

2023 SESSION REPORT TO THE 5TH DISTRICT

Dear friends and neighbors,

September 2023

We hope this report finds you well, having enjoyed the summer and getting ready for kids to start school. We'd like to take this opportunity to reflect on this year's legislative session and emphasize what an honor it is to represent you at the State Capitol as we work on addressing the needs and concerns of our community.

This session we passed meaningful legislation that positively impacts the lives of families and individuals in our 5th district and throughout the state. From education and healthcare to environmental protections and social justice, in this newsletter you'll find information on measures that will make a difference in the lives of many Washingtonians.

Back in May, we sent out a special edition electronic newsletter focused on major investments in the operating, capital, and transportation budgets, so we won't repeat that information here since this one will be mostly dedicated to policy.

If you want to delve into the budgetary details, we encourage you to access our comprehensive budgets report at <https://t.ly/kQOV>

We want to express our gratitude for your ongoing interest in our work and the issues that matter to people in our district. It was great to see some of you at our two recent community coffee events. We look forward to future opportunities to hear from you directly and get to know each other better. Your input and feedback are invaluable in shaping the decisions we make as your representatives, so please keep sharing your thoughts, concerns, and ideas with us.

As families return to school and fall activities, we are preparing for the 2024 session, which will focus on policy improvements and supplemental budget changes. It is the strength and vibrancy of our community that inspire us to work harder each day. Together, we can achieve remarkable things and build a brighter future for all.

Best regards,



REPRESENTATIVE Lisa Callan

REPRESENTATIVE Bill Ramos



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- Capital Budget (Vice Chair)
- Education
- Human Services, Youth & Early Learning
- Children & Youth Behavioral Health Work Group (Co-Chair)



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Committees:

- State Government & Tribal Relations (Chair)
- Community Safety, Justice & Reentry
- Transportation
- Latino Democratic Caucus (Vice Chair)

2023 SESSION REPORT



REP. Lisa Callan

PROTECTING THE HEALTH AND SAFETY OF OUR CHILDREN

I want every child in Washington to have their best chance to thrive in the state we all call home—just like I want for my own child. Much of my work this session was focused on putting our children’s well-being first. Here are a few of the bills I sponsored that were signed into law:

Helping our kids in crisis (HB 1580)

This crucial bill will allow us to pull together a multiagency response to provide our young people in crisis & their families with individualized support and services. No child should be ‘stuck’ living in our hospitals for days, months or years while they await appropriate care.

Caring for our foster youth (HB 1204)

The Family Connections pilot program has been incredibly effective in bringing together both parents & caregivers to ensure our children in dependent care feel safe, experience less trauma, and are supported by all

the adults in their lives. This bill makes the program permanent.

Providing education to all young people (HB 1701)

Every student in WA has a constitutional right to a basic education. This includes our young people involved with juvenile justice—but we’ve been failing them for decades. This bill directs OSPI to ensure our youth involved with juvenile justice receive the basic education they deserve and are owed.

Keeping our children safe (HB 1230)

At a time when firearms and drugs like fentanyl continue to claim the lives of our young people, it’s never been more important to ensure parents have the information they need to keep their children safe. This bill ensures parents, students, and peers have easy access to medication & firearm safety information through school websites and newsletters.

Bolstering Support for Youth Behavioral Health

As the Co-Chair of the Children & Youth Behavioral Health Workgroup, I focused on strengthening supports for the full health and wellbeing of our youth. I am thrilled about funding for key programs such as Wraparound with Intensive Services, Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation, Mental Health Referral Service for Children and Teens, and the Childcare Complex Needs Fund. I’m also happy to report we boosted the behavioral health system by creating the position of behavioral health support specialist (SB 5189) and adopting the Mental Health Counselor Compact (HB 1069).



INVESTING IN SCHOOLS

Education has always been a priority, that’s why the new budget boosts education spending by \$2.2 billion, which includes increasing special education funding with an unprecedented \$417 million. Additionally, we will study the true total cost of special education so that we can know exactly what it will cost the state to remove the cap on special education funding.

REAL SOLUTIONS FOR THE HOUSING CRISIS

The housing and homelessness crisis is hurting all our families. We desperately need to create housing, especially close to jobs and services. Decades ago, we had more options aside from today’s binary choices of single-family homes and apartment/condo towers. We’re happy to tell you those missing middle choices--such as duplexes, cottage courts, and town houses--are back after we passed a groundbreaking bill (HB 1110). This law and other reforms will help us turn the corner on the housing crisis by allowing more housing options to be built.

MAKING OUR COMMUNITIES SAFER

Some of the measures we passed this year will improve domestic violence protections (HB 1715), establish victim-centered, trauma-informed responses in the legal system (HB 1028), increase transparency in deadly force investigations (HB 1179), and increase the penalty for hazing (HB 1002).





