



48TH DISTRICT REPORT

2021 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

SAVE THE DATE

48th Legislative District Virtual Town Hall

**Wednesday,
June 30 at 6 pm**

You'll be able to ask us
questions live during the event,
or submit them in advance to:

www.surveymonkey.com/r/48thTownHall

Please check our Facebook
pages and caucus websites for
more information!

Dear Friends and Neighbors,

When the legislature convened in January, Washington faced challenges unlike any it had seen in generations. The pandemic was raging, with vaccines only just becoming available, and our state's small businesses and workforce were struggling. Economists made dire predictions about our economic future, and Americans from all walks of life in our state and across the country took to the streets to demand police accountability in the wake of the murder of George Floyd.

These emerging crises added to the on-going work needed to address climate change, to make housing, childcare and healthcare affordable and accessible, to fix Washington's broken tax structure and to do all this in a way that ensures our laws are applied equitably across our state.

We are proud to report back to you that, in a year that brought unprecedented challenges, historic changes have come and, although it happened virtually, we did it together. It is a tribute to every Washingtonian whose voice, sacrifice and important work helped keep our neighbors and communities safe. Hard work remains – but we believe 2021 will be remembered as the year in which fundamental changes were made that will not only make our communities stronger now but will result in long-term resilience and stability for generations to come.

For more information on our priorities and the bills included in this newsletter, please visit our caucus websites or contact our offices.

Sincerely,


Sen. Patty Kuderer


Rep. Vandana Slatter


Rep. Amy Walen

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SENATOR PATTY KUDERER

Protecting Tenants and Helping Landlords

The COVID-19 pandemic has been a public health crisis like none other. Many people lost their jobs and unemployment claims skyrocketed last year. Thousands of families were at serious risk of not being able to pay their rent or mortgage.

The governor issued an eviction moratorium for nonpayment of rent at the beginning of the pandemic — a decision that saved both tenancies and lives.

The moratorium is scheduled to expire on June 30, so much of my work this year focused on smoothing the transition and preventing a spike in homelessness once the moratorium expires.

Along with hundreds of millions in new investments to keep people housed, two major housing policy bills were approved this year. My bill, [SB 5160](#), will protect renters from losing their homes and help landlords pay their bills, and established a first-in-the-nation statewide right to counsel. Currently, about 90% of landlords have legal representation during an eviction proceeding, but less than 10% of tenants have access to an attorney. My bill will fix that imbalance, creating opportunities to keep a family from falling into the cycle of homelessness while ensuring landlords are paid.

SB 5160 also expands the use of Dispute Resolution Centers statewide for two years and establishes a pre-eviction mediation program. DRC's have a proven track record of success in settling



disagreements between tenants and landlords and they are ramping up to address the expected caseload once the moratorium expires. Finally, the bill enacts several tenant protections from COVID-related late fees and adverse nonpayment decisions to help families transition out of the recession-related financial hole and back into housing and employment stability.

To help struggling landlords, the bill expands the use of the Landlord Mitigation Program. Landlords can apply to be reimbursed for claims for unpaid rent up to \$15,000 to recover rental arrears accrued during the public health emergency when certain tenants vacate or abandon tenancy and/or default on a repayment plan.

Another important housing bill that passed this year is [HB 1236](#) replacing the 20 day "no cause" eviction notice with one requiring "good cause," as defined in the law. This "good cause" law has been worked on for many years and was supported by landlords and tenants alike. Washington now joins a growing number of states that view a stable home as an essential need, as we know stable homes and stable communities are essential for a thriving economy. These housing bills bring that stability to our state at a time we need it most.



Keeping People Safe

Two other important issues I worked on this year: [SB 5038](#) bans the open carry of weapons at the state Capitol and at permitted demonstrations, and [SB 5140](#), the Pregnant Patient Protections Act, bars hospitals from prohibiting health care providers from providing health care services related to miscarriage management and treatment for ectopic pregnancies. These are important bills to protect public health and safety.



