

2021 SESSION REPORT TO THE 5TH DISTRICT

Dear friends and neighbors,

The last year isn't one any of us would like to relive. COVID-19 took more than 600,000 American lives, brought on the hardest period for businesses since the Great Depression, disrupted every aspect of our lives, and exposed centuries-old racial chasms.

In the midst of this, your Legislature met – remotely – to focus on COVID response, economic recovery, and racial justice and equity in response to input from you and Washingtonians throughout the state who shared their priorities for this unique session.

With more people vaccinated every day, businesses are reopening, folks are getting back to work, and our kids were back in school before summer vacation. As we continue recovering, we are also taking serious steps to root out racial inequities in education, employment, policing, and public life.

We also made strides on fighting climate change by passing bills to cap carbon emissions, reduce dependence on fossil fuels, and ease the effects of climate change that have fallen hardest on marginalized and underrepresented communities.

We can't cover everything we did over the course of 105 days in this report, but we're including some of the session highlights and our offices can provide you with additional information.

Thank you for giving us the honor of serving you in the state House of Representatives.



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Committees:

- Capital Budget (Vice Chair)
- Children, Youth & Families
- Education

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Committees:

- Transportation (2nd Vice Chair)
- Public Safety
- Rural Dev., Agriculture, & Nat. Resources

PANDEMIC AND ECONOMIC RECOVERY

A budget is a statement of values and in this historic year we passed a **\$59.2 billion Operating Budget (SB 5092)** to help families and businesses continue recovering and build a more resilient Washington with investments that include:

- **\$172 million** for expanded Paid Leave Coverage.
- **\$300 million** in small business grants and **\$2.2 billion** in unemployment insurance rate cuts over the next four years.
- **\$1.3 billion** for vaccine distribution, contact tracing, and testing.
- **\$48 million** for student learning devices and broadband connectivity, plus **\$237 million** for programs to mitigate the challenges of remote learning.
- **\$207 million** for improved Medicaid funding for seniors and people with disabilities.
- Landlord and rental assistance with **\$983 million** for overdue rent and **\$200 million** in landlord and mortgage foreclosure assistance.
- **15% increase** in Temporary Assistance for Needy Families.

We also passed the **Fair Start for Kids Act (SB 5237)** to stabilize and expand the childcare industry and make childcare more affordable.

And we funded the **Working Families Tax Credit (HB 1297)**, to assist approximately 420,000 Washingtonians struggling to get by. This money will go directly back into the local economy.



From the floor in 2019.



I was very pleased that each bill I introduced in 2021 made it through the legislative gauntlet and was signed into law by Gov. Inslee.

HB 1295 addresses the **education of youth in the juvenile justice system**. Education plays a key role in helping people achieve success in life and my bill will give youth in, or recently released from institutional settings, the opportunity to receive the same quality of basic education as their peers.

HB 1325 reflected input from more than 200 individuals representing public agencies, hospitals, healthcare providers, schools, and behavioral health advocacy groups, as well as families with lived experience. The bill gives **permanent status to the Partnership Access Line for Moms and the Mental Health Referral Service for Children and Teens**.

HB 1370 will assist communities with the **capital investments needed to build childcare** facilities to eliminate the “childcare deserts” where these services are unavailable. My bill increases the amounts that the state’s Early Learning Facilities program can provide as grants or low-cost loans to help plan, build, renovate or expand childcare facilities.

HB 1373 also resulted from close work with constituents, in this case the Legislative Youth Advisory Council. I was proud to help them **improve the mental health and wellbeing of Washington students**. Our bill requires school districts to post contact information for behavioral health organizations on their websites and social media platforms to provide easy access to these resources when they’re needed most.

CAPITAL BUDGET

Creating jobs today to build the future we want

The 2021-23 **Capital Budget (HB 1080)** makes historic investments across our state and puts tens of thousands of people to work rebuilding the economy.

Major Projects in the 5th District:

- More than \$7 million in park, playground, and trail improvements across the district.
- \$1 million to support the Issaquah Food & Clothing Bank as it continues to serve its existing customers and expands to serve a greater population.
- More than \$600,000 for the Village Theatre in Issaquah to renovate and begin construction on its new studio warehouse.
- \$250,000 to finish funding seven permanently affordable homes in North Bend.
- \$1 million to construct a new city hall building in Carnation, including rental space for nonprofit organizations and an important emergency operations center for the area.
- More than \$150,000 to restore the roof of the historic North Bend Depot.
- \$360,000 to begin work on the second phase of the Snoqualmie Valley Youth Activity Center.
- \$250,000 to support trail improvements at the Lake Sammamish State Park.
- \$6.5 million to begin work on sewer infrastructure improvements in the Fall City area (pending federal approval).

