

Rep. Gerry Pollet • Rep. Javier Valdez

OPERATING BUDGET

Homelessness and Housing

Addressing the homelessness crisis and expanding access to programs to protect people from losing their homes is a top priority. Between the pandemic and the growing cost of living and inflation, we need to do more. Families deserve better. They should have a roof over their head and the peace of mind knowing treatment and care is available for those that need it. This year's supplemental budget invested in supporting our neighbors experiencing homelessness or housing insecurity:

- An additional **\$160 million** in utility assistance for broadband, energy, water, garbage, and recycling.
- **\$45 million** in additional funds for rental assistance.
- **\$55 million** in homeless provider stipends.
- **\$27 million** in landlord mitigation.
- **\$45 million** for services for individuals living in public areas.
- Transfers half a billion dollars to the Capital Budget for housing needs.

Public Health and Healthcare

The Legislature dramatically expanded our public health response to COVID-19 and set us up for long-term public health success. These investments included money from the state budget and from federal funds.

- An additional **\$125 million** for COVID response and vaccination.
- **\$20 million** for public health information systems.
- **\$22 million** for increases in children's Medicaid dental rates.
- **\$25 million** in additional funding for community health centers.

Behavioral Health

Mental health crises and substance use disorder cause untold pain for families across Washington.

Families just want to get their loved one help when they need it. They deserve to know there is help available.

- **\$100 million** to support behavioral health providers.
- **\$51 million** for mental health and substance use disorder provider rate increases.
- An additional **\$24 million** for non-Medicaid services.
- **\$23 million** to expand opioid response programs and supports.
- **\$24 million** for housing and employment for individuals with behavioral health issues.
- **\$35 million** for crisis, outreach, and diversion programs.

Protecting Our Environment

The Supplemental Operating Budget also made significant investments in reducing greenhouse gas emissions, supporting salmon recovery, and combating invasive species.

- **\$180 million** in additional funding for salmon habitat, production, and recovery.
- **\$11 million** in expanded funding for recreational lands maintenance.
- **\$113 million** for wildfire suppression and habitat recovery.
- **\$103 million** for low emission vehicles and infrastructure.
- **\$58 million** for solar incentives.
- **\$16 million** for expanding invasive species control.



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END OF SESSION UPDATE 2022 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

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Rep. Gerry Pollet



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END OF SESSION UPDATE 2022 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Friends and neighbors,

If the last two years have taught us anything, it is how important it is to plan for resilient communities and to address problems early. This has been illustrated by natural disasters, a pandemic, as well as local, state, national, and international crises. This parade of emergencies has shown us that resiliency comes from smart planning, social safety nets, and governments that respect and reflect the lived experiences of all our residents.

We want to share and have your feedback on the work we've done this session. Whether it is allocating money to retrofit schools for seismic safety, pushing the State Patrol to reflect the diversity of our state, including our tribal partners in local planning, creating a transportation future that supports our environment and all our neighbors, or the many smart investments made by our capital and operating budget, we've worked with our colleagues to create a Washington that is resilient and supports its residents.

As chairs of the State and Local Government Committees, we directly influence this process. Likewise, our positions on the Transportation and Appropriations Committees mean we give vital input in getting resources that help keep our communities resilient.

These are responsibilities we take seriously. We have the responsibility to listen to all residents of the 46th, all sides of issues, to seek solutions that benefit everyone in Washington. That is why your input is so important to us. Your thoughts concerns help us do a better job for the people of the 46th District and our state.

We look forward to hearing the next great idea from someone we call neighbor. During this interim, do not hesitate to reach out to us to share your thoughts. We are excited to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

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CAPITAL BUDGET

46th District Capital Budget Projects

- **\$300,000** to relocate and expand Children's Home Society of WA's North Seattle Family Resource Center to a new, more visible street level location in Lake City and create a new North Seattle social services hub with other community partners.
- **\$100,000** to help create a welcoming, inclusive, fully accessible, and world-class community boating center to engage more people and provide safe lake access and oversight at Sail Sand Point.
- **\$200,000** for "Eli's Park", bringing to fruition a vision to for the Burke-Gilman Playground Park to become a nature-based space that is fully accessible to people of all abilities and backgrounds, readily available to children visiting at Children's Hospital.
- **\$103,000** for the construction of a new bike and pedestrian crossing of Bothell Way NE (SR-522) to connect Lake Forest Park Town Center on the north side of the highway with the Burke-Gilman Trail and new lakeside park.
- **\$325,000** to relocate the St. Edward State Park Maintenance Facility help with the redevelopment of the seminary building hotel.

