

2024 SESSION REPORT TO THE 5TH DISTRICT



May, 2024

Dear neighbors,

We're happy to report that lawmakers finished work on time and passed a balanced state operating budget that doesn't raise taxes.

There's also good news in the state construction budget, with \$1.3 billion in new funding to build schools, colleges, parks, and other vital infrastructure. The supplemental transportation budget helps keep our state moving with \$1 billion in new funding, with a special focus on traffic safety, the State Patrol, and improving ferry service.

For more about the three state budgets and what they mean for us in the 5th District, please read [our budgets edition e-newsletter](#). You can access it by scanning this QR code.



To everyone who joined us last month at our town hall meeting, many thanks—it was so good to see people face-to-face again!

Inside this newsletter, we'll give you highlights about what happened on major issues, but we can't fit everything, so if you have specific questions about a bill, or want to share your thoughts, please get in touch.

Sincerely,

REPRESENTATIVE **Lisa Callan**



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Committees:

- Capital Budget (Vice Chair)
- Appropriations
- Human Services, Youth & Early Learning

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- State Government & Tribal Relations (Chair)
- Community Safety, Justice & Reentry
- Transportation

2024 SESSION REPORT

INCREASING HOUSING

This year, we built on \$400 million Housing Trust Fund investments and policy work we did ([HB 1110](#) and [HB 1337](#)) in 2023 with an additional \$127.5 million in the 2024 supplemental budget. We continued to expand our ability to increase housing supply by accelerating the construction of affordable workforce housing ([HB 1892](#)), preventing common-interest communities from imposing arbitrary occupancy limits ([HB 1054](#)), paving the way for co-living housing ([HB 1998](#)), and expanding protections for mobile home park tenants ([SB 6059](#)).

FENTANYL/OPIOID CRISIS & BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

Last year, the drug claimed more than 112,000 lives across America, surpassing all prior overdose epidemics our country has gone through. The Centers for Disease Control rank Washington 18 among all states in overdose deaths.

Through better access to education, treatment, prevention and facilities, we are working to turn the tide of this crisis.

The Capital Budget provides \$82.7 million to build behavioral health care facilities in communities across Washington. The Operating Budget also invests heavily in access to treatment, education, awareness, outreach, and prevention with \$215 million in new funding, and an additional \$245 million in behavioral health capacity, rate increases, and outpatient and personal care programs.

Bipartisan steps on treatment and prevention include requiring a statewide drug overdose prevention and education campaign ([SB 5906](#)); making sure all students have access to the most up-to-date materials and learning standards on fentanyl, opioids and other life-threatening drug use ([HB 1956](#)); protecting children from being exposed to fentanyl ([SB 6109](#)); creating the Tribal Opioid Prevention and Treatment account ([SB 6099](#)); and requiring all K-12 and higher education institutions to stock life-saving overdose reversal medication ([SB 5804](#) and [HB 2112](#)).



Tahoma School District

SUCCESS FOR ALL STUDENTS

Every student deserves access to the necessary resources, opportunities, and assistance to flourish. This year, the Legislature passed several measures to provide a high-quality education in a fair system so every student in Washington can succeed in school and in life.

We increased the cap to allow more funding for special education ([HB 2180](#) by Callan) and shifted the burden of proof in special education due process hearings from the student's parents to the school district ([SB 5883](#)). We directed new funding to support paraeducators in classrooms ([SB 5882](#)) and increased funding for schools' daily basic operating costs ([HB 2494](#)).

New funding ([HB 2195](#) by Callan) boosts the construction of badly needed early learning facilities centers, while another new law ([HB 1851](#) by Callan) provides funding for a consult line to pediatricians and school counselors who are delivering evidence-based Behavioral Health skills training to youth.

We expanded dual and tribal language programs ([HB 1228](#)) to nurture cultural diversity and unlock the potential of every child; reduced the burden of debt by ensuring students and their parents know about dual credit programs and financial aid opportunities ([HB 1146](#)); took steps to clarify the complaint process for books and instructional material ([HB 2331](#)); and ensured that students learn about the contributions of ALL Washingtonians so they can see themselves reflected in their schools' curricula ([SB 5462](#)).

FOCUSED HUMAN SERVICES

This session we passed bills that will make a meaningful difference in the lives of many Washingtonians by:

Ensuring that infants and toddlers receive the early support they need ([HB 1916](#)); breaking down administrative barriers to early childhood education and care ([HB 1945](#)); expanding time limit exemptions for cash assistance programs through Temporary Assistance for Needy Families ([HB 2007](#)); and helping families bridge short-term financial gaps by increasing the grant amount for Diversion Cash Assistance ([HB 2415](#)).

On the behavioral health front, we are identifying gaps and barriers to services and building a roadmap to eliminate them ([HB 2256](#) by Callan); ensuring that minors receive appropriate and timely care during mental health crises ([SB 5853](#)); and extending foster care services for youth ages 18 to 21 so they can better transition to adulthood ([SB 5908](#)).