REPRESENTATIVE VANDANA SLATTER

Creating More Opportunities to Grow our Workforce

This year the legislature focused efforts on creating pathways for students to stay on track and succeed. I was honored to be the new chair of the House College and Workforce Development Committee where we worked to deliver on these goals. Here are some examples:

We expanded postsecondary education in prisons ([HB 1044](#)) to strengthen and incentivize a workforce that wants to contribute to its community, lower recidivism rates, improve public safety, and save taxpayer dollars.

We expanded opportunity scholarships for community and technical colleges ([HB 1425](#)) to increase access for older, non-traditional students, and students in rural communities.

And we passed legislation to allow community and technical colleges to offer bachelor's degrees in computer science ([SB 5401](#)).

House and Senate Democrats prioritized diversity and inclusion on college campuses resulting in bills that:

- Increase and promote diversity in our community and technical colleges ([SB 5194](#)).
- Require diversity, equity, inclusion, and anti-racism trainings and assessments at higher education institutions ([SB 5227](#)).
- Build a foundation of equity in medical training ([SB 5228](#)).
- Add a graduate student to expand student representation on the Washington Student Achievement Council ([HB 1472](#)), a bill that I was proud to sponsor.

Advancing the Fight Against Climate Change

Washingtonians have long demanded strong action to confront climate change and this session we passed two bills that will put us on track to meet our statutory goal of net-zero emissions by 2050:

Clean Fuel Standard

[HB 1091](#) will establish a Clean Fuels Program to limit greenhouse gas emissions per unit of transportation fuel energy to 20 percent below 2017 levels by 2038. This measure will make our state cleaner, reduce emissions, and spur economic activity and growth.

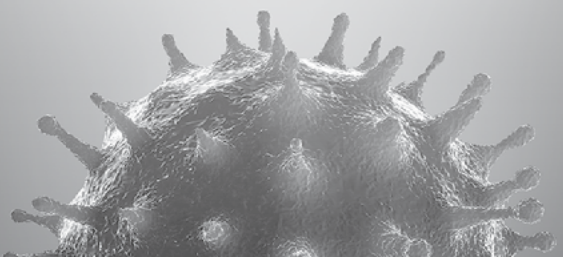
The Climate Commitment Act

[SB 5126](#) establishes a comprehensive, economy-wide program to limit greenhouse gas emissions, reduce pollution in overburdened communities, and invest in clean jobs, environmental justice, and climate resilience. The program sets a statewide emissions budget (a "cap") that applies to the largest polluters in the state, and gradually ratchets down that cap to meet Washington's goal of net zero emissions by 2050, one of the targets set in my [House Bill 2311](#), which passed last year.

A Note on my COVID-19 Health Data Privacy Bill

[HB 1127](#) passed with bipartisan support and input from many stakeholders but was vetoed by the governor. The bill was written to reassure Washingtonians who downloaded digital apps for pandemic response that their personal COVID-19 health data would only be used for a public health purpose.

Gov. Inslee said the language of the bill was broad and could stymie public and private efforts to offer incentives for every eligible person to get vaccinated. I agree that it is critical to vaccinate the community to save lives so, while I am disappointed in the veto, I am heartened by his commitment to work further on protecting our health data and look forward to partnering with his office and a broad group of stakeholders to drive these efforts forward.





REPRESENTATIVE AMY WALEN

COVID-19 Relief Funds Tax Exemption

The COVID-19 pandemic caused Washington to enact limits on business and social activities to slow the spread of the Coronavirus. Though this was necessary to protect human life, it upended our economy. The federal government passed aid packages to help keep businesses open and workers employed. This helped many of our small businesses stay afloat at a time when stress about the economic toll of the pandemic was enormous.

As vaccination rates grow, there is hope on the horizon. However, our small businesses are still hurting. One of the first bills we passed will help maximize the very funds that have kept them. [HB 1095](#) exempts COVID-19 funding for small businesses from state taxes.

