of your life, and the yearly utility costs are good to know. While my bill to do this (**HB 1433**) passed the House, it didn't make it through the Senate.

The fluorinated refrigerant gases used in your air conditioners, heat pumps, and supermarkets have 2,000 to 4,000 times more global warming potential than carbon dioxide. I proposed legislation (**HB 2401**) to help recover, reclaim, and re-use these gases instead of venting them into our atmosphere. This bill also passed the House but not the Senate.

Finally, there's a clean, abundant source of energy beneath our feet right now. A new law (**SB 6039**) will champion the consideration and development of geothermal energy. It's clean, it's renewable, and it will reduce our reliance on fossil fuels while creating new jobs and economic opportunity in the clean energy sector.

Affordable housing

Two key housing reforms passed into law this session. The first (**HB 2321**) clarifies middle housing and residential density requirements, including off-street parking requirements, types of middle housing a city must allow, and development allowances on lots with critical areas or buffers.

The second law (**HB 2071**) is one I wrote that's related to middle housing, which we desperately need to create more affordable housing where it's needed most. This legislation makes it easier and cheaper to build multi-family homes, up to six-plexes, by putting them in the residential building code instead of the far more costly and time-consuming commercial code.