From the floor
in 2020.



As a member of both the Policing Policy Leadership Team and the Public Safety Committee, my focus this session was on **improving policing** and preventing unnecessary use of force. A comprehensive package of bills to address these issues was signed into law, including **HB 1089**. My legislation authorizes a **review of deadly force investigations** to determine whether those involved complied with all applicable rules and procedures. Transparency is crucial to rebuilding

trust between law enforcement and the community.

The governor also signed my **urban and community forestry legislation (HB 1216)**, which will help urban areas develop and maintain tree canopy and forested areas to improve air and water quality, especially in communities of color that disproportionately suffer from negative environmental impacts.

TRANSPORTATION BUDGET Investing in Equity and Sustainability

As a vice chair of the Transportation Committee, it was crucial for me to learn what Washingtonians want from their transportation system. Last year we held nearly 90 remote listening sessions in every corner of the state and heard from hundreds of people, including many who said they'd never been asked for their thoughts and ideas before.



One recurring theme was the need for a more diverse workforce in transportation. We took note and ensured that our **\$11.8 billion Transportation Budget (SB 5165)** includes new initiatives for a more sustainable transportation system and invests in getting more women and minority individuals to work as apprentices and on transportation projects, and as business owners getting contracts.

Major Projects in the 5th District:



- SR 18 Widening Issaquah-Hobart Road to Raging River: \$18.9 million.
- I-90/SR 18 Interchange improvements: \$86.4 million in 2021-23 and \$107.4 million in 2023-25.
- I-90/Highpoint to SR 18 - fiber extension: \$780 K
- Issaquah-Fall City road: \$1.5 million.
- I-90, Snoqualmie Pass - corridor improvements: \$1.7 million.
- I-90/Eastgate to SR 900 - corridor improvements: \$12.7 million.

RACIAL JUSTICE AND POLICE ACCOUNTABILITY

To improve public safety and increase trust between police officers and the communities they serve, we established systems of accountability and transparency, including:

- **Use of force:**
 - o **HB 1310** creates statewide policies that mandate de-escalation and a standard of reasonable care when officers use force.
 - o **HB 1267** creates an independent agency to investigate deadly uses of force.
 - o **HB 1089**, sponsored by Rep. Ramos, authorizes a review of deadly force investigations to determine whether those involved complied with applicable rules and procedures.
 - **State oversight and accountability:** **SB 5051** will increase trust in law enforcement by standardizing and expediting ways for problem officers to be removed from the profession.
 - **Police tactics:** **HB 1054** bans chokeholds, neck restraints, and no-knock warrants; restricts vehicular pursuits and firing on a moving vehicle, and the use of tear gas and certain military equipment; and requires officers to be identifiable when in uniform.
 - **Duty to intervene and report:** **SB 5066** requires officers to report wrongdoing and intervene if a colleague uses excessive or unnecessary force.
 - **Preventing wrongful convictions:** **HB 1223** requires electronic recording of custodial interrogations related to a felony or involving a juvenile.
- Other measures to advance racial equity:**
- **Banning private prisons (HB 1090).**
 - **Making Juneteenth a state holiday (HB 1016).**
 - **Restoring voting rights** for formerly incarcerated individuals (**HB 1078**).



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2021 SESSION REPORT

Preserving Washington's Environment

Washingtonians have long demanded action to confront climate change and this session we passed some of the most comprehensive measures in the nation.

The **HEAL Act (SB 5141)** defines environmental justice in state law, outlines how agencies should consider community needs in their work, and centers communities of color that have been on the front lines of the climate crisis, living in neighborhoods that suffer the worst from pollution.

With transportation making up 45 percent of total emissions, we must transition away from fossil fuels and toward renewables. Passage of the **Low Carbon Fuel Standard (HB 1091)** means Washington will join other West Coast neighbors to decrease emissions from the transportation sector by promoting clean fuels.

Additionally, the **Climate Commitment Act (SB 5126)** will work to decrease emissions while establishing deadlines for electrification. .



Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest