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Committees

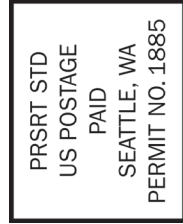
Environment & Energy
(Vice Chair)

Capital Budget

Rural Development,
Agriculture &
Natural Resources



*“My kitchen table
is your kitchen
table – I will
always have a
chair for you”*



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Debra Lekanoff

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The information
related to COVID-19
is changing rapidly.
Use the official
Washington state
COVID-19 website
to stay up to date:
coronavirus.wa.gov.

LD40



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Report on the 2020 Session

Dear friends and neighbors,

We are living in unprecedented times. The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic is affecting all our daily lives, and I hope you and your loved ones are taking the necessary precautions to stay safe and healthy.

As the 2020 session was ending, the pandemic was just hitting our state. On the last day of session, the Legislature passed **over \$200 million in COVID-19 emergency response funding** to increase capacity in hospitals, make it easier to hire health care workers, expand testing, and provide vital resources to help small businesses, workers, and families. I'm proud of that work, but I also want to share with you some of the policies and investments we made that will benefit our state after we make it through this unexpected crisis.

We made major investments into the Housing Trust Fund to help solve our homelessness and housing affordability crisis, as well as increased funding for our state's childcare program for working families. We also passed legislation to keep our promise to Washington's students and ensure families can access the significant financial aid available through the Washington College Grant.

We passed comprehensive sexual health education legislation, ensuring our state's students are taught the skills they need to identify and prevent sexual assault, as well as engage in healthy, consensual relationships. We also banned single-use plastic bags and updated our state's greenhouse gas emission limits to reflect recent climate science. Finally, we established a first-in-the-nation statewide Office of Equity and banned hair discrimination.

These are only some of the vital policies passed during the 2020 session, and I encourage you to visit housedemocrats.wa.gov to learn more about what we accomplished for you. Inside you'll find information on the work I did this session, along with my plans for ongoing legislative work. Please don't hesitate to reach out to my office if you have questions or concerns, or to let me know what the Legislature should prioritize in 2021.

Stay safe and please wash your hands!

Rep. Debra Lekanoff





The Legislature recently wrapped up the 2020 legislative session. Here are some pieces of legislation I successfully passed and issues I intend to continue working on for our district and the state. Thank you for the honor of serving you!

Recognizing Sovereign to Sovereign Relationships

I was honored to help ensure students from federally recognized tribes can wear tribal regalia at graduation ceremonies with the passage of my bill, House Bill 2551. While some schools in Washington already allow this, many do not. Every native student should have the right to wear tribal regalia to show their resilience and honor their ancestors who had to suppress their culture and heritage.

Investing in Rural Economies and Technology

To promote green jobs and help reduce greenhouse gas emissions, I sponsored House Bill 2486, which extends the sales and use tax exemption for electric marine batteries. This will provide predictability for the growing industry and incentivize more vessel owners to purchase battery-powered marine propulsion systems.

Public Safety and Equality for All Communities

Another bill I successfully passed was House Bill 2785, which requires that two additional private citizens, at least one from a federally recognized tribe, serve on the Criminal Justice Training Commission, which develops and provides training for law enforcement. Communities have been working with law enforcement to improve interactions between police and the communities they serve, and this new law represents a commitment that the collaborative work will continue.

Tribal and State Partnership for Human Health

Finally, I also sponsored legislation to help address behavioral health access issues for American Indians and Alaskan Natives. While my bill did not move forward, the Senate companion, Senate Bill 6259, successfully passed this session. The new law will require the state's behavioral health system to coordinate with the Indian behavioral health system, create tribal designated crisis responders, require the notification of Indian health care providers when their patients are in crisis, and provide better support to Indian health care providers so they can care for their communities.

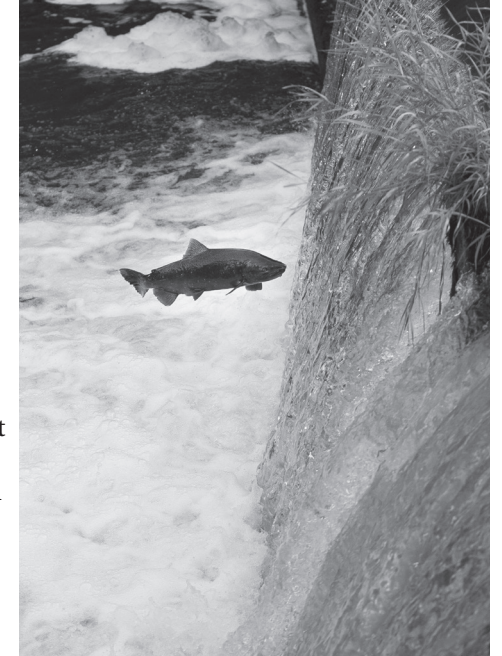
Continuing Work

Along with the successes, came some frustrations. Significant policies on salmon, water, and agriculture did not move forward this session. However, I am dedicated to continuing that work throughout the interim and into the future.

Salmon is intertwined within our economy, culture, and the values of Washington state. I will continue my work to create a Joint Legislative Committee on Salmon that will guide the Legislature in making informed laws, policies, and funding decisions.

I'll also continue to support efforts to modernize the Growth Management Act to include salmon recovery efforts and replace state, local, and private culverts to improve fish passage. While the Legislature did invest in addressing fish passage culverts this year, there is much more to do to meet the requirements of the court order and restore critical salmon habitat.

Another aspect of salmon recovery that I will continue to work on is the implementation of a net ecological gain standard for land development. Our current standard of "no net loss" means decisions on land development are balanced with environmental impacts, leaving it no worse, but no better. By switching to a net ecological gain standard, or a "leave it better than you found it" standard, development projects would contribute to habitat restoration and help achieve a healthier environment for current and future generations.



Water is also a priority here in Washington. Moving forward, I will continue my work as Co-Chair of the Joint Legislative Task Force on Water Supply, which serves as a place for legislators to be informed on the current status of water so we may make informed decisions on the future of water in our state. In addition, I plan to continue advocating for the development of a statewide water management plan and water court system.

Finally, I look forward to working with the Department of Agriculture to develop a Washington State Farm Bill to provide additional support and relief for our agricultural industry. The 40th District has a rich culture and economy around agriculture. Many in our district and around the state rely on the federal FARM bill, which sometimes doesn't go far enough. That's why I intend to work on legislation to complement federal policy and expand programs supporting conservation, nutrition, rural development, research, energy, crop insurance, and farmworker protections.