

2025-2026 Biennium Review

47th DISTRICT • KING COUNTY

Representative Debra Entenman

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Rep. Debra Entenman 47th DISTRICT

Join me at
an upcoming
TOWN HALL
Saturday, April 18 10-11:30 am at the
**AUBURN CITY
HALL CHAMBERS!**

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Debra Entenman

STATE REPRESENTATIVE

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**AUBURN CITY
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Dear Friends and Neighbors,

Over the past two years, the Legislature has faced both significant budgetary challenges, as well as significant and unconscionable challenges from the second Trump Administration.

For the first time since the Great Recession years, we began both the 2025 and 2026 sessions with budget shortfalls. While our economy remained strong, slowing revenue, inflationary pressures, increased demand for core services, and an outdated tax system helped create a perpetual problem we had to address.

Following our efforts in 2025 in which we eked out a balanced budget through a mix of cuts and new revenue, forecasts from the Economic Revenue Forecast Council showed a recurring theme: President Trump's tariffs are continuing to cause higher inflation, more economic uncertainty, and greater price increases to Washington's families. Our budget was also facing significant impacts from H.R. 1, the bill President Trump signed into law in July of 2025, that makes deep cuts to Medicaid and food assistance to fund tax cuts for billionaires.

In addition to exacerbating our budgetary issues, the actions of the Trump Administration, specifically federal agents from U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and the Department of Homeland Security, created fear in neighborhoods and communities across our state and nation, increasing the need to take action against federal overreach.

The mood moving into the 2026 session was somber but determined. We took that determination and turned it into collective action, passing legislation to limit ICE's reach (see inside). We also took steps to help bring down costs, such as creating a statewide energy assistance program (HB 1903), preserving access to preventive services (HB 2296), and protecting fairness and competition in grocery and medicine costs by prohibiting outdated restrictions that limited stores from reopening in vacant spaces (HB 2294).

But the most significant step we took this session was passing the Millionaire's Tax (SB 6346), which will provide tax relief for working families and small businesses in our state, while bringing more fairness to our outdated tax code. Once implemented, the new tax will provide stable revenues, ensuring we can fund our budget sustainably and meet the needs of the people of our state rather than continually confronting budget shortfalls.

Please read on to learn more about local projects funded as well as legislation I have passed over the last two years, and as always, please feel free to reach out to my office with any questions or concerns.

Debra Entenman

Sincerely,

Debra Entenman
State Representative



Local Projects Funded in this Year's Budget

The \$889 million supplemental capital budget funds construction projects and infrastructure across Washington and makes major investments in school construction, affordable housing, flood response and prevention, and more. I was able to help secure several wins for our district in the final supplemental capital budget, including \$375,000 for the Covington Aquatic