2024 SESSION REPORT

AFFORDABLE HEALTH CARE

Inhalers for asthma and epi-pens are common, life-saving devices—yet prices have skyrocketed. A new law ([HB 1979](#)) will cap the cost of inhalers and epi-pens to \$35/month.

Washington's health care cost trends are outpacing the rest of the nation, so we passed [HB 1508](#) to improve our state's health care cost transparency board by adding more consumers to the committee, reforming how data is shared between agencies, and requiring surveys to learn more about insurance usage.

Preventative health care is smart and cost-effective, so we expanded the services covered without a co-pay ([HB 1957](#)) to include screening for common afflictions like lung cancer and colon cancer.

STRENGTHENING OUR DEMOCRACY

You deserve a government that puts people first and operates in a transparent and accountable way. This session, we're making things easier for voters, strengthening our international ties, and ensuring everyone's voices are heard.

Voting guide pamphlets are now streamlined ([HB 1272](#)) to make sure content and rules are uniform; this law requires that people writing for and against ballot measures actually live in the area affected, and it increases the maximum fine for publishing or distributing campaign material that's deceptively similar to an official voters' pamphlet.

Washington is the most trade-dependent state in the nation, and a new law ([HB 2000](#)) will make those connections—and our economy—even stronger. It creates a statewide strategy for international relations that's inclusive and pro-active.

Nothing About Us Without Us ([HB 1541](#)) requires increased representation from people directly affected by state taskforces, workgroups, and advisory committees. Their lived experiences are crucial for getting the job done.

SAFE COMMUNITIES

One of the most important jobs of the legislature is to ensure the safety of all Washingtonians; here are some of the steps we took:

Protecting our Kids:

Making it a crime to share fabricated artificial intelligence intimate images to protect minors ([HB 1999](#)) and prevent this harmful behavior; removing the statute of limitations on childhood sexual abuse ([HB 1618](#)); and eliminating child marriage ([HB 1455](#)).

Managing Firearms:

Requiring gun owners to report within 24 hours if a gun is lost or stolen ([HB 1903](#)); allowing the Washington State Patrol to destroy, rather than sell, seized weapons ([HB 2021](#)); ensuring that firearms dealers store their inventory safely ([HB 2118](#)).

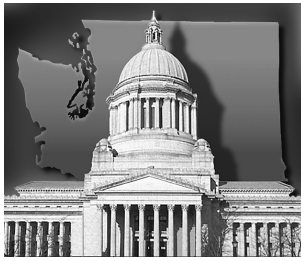
Road Safety:

The transportation budget invests \$31 million for safety enhancements with \$8.5 million to improve bike, pedestrian and school zone safety. New funding will help prevent deadly wrong-way driving accidents and clean up safety risks associated with homeless encampments along our state's rights-of-way. We're also stepping up DUI enforcement and ensuring that more ignition interlock devices are installed on the vehicles of drivers with impaired driving offenses. Additionally, we passed legislation ([HB 1963](#) by Ramos) to crack down on obscured license plates by prohibiting plastic license plate covers because they interfere with law enforcement, toll collection, and safety cameras.

Vehicular Pursuits:

The Legislature passed [Initiative 2113](#) to establish a middle ground in police pursuits by upholding vital safety protocols while empowering local communities to implement pursuit policies tailored to their unique requirements. It maintains guidelines such as the balancing test, which evaluates the need of a pursuit against its potential threat to the community. Additionally, it mandates supervisory oversight along with training, planning, and communication standards.





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2024 SESSION REPORT



PROTECTING THE ENVIRONMENT

Cheap, clean energy is beneath our feet. Geothermal energy ([SB 6039](#)) reduces the reliance on fossil fuels and opens up new avenues for economic development and job creation in the clean energy sector.

Buildings are the second-leading cause of greenhouse gases. A bill dubbed Buy Clean, Buy Fair ([HB 1282](#)) collects data on embodied carbon with building materials used in our state, the first step toward a solution.

To reduce illegal dumping and safeguard Washington's natural beauty, we reclassified dumping violations as natural resource infractions ([HB 2207](#) by Ramos), streamlining the process, strengthening enforcement, reinvesting in prevention, and empowering local solutions.

TAX FAIRNESS

This session, we continued working on fixing our tax code in several ways: improving the Working Families Tax Credit program by streamlining the application process, simplifying income verification, and eliminating unnecessary delays ([HB 1895](#)), which builds on last sessions' work to expand the Working Families Tax Credit ([HB 1477](#)).

In an effort to reduce fuel tax evasion and risk critical infrastructure repairs, we're closing a loophole between the fuel taxes paid at the pump and what some distributors report. This helps ensure that bad actors are not stealing the taxes everyday Washingtonians pay at the gas station. ([HB 1964](#) by Ramos).