This was about fairness and protecting the livelihoods of Washingtonians as we worked to keep them safe. It was a good step toward rebuilding Washington's economy.



Collecting Unpaid Child Support

Unpaid child support has consequences for life, not only for children but also for the parent or caregiver who financially supports them. Often, these caretakers sacrifice money for their retirement or that could have been used to improve their quality of life. This hurts those caring for these kids, especially during the COVID-19 economic crisis. [HB 1416](#) requires insurers to share claim payment information with the DSHS/Division of Child Support to collect past-due child support. This bill makes the process for collecting child support debts much more efficient, helping kids and those who care for them.

Wage Garnishments and the COVID-19 Economic Crisis

Many people have struggled to put food on the table and pay rent during the COVID-19 crisis. Right now, they need to keep as much money as possible in their pocket until the economy recovers. Wage garnishments can have a huge impact on a person's ability to buy food and keep a roof over their head during this crisis. [HB 1525](#) protects \$1000 in Washington consumers' bank accounts from garnishment for the next four years following the COVID-19 economic crisis. I worked extensively with industry and advocates to find a solution that respects both creditors and consumers during this crisis.



Other Notable Bills

Certificate of stillbirth – [HB 1031](#) helps families heal after a stillbirth. It allows families to request a certificate of stillbirth to acknowledge their trauma. Currently, only a death certificate is available.

Slowing the sale of puppy mill puppies - [HB 1424](#) stems the tide of puppy mill pets being sold to unknowing consumers in our state. The six existing Washington stores that sell puppies and kittens can continue, but no new stores will be able to enter this market. This is good for consumers, families, and pets.

***I am proud to have sponsored these bipartisan bills.
All five pieces of legislation have been signed into law by the Governor.***

A Budget that Puts People First

Every action taken during the 2021 legislative session was done with recovery from the pandemic in mind.

While it's true that Washington's robust and resilient economy is bouncing back from the impacts of Covid-19, this recovery has been uneven, and our most vulnerable communities continue to struggle. With them in mind, we passed a budget that creates an equitable recovery and makes investments that will lift up all people and all communities in Washington.

The [2021-23 Operating Budget](#) uses ongoing state revenue and federal funds from the American Rescue Plan to provide rent relief, small business help, strengthen the safety net, fight climate change and invest in public health, safety, education, childcare, healthcare, behavioral health and much more.

Here are some of the highlights:

- **15% increase** toward the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program.
- **\$340 million** for the Immigrant Relief Fund.
- **\$172 million** for expanded Paid Leave Coverage.

- **Nearly \$300 million in small business grants** and **\$2.2 billion in unemployment insurance rate cuts** over the next four years.
- **More than \$1.3 billion for public health** funding for vaccine distribution, contact tracing, and testing.
- **\$48 million for student learning devices and broadband connectivity**, plus **\$237 million to support student learning recovery programs** to help ensure they don't fall behind due to the challenges of remote learning.
- **\$207 million for improved Medicaid funding** for seniors and people with disabilities.
- **Landlord and rental assistance with \$983 million to pay back overdue rent** and nearly **\$200 million in landlord and mortgage foreclosure assistance**.

A budget is a statement of values and we were proud to support this budget because it invests in people. Our state is stronger when every Washingtonian has an opportunity to succeed. We believe this budget puts our state on a stronger and more sustainable path.

Tax Reform

Washington's tax structure has long been the most regressive in the nation. This means that, in our state, low-income folks pay 17 percent of their income in taxes, middle class people pay 11 percent, and the wealthiest pay just three percent.

This year we took two big steps to help repair this broken system.

By passing a [Capital Gains Tax](#) and funding the [Working Families Tax Credit](#), we are asking the wealthiest Washingtonians, literally **just 7,000 individuals out of 7.6 million people living in the state**, to pay their fair share and help those struggling to make ends meet put some money in their pockets.

