

# 2024 LEGISLATIVE REPORT 41<sup>st</sup> DISTRICT



## REP. MY-LINH THAI

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## CAPITAL BUDGET

The 2024 Supplemental Capital Budget of **\$1.3 billion** focuses on job creation and addressing key challenges in Washington state. Major investments include **\$79 million** for school construction, **\$82.7 million** for behavioral health facilities, and **\$127.5 million** for affordable housing through the Housing Trust Fund. Legislation like House Bill 2195 aims to meet growing childcare needs by funding high-quality early learning facilities, while House Bill 1892 establishes a Workforce Housing Accelerator Program to expedite affordable housing construction. To ensure all Washingtonians have access to critical resources, House Bill 1982 provides broadband loans and grants to enhance connectivity reflecting a comprehensive approach to fostering economic development and community well-being.

## OPERATING BUDGET

The Supplemental Operating Budget, building upon the Resilient Washington Budget, prioritizes communities in need and focuses on equity by making targeted investments in healthcare, energy assistance, housing, and education. Notable allocations include **\$335 million** for climate initiatives, **\$335 million** for K-12 education, **\$115 million** for early learning and childcare, **\$215 million** for opioid and fentanyl response, and **\$245 million** for behavioral health. Funding also supports long-term care, public health, homelessness, college, and workforce development.



Legislative successes include a 3 percent COLA increase for retired teachers and public workers, inclusion of DSHS workers in the Public Safety Employees' Retirement System, increased funding for school operating costs and special education, and staffing allocations for prototypical schools. These measures aim to address rising costs, ensure equitable access to education and healthcare, and support vulnerable populations across Washington state.



## TRANSPORTATION BUDGET

The **\$14.6 billion** 2024 Supplemental Transportation Budget prioritizes climate action through substantial funding from the Climate Commitment Act (CCA), totaling over **\$300 million**. This funding supports a range of initiatives aimed at reducing carbon emissions and promoting clean transportation. Specifically, the budget allocates funds for electric school buses, electric vehicle charging infrastructure, public transit enhancements, and pedestrian safety measures like sidewalks and bike lanes. Underserved and tribal communities are targeted for assistance, ensuring equitable access to clean transportation solutions.

In addition to CCA funding, the budget retains its commitment to funding major transportation and invests in road preservation and maintenance to ensure the longevity of existing infrastructure. We've also prioritized investments in multi-modal transportation systems, traffic safety measures, and infrastructure improvements. Funding is allocated for bridge replacements, fish passage repairs, and highway maintenance, contributing to overall transportation resilience and safety.

For more information on all three state budgets, visit [fiscal.wa.gov](https://fiscal.wa.gov).

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## REPRESENTATIVE MY-LINH THAI

**41st Legislative District**  
*Deputy Majority Leader*

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Dear Neighbors,

I want to express my heartfelt gratitude for your unwavering engagement over the past legislative session. The 2024 session was very productive, despite being only sixty-days long compared to the 105 days the previous year. We continued to make progress on issues like healthcare affordability, housing, reproductive justice, tax fairness, and community safety with bipartisan support. We also took action to continue utilizing the Climate Commitment Act and Capital Gains Excise Tax to fund critical programs such as environmental equity, funding public schools, and increasing access to early learning. While work remains ahead of us, I'd like to share this year's progress in supporting our community and putting people first:

### LONG TERM CARE & DISABILITY SERVICES

Helping families take care of loved ones who are ill or living with disabilities was a large priority this year as well. We passed legislation to expand access to paid sick leave for non-traditional caregiver relationships (**SB 5793**), implemented the Family Connections program (**HB 1204**), and covered the caregiver gap in the unemployment insurance program (**HB 1106**). This year's budgets also include **\$77 million** to ensure access to long-term care and developmental disabilities programs through increased caregiver and provider rates and reimbursements.

### HEALTHCARE FOR ALL

Securing healthcare access for all Washingtonians, regardless of immigration status, was a top priority. Through targeted investment of **\$28.4 million**, essential healthcare services were extended to undocumented individuals, reaffirming the dignity of every community member. Legislative successes included preserving coverage of preventive services without cost sharing, supporting young adults' post-behavioral health treatment, capping inhaler and epinephrine costs, and enhancing access to long-term care benefits. One piece of legislation I sponsored, **House Bill 2115**, will protect abortion medication providers amid escalating threats. Alongside a **\$444 million** investment in public health and healthcare, projects like contraceptive vending machines on college campuses, and a host of legislation like the My Health, My Data Act and the Shield Law, Washington remains committed to equitable and affordable healthcare for all residents.

### TAX FAIRNESS

Fairness in our tax system is paramount. Through my legislation, **House Bill 1895**, to streamline and improve access to the Working Families Tax Credit, I hope we can continue to alleviate financial burdens on vulnerable populations while funding essential services. We further passed property tax exemptions for nonprofits providing affordable housing and adult family homes for individuals with disabilities expand access to crucial services. Looking ahead, I remain committed to efforts that emphasize fairness, economic relief, and community well-being to help those most in need.

### HOUSING AFFORDABILITY

Recognizing housing as a critical need for fostering healthy communities, I've made a dedicated effort to confront the persistent housing shortage in our state. The legislature passed **SB 5792** to streamline the construction of small condominium buildings, and **HB 2071** to explore potential changes to building codes, facilitating the development of smaller housing units. Additionally, **HB 1998** mandates cities to permit "co-living" or "micro-housing" arrangements, promoting shared kitchen facilities alongside private bedrooms. Furthermore, **SB 6175** broadens affordable housing options by allowing cities to defer sales and use taxes for repurposing commercial buildings into affordable housing units.

### COMMUNITY SAFETY AND FENTANYL CRISIS

Fentanyl disproportionately impacts individuals with substance use disorders (SUD), with youth and young adults experiencing a concerning rise in deaths. To combat this crisis, legislative successes like **SB 6109** enhance child safety and family support and address risks associated with synthetic opioids in child welfare. Efforts such as **HB 1956** focus on fentanyl prevention education in schools, while **HB 2396** ensures clear public education. **HB 2112**, funds prevention education and makes fentanyl strips and naloxone available on higher education campuses. **SB 5804** mandates naloxone in smaller school districts, supported by a budget allocation of **\$345,000** for high schools and **\$400,000** for higher education. An additional **\$230,000** expands the naloxone vending machine program, ensuring readiness to administer lifesaving treatment across districts and institutions.

### MOVING FORWARD TOGETHER

As we reflect on the accomplishments of the past legislative session, I recognize that many in our community continue to face daily struggles. I remain committed to hearing your concerns, advocating on your behalf, and working collaboratively to address the challenges that lie ahead.

Sincerely,