Representative Pollet Priorities

Heading into the 2022 legislative session, our schools were facing multiple crises due to COVID. Seattle Public Schools spent over \$40 million of local levy money just to keep schools open, for staff COVID testing, and contact tracing. These should be state funded public health responses, which I led efforts to have the state fund.

The lack of school nurses is something which our teachers and parents know first-hand. Under our current funding formula, the state only funds 0.07 of a single nurse for an elementary school with 450 students. For years, I've worked to dramatically increase school nurses, social workers, and psychologists. In my work at the UW School of Public Health, I oversaw research documenting for legislators how funding school nurses improves both student health and academics. One of our lasting accomplishments this year is an 8-fold increase in the funding and staffing for these positions.

Protecting Our Children in Schools During a Cascadia Zone Earthquake

Tens of thousands of our children will be killed or seriously injured when the Cascadia earthquake happens because so few of our schools have been built to, or upgraded to, current seismic standards. I worked with our seatmate Senator Frockt, who has been concerned about this problem for many years, to develop and pass a new investment program to retrofit schools to protect our children from being killed in an earthquake.

Ensuring Our Tribes Have a Right to Participate in Local Government Planning

Treaty rights for our tribes to access shorelines, fish, use plants, access cultural sites are all too often ignored or harmed by local government land use and comprehensive plans. Sadly, some local governments have resisted including our tribes and refuse to recognize them as sovereign nations. As Chair of the House Local Government Committee and a long-time teacher of Tribal and Environmental Law, I worked with our tribes to develop and pass **HB 1717** to ensure that tribes have new legal rights to participate fully as partners in local planning efforts.

Local Government Committee

As Chair of the Local Government Committee, I work on issues that affect how our communities include the development of housing and address climate change. In addition to including tribes in the comprehensive planning process, we successfully updated the timeline for the Growth Management Act, giving cities and counties adequate time and resources to plan the future of our communities.

Unfortunately, there were a few priorities that did not make the legislative finish line this year. One effort I devoted a lot of effort to was **HB 1660** to increase low barrier affordable housing through a best-in-the-nation policy for including accessory dwelling units (ADUs) in neighborhoods.

Perhaps my biggest disappointment came in the 11th hour failure of **HB 1099** to ensure cities and counties adopt goals to fight climate change into comprehensive plans. Core elements would require cities to plan to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions by planning to reduce vehicle miles traveled, increase transit-oriented development, preserve trees and reduce heat islands. Unfortunately, with hours left in the legislative session after the bill returned from the Senate with amendments, Republicans threatened to run out the clock during the debate of the budget and other bills to prevent us from passing **HB 1099**.

I'll be working to have us move quickly in 2023 to include fighting climate change in the Growth Management Act.

The engagement and advocacy of residents in our district is always inspiring. To meet my commitment to be accessible, I continue to hold my drop-in Saturday morning discussion times – just email me to join an upcoming discussion.

Thank you,

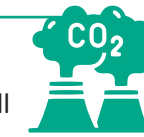

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Email if you'd like to join me for one of my Saturday morning drop-in discussion times.

CAUCUS WINS

Combatting Climate Change

Methane is a hundred times worse than carbon dioxide when it comes to trapping heat and changing our climate — and much of it comes from our state's landfills. **HB 1663** requires large municipal landfills to install and operate gas collection and control systems to capture methane and prevent it from getting into the atmosphere.



However, we fell short in not adopting time-sensitive legislation to include reducing greenhouse gas emissions and addressing climate change in Growth Management Act planning. Unfortunately, there was little time left to debate the bill after it returned from the Senate with amendments. Republicans threatened to run out the clock during debate on **HB 1099**, showing their commitment to preventing us from passing **HB 1099** and combating the climate crisis.

We can't run out the clock on climate change; it is happening right in front of us. We are committed to bring this back next year.

HB 1799 expands on this by helping redirect our surplus food to families who desperately need it, while repurposing organic waste for composting at local farms. We can help eliminate hunger and protect communities from the effects of climate change at the same time. This is a common-sense, win-win solution.

Our kids deserve a livable future, and we must do what we can to prevent our planet from getting hotter and hotter.

Homelessness and Behavioral Health

Over 70 percent of people who are chronically homeless struggle with a physical health or behavioral health condition. Stable housing is integral to the health care treatment for persons who have been chronically homeless. **HB 1866** establishes the Apple Health and Homes Program to provide a housing benefit and community support services benefit to persons who meet eligibility criteria related to income, medical risk factors and barriers to finding stable housing.