REP. **Bill Ramos**

PARTNERING WITH LAW ENFORCEMENT

Police pursuits (SB 5352)

We passed legislation to ease restrictions because, while pursuits can be unsafe, police officers need the tools to go after dangerous suspects. Lowering the standard for vehicle pursuits to reasonable suspicion will ensure that police can pursue suspects when it is safe to do so for the community and themselves.

Recruiting officers (HB 1387)

My bill to address law enforcement staffing became a budget proviso with \$150,000 in funding going to the Criminal Justice Training Commission to develop a plan and recommendations on the recruitment and training for a pool of candidates available to hire as peace officers across the state.

WORKING FOR ALL OF US

We passed many important bills in the House State Government and Tribal Relations Committee, which I chair, and I'd like to highlight a couple of them:

Voting Rights Act (HB 1048)

In 2018, the Legislature passed the Washington Voting Rights Act (WVRA) to assist cities, counties, school boards and other local elected bodies in voluntarily adopting changes to create fair elections and improve

representation. This year we passed a new measure, dubbed the **WVRA 2.0**, ensuring that every vote matters and protected classes votes are not diluted or gerrymandered unfairly.

Cyber Security (HB 5518)

Cyber-attacks should be dealt with like other statewide threats and emergencies so we can develop contingency plans. That's the goal of a bipartisan bill that will create a committee to provide advice and recommendations to both private and public sectors, across all critical infrastructure, to ensure we have coordinated prevention and response strategies in place.

SUPPORTING ADULT FAMILY HOMES

There are long waiting lists for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities who need housing. My bill (**HB 1265**) will help increase housing by establishing a property tax exemption for adult family homes that serve people with intellectual or developmental disabilities and are owned by a nonprofit.

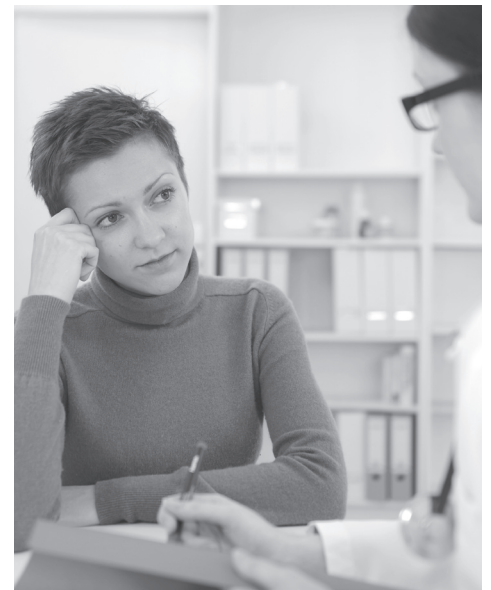
PROTECTING SALMON

On-water lighting creates light pollution, enabling larger fish to hunt during non-daylight hours, often depleting the number of smaller fish. To help protect salmon, last year we secured funding to begin studying on-water lighting, and this session we got \$300,000 to continue this process, including community education and incentives to decrease on-water lighting.



PROTECTING YOUR PRIVACY

The My Health, My Data Act (**HB 1155**) is first-in-the-nation legislation to protect our deeply personal health information from being sold without our consent. That includes reproductive health data from apps and devices that can now be tracked and even sold. This is critically important as reproductive health care is being attacked across our country. This new law protects your privacy, interdependence and dignity to make your own health care decisions.



SURVIVING HEAT WAVES

As in previous years, temperatures reached record highs this year, so it's important to keep hydrated, wear sunscreen and stay cool. There's good news: a bill we passed this session will help with that. **HB 1329**, which goes into effect on July 23, will prohibit utilities and landlords from terminating water or electricity service during days when the National Weather Service issues an extreme heat warning. This will help protect economically vulnerable communities from the devastating impacts of extreme hot weather. Additionally, more than \$300,000 in grant dollars will be available for local communities to set up cooling centers.



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COMMUNITY PRIORITIES



After a period of negotiations and compromises, on May 16 we went back to Olympia for a one-day special session to pass bipartisan legislation (**SB 5536**) addressing the Supreme Court’s Blake decision.

The measure amends Washington’s drug possession laws by reclassifying knowing possession of a controlled or counterfeit substance as a gross misdemeanor and expanding treatment options and pretrial diversion programs for people charged with possession. The legislation includes funding for use disorder treatment and local jurisdiction costs, and connects the judicial and treatment process helping to reduce crime and get people the help they need to successfully transition back into the community.

On May 30, we sent an e-newsletter exclusively on this topic, where we provide details and specifics of the new statute; you can read it here: <https://t.ly/Mscc>

We believe the new law strikes a balance between accountability, treatment, and public safety, while also ensuring consistent and equitable policies statewide.