The Capital Gains Tax will only be paid when the profits from the sale of stocks and bonds exceeds \$250,000 annually. Revenue collected from this tax will fund childcare and early learning programs.

The Working Families Tax Credit will send money to approximately 420,000 Washingtonians struggling to get by. This money will go directly back into the local economy, spent on things like rent, food, car repairs and other necessities.

We were also proud to vote to expand a property tax cut for seniors and veterans with a service-related disability.

There's more work ahead to fix a tax structure largely built almost a century ago, but these reforms are a big step toward fairness for a growing number of hard-working Washingtonians who can no longer afford basic necessities.

Police Accountability

In communities across the state, we have watched the erosion of trust between law enforcement and the people they serve because lives continue to be shattered by officers who abuse their power.

A top priority in 2021 was to fundamentally change policing in our state, to prevent unnecessary use of force and to ensure that when power is abused, those on the receiving end and their families will realize justice.

We adopted policies to address law enforcement credibility ([HB 1088](#)), oversight ([SB 5051](#)) and create independent investigations of officer-involved incidents ([HB 1267](#)). We banned the use of chokeholds, neck restraints, no-knock warrants, certain military equipment and limited the use of tear gas ([HB 1054](#)). We made it so that officers who serve honorably and witness bad behavior by fellow officers must intervene ([SB 5066](#)). We also took steps to diversify police departments throughout our state ([HB 1001](#)) and created a grant program to strengthen community policing ([SB 5353](#)).

These systemic problems can't be fixed in one year. We will continue working with communities across Washington and with law enforcement to ensure that public safety is experienced equally by everyone.



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Olympia, WA 98504-0600



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Represents part of King County including parts of Bellevue, Kirkland, Redmond, and all of Medina, Clyde Hill, Yarrow Point and Hunts Point

Transportation Investments Moving Us Forward

The **\$11.8 billion** Transportation Budget ([SB 5165](#)) will continue to fund major work that was put on hold due to the pandemic, and includes new initiatives to create a more diverse transportation workforce along with funding for a more sustainable transportation system with electrification, charging stations, and hybrid ferries. We need to continue making investments on a safe, efficient, multimodal, green, and equitable transportation system.

Investments in the 48th District

- SR 520/124th St Interchange to reduce congestion, increase safety, and provide access to Spring District: **\$36 million**
- SR 520/148th Ave NE Overlake Access Ramp: **\$43.2 million**

Other Transportation Budget highlights

- Federal funding:
 - **\$400 million** for fish culverts
 - **\$600 million** to backfill revenue losses from COVID
- Sustainable transportation: **\$14 million**
- Equity in contracting and apprenticeships: **\$6 million**
- Equitable access to transportation: **\$8.7 million**
- State Patrol: **\$5 million**

Building the Future We Want

The 2021-23 Capital Budget ([HB 1080](#)) makes historic investments in communities across our state and will put tens of thousands of people to work rebuilding the economy.

Investments in the 48th District

- International Community Health Services: **\$106,000**
- Bellevue Boys and Girls Club: **\$156,000**
- New Ground Kirkland: **\$258,000**
- Redmond Senior and Community Center: **\$1.25 million**
- The Landing [the only emergency young adult shelter program on the Eastside]: **\$258,000**
- The Together Center: **\$1 million**
- David E. Brink Park Shoreline Renovation: **\$500,000**
- Marymoor Park Dock Replacement: **\$500,000**
- Lake Sammamish Property Acquisition: **\$1.8 million**

Statewide highlights

- Early learning, K-12 and higher education: **\$1.5 billion**
- Behavioral health: **\$428 million**
- Affordable housing and emergency shelters: **\$350 million**
- Broadband infrastructure: **\$411 million**
- Clean drinking water, forest management, toxic cleanup, recreation and conservation, and state parks: **\$690 million**