Additionally, many people are discharged from behavioral health care and have nowhere to go. **HB 1860** requires that patients receive housing-related care coordination services before being discharged. Housing and homelessness are often related. We should not lose the opportunity to connect people to housing prior to homelessness.

Access to Health Care for Everyone

Many Washington families can't afford needed hospital care. Equalizing the thresholds for charity care and expanding eligibility will expand access to free and reduced cost health care for over 2 million Washingtonians. Charity care shouldn't be based on the geographic luck. HB 1616 standardizes how hospitals in Washington provide and bill for services to patients receiving subsidized care. No matter where you live in Washington, you need access to health care and shouldn't be punished with inconsistent policies.



Balanced Billing

Patients and families shouldn't get a surprise bill after an ER visit. Prior federal and state efforts haven't covered some types of hospital visits. Mental health needs can be an emergency too, and those emergency visits should be protected as well.



Capping Insulin at \$35 Per Month

In 2020, the Legislature directed health plans to limit the cost of insulin to **\$100 per month**. That was set to expire next year. Under this new law, insulin will be capped at **\$35 per month** through 2023 for all health plans.



Representative Valdez Priorities

This year was a landmark year in the areas of transportation and gun safety, and I was proud to be part of that process. The State Government and Tribal Relations Committee also took up some important legislation around voting integrity. Here are some highlights I am particularly proud to have had a hand in helping make a reality.

Move Ahead WA

As a member of the House Transportation Committee, I am proud to have helped pass the Move Ahead WA transportation package. This historic 16-year package creates a sustainable, accessible transportation future for Washington. In 2020 we held over 90 listening sessions to hear transportation priorities from communities across the state. This helped us create a package that focuses on meeting the needs of every community.

- Preserving our roads, bridges, ferries, and expanding bike and pedestrian infrastructure
- Taking meaningful action against climate change
- Expanding safe, accessible, affordable options for people to get around
- Addressing the harm caused by past transportation policies in underserved communities

I am also excited by our historic, **\$5.4 billion** investment in carbon reduction and the expansion of multimodal transportation options. These are funded by the Climate Commitment Act, using revenue that puts a price on carbon to further reduce emissions and increase accessibility for everyone who lives in Washington.

Move Ahead WA – Local Projects

The Move Ahead WA transportation package invests **\$3 billion** in transit. Roughly half of that investment is for transit service, much of which will benefit Seattle residents, meaning more accessible transportation to help reduce greenhouse gas emissions and combat climate change.

- **\$50 million** for North Aurora safety improvements
- **\$3.5 million** for sidewalk replacement on 61st Ave NE in Kenmore
- **\$100,000** for the Town Center to Burke Gillman Trail Connector in Lake Forest Park

Reducing Gun Violence and Keeping Our Communities Safer

In Washington, high-capacity magazines have been used in mass shootings in Mukilteo and Burlington. They also fuel the everyday gun violence that takes lives without making

headlines. I have been fighting to get these magazines off the streets since joining the House of Representatives and prime sponsored the legislation in the House to make this happen. And I am pleased to report that this year we finally passed SB 5078 restricting the sale, purchase, or manufacture of magazines over 10 rounds, which was long overdue as a major step to make our communities safer.

In 2019, I sponsored **HB 1739**, which enacted a statewide ban on homemade, untraceable, "ghost guns." However, three years later, we needed to take action to close some loopholes in that 2019 law. So, I co-sponsored HB 1705 to do just that. These guns can be easily bought online without licenses, background checks, or serial numbers, making them a favorite of gun traffickers. Law enforcement recovered more than 23,000 ghost guns between 2016 and 2020.

Diversity at the State Patrol


Though Washington is home to many communities, our largest public-facing workforce—the Washington State Patrol—does not look like the people of our state. **HB 2057** implements an inclusive recruitment, retention, diversity, equity and inclusion plan for WSP. To keep our communities safe and to reduce the deadly over-policing of people of color, WSP's hiring processes need significant change so that this agency reflects the ever-growing diversity of Washington.

Protecting Sensitive Voter Information

Scammers can use e-mails, signatures, and phone numbers to steal identities. Those items should not be accessible through the public records process. Currently, certain important pieces of information aren't disclosable on voter registration records – like signatures and personal contact information. HB 1953 makes it very clear that those pieces of information are also not disclosable from your ballot envelope. Your personal information remains your personal information.

Our state still has a lot of work to do to make sure our governments reflect the people they represent, continue managing our health in a post-COVID recovery, combat climate change, and protect people against the gun violence epidemic. I look forward to continuing to work on these issues in the future. It is an honor to serve and represent you.

Thank you,


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