

41st DISTRICT LEGISLATIVE REVIEW

2023



REPRESENTATIVE MY-LINH THAI

41st Legislative District
Deputy Majority Leader

COMMITTEES

- Civil Rights & Judiciary
- Finance
- Health Care & Wellness

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Dear Friends and Neighbors,

During the 2023 legislative session, we returned to Olympia after two years due to the pandemic. In 105-days, we made significant progress on the issues that matter most to you. We've taken tangible action on supporting low-income and working-class families in achieving economic stability, addressing the housing affordability crisis, reducing gun violence, protecting reproductive rights, increasing access to health care for all, protecting our natural resources, and much more.

I am particularly proud to have worked with stakeholders in our community to pass seven pieces of legislation. In April, we passed our 2023-25 operating, capital, and transportation budgets building on the work done in previous years by making major investments to fund critical state services, help students have the tools they need to succeed, provide families with stable housing, and to turn the tide on climate change. Best of all, **it does not rely on any new general taxes or fees.**

The work we accomplished this session can't fit in one newsletter; however, I've highlighted the most meaningful updates in the following pages. You can also learn more about our work this year by visiting my website and getting in contact with me directly.

Thank you for taking time to read this update. It is an honor to serve as your state representative. I look forward to connecting with you in our community this interim!

With warmth,

2023 BILLS PASSED

- **House Bill 1074** protects renters from landlords unjustly withholding their deposits, which were never intended to be a fee.
- **House Bill 1077** allows courthouse dogs to assist survivors of traumatic crimes.
- **House Bill 1275** allows athletic trainers to provide over the counter medications as prescribed by an authorized health care practitioner for the purpose of athletic training.
- **House Bill 1287** reduces the shortage of dental hygienists by streamlining active practice requirements for full licensure in Washington.
- **House Bill 1477** modifies and expands the Working Families Tax Credit, so that more individuals in need can qualify for assistance.
- **House Bill 1562** reduces the risk of lethality and harm associated with those likely to commit domestic violence by governing the process of firearm possession and restoration of firearms rights.
- **House Bill 1745** requires clinical trials to adopt a policy of recruiting participants from underrepresented demographics to widen the lived experiences of participants.
- **House Resolution 4604** recognizes the Lunar New Year and the cultural contributions of Asian Americans in our state.



REPRESENTATIVE MY-LINH THAI

PUTTING PEOPLE FIRST – 2023 LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

Health care resources are significant in addressing substance abuse, physical health, and a person's ability to work and provide for themselves and their families. This year, we worked to create healthier communities by implementing the 988 behavioral health crisis response hotline ([HB 1134](#)), allowing the DOH to contract certified peer specialists ([SB 5555](#)), and creating a system to support children in crisis ([HB 1580](#)). In May, we entered a one-day special session to pass a new drug possession law ([SB 5536](#)) that limits exposure to the justice system for those suffering from substance use disorder, limits financial penalties, and caps incarceration time for the first two offenses. Addressing this public health problem requires a public health response and work will continue in the years to come.

Climate Justice requires us to implement strategies to reduce



greenhouse gas emissions and prepare for the impacts of climate change. We can ensure a more resilient future by electrifying the state ([SB 5165](#)), reducing greenhouse gas emissions by decarbonizing state energy systems ([HB 1390](#)), and keeping our environment

and communities safe from toxic cosmetics and providing safe battery recycling programs ([HB 1170](#), [HB 1047](#), and [SB 5144](#)).

Workforce Development requires higher education and vocational training to be more attainable than ever before. We've streamlined licensing requirements for military spouses ([HB 1009](#)), behavioral health care professionals ([HB 1724](#), [HB 1503](#)), nurses, dental hygienists ([HB 1287](#)), forensic pathologists ([SB 5523](#)), and apprentices ([HB 1050](#)). We expanded the workforce pipeline by creating more educational opportunities with college in the high school programs ([SB 5048](#)), expanding applied doctoral degrees to regional universities ([HB 1030](#)), increasing financial aid opportunities for students ([HB 1289](#), [HB 1763](#), [HB 1823](#), [SB 5702](#)), and providing childcare for those in registered apprenticeships ([HB 1525](#)).

Housing unaffordability in our district and across Washington state is a clear sign that the status-quo is not working. As a result, this session became known as 'the year of housing' because of how much progress we made to address this crisis. We increased housing supply ([HB 1110](#)), eased barriers to accessory dwelling units ([HB 1337](#)), and streamlined conversions of unused or underused buildings into new housing ([HB 1042](#)). We also focused on creating paths to homeownership, especially for low-income families and those impacted by racially restrictive real estate policies ([HB 1474](#)). Finally, we've helped keep vulnerable populations, such as disabled veterans and seniors, in their homes with a targeted property tax exemption ([HB 1355](#)). The \$1.2 billion allocated for affordable housing shows that moving unsheltered people into real housing with supportive behavioral health services is one of our top priorities.

Reproductive Rights are under attack in this country.



When the U.S. Supreme Court overturned abortion protections, we stepped up to strengthen protections at the state level. We passed legislation to protect private health data ([HB 1155](#)),

protect those who provide reproductive and gender-affirming care ([HB 1469](#)), and allow the state to distribute mifepristone ([HB 1854](#)). In the operating budget, we secured funding for emergency contraception vending machines at many community colleges and universities. Looking ahead, we must remain vigilant in responding to attacks on our fundamental right to bodily autonomy.

Education must meet the needs of all students and communities across our state in a fair and equitable manner. That's why we passed legislation to provide an additional 90,000 students with breakfast and/or lunch at school ([HB 1239](#)), added \$417 million in new funding to support special education services ([HB 1436](#)), and expanded high school graduation pathway options ([HB 1308](#)). High school students can receive credit for paid work experience ([HB 1658](#)) and benefit from expansion of the Running Start program ([HB 1316](#)). Meanwhile, our littlest learners will benefit from transition to kindergarten programs ([HB 1550](#)) and additional recess time for physical and cognitive development ([SB 5257](#)).

Child Care can protect youth in crisis and help meet the basic needs of low-income families which is essential to building a successful society for the future. Meaningful legislation that helps us achieve these goals include supporting youth in seeking protected health care services ([SB 5599](#)), implementing the Family Connections program ([HB 1204](#)), strengthening the ability of assistance programs to meet the needs of children and families ([HB 1447](#)), and helping at-risk youth seek housing assistance and other services ([HB 1406](#)). The state budgets also include \$81 million for refugee support and education, \$95 million for food assistance programs, and an overall investment of \$397 million in human services and poverty reduction measures to help keep families from going hungry.

INVESTING IN OUR COMMUNITY

The 2023-25 state budgets prepare Washington for continued prosperity with record investments in public services our communities depend on. Below are investments I'd like you to be aware of:

CAPITAL INVESTMENTS

- **\$1.5 million** for the Washington Wildlife Recreation Program at Luther Burbank Park.
- **\$1.1 million** to help the Eastside Early Childhood Center increase capacity for early childhood education.
- **\$824,000** to build the Lake Boren CrossTown Recreational Trail.
- **\$583,000** for the Lake Hills Clubhouse renovation.
- **\$350,000** to renovate and improve community athletic facilities to increase youth participation.
- **\$318,000** from the Building Communities Fund for a multipurpose community center.



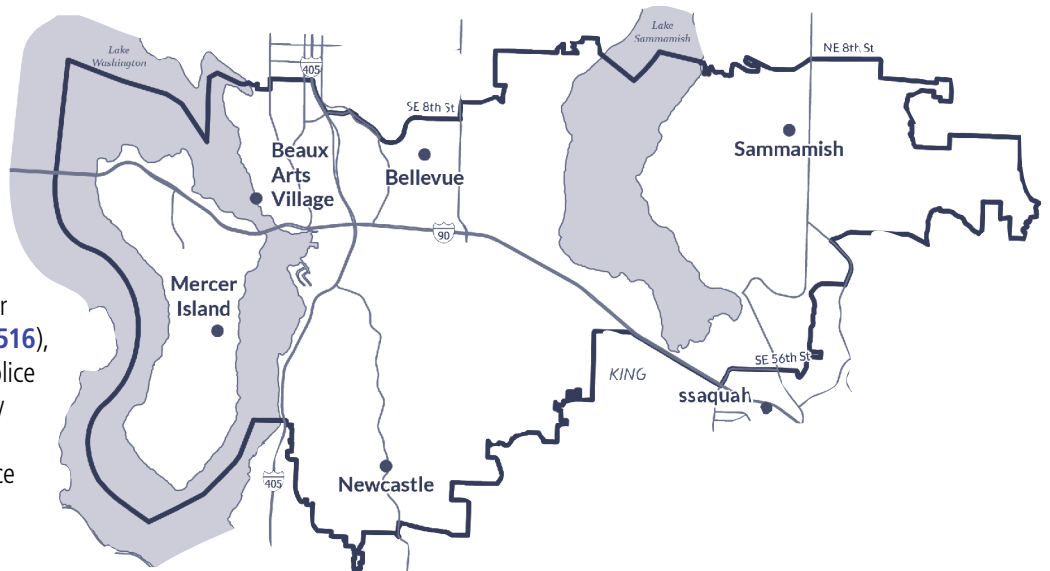
TRANSPORTATION INVESTMENTS

- **\$179 million** to reduce congestion on I-405 with one additional lane in the northbound and southbound directions between I-90 and SE 8th St.
- **\$73 million** for I-90/Eastgate to SR 900 corridor improvements. This area experiences severe congestion during peak traffic hours. Reconstruction shoulders, re-striping in both directions of I-90, and additional improvements will result in additional capacity between Eastgate and Westlake Sammamish Parkway interchanges.
- **\$8.59 million** in multimodal investments for Sound Transit to install non-motorized improvements such as signals that prioritize the three new Stride Bus Rapid Transit Lines linking cities along I-405, SR522/523, and 518 corridors.
- **\$6.9 million** to build the "Bellevue Gap", a 3.6-mile-long missing segment of the Mountains to Sound Greenway trail.
- **\$5 million** to reduce the congestion on Issaquah-Fall City Road.
- **\$5 million** for the support of pedestrian and bike crossings at the former location of the Wilburton tunnel.



LOOKING AHEAD

We made a lot of progress this year to uplift all communities and put people first. I am looking forward to working on the remaining issues this year including progressive tax justice (**HB 1075**, **HB 1473**), recognizing Lunar New Year as a new state holiday (**HB 1516**), and addressing public safety through police accountability and rebuilding community trust (**HB 1025**). As always, I want to hear from you! You can contact my office year-round.





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LEGISLATIVE REVIEW

REP. MY-LINH THAI

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41st DISTRICT LEGISLATIVE REVIEW 2023

Saturday, September 9th
9-10 AM

55 Sunset Coffee
55 W Sunset Way,
Issaquah, WA 98027

COFFEE & CONVERSATION

with
Representative My-Linh Thai

Saturday, October 7th
9-10 AM

Starbucks
180 148th Ave SE
Bellevue, WA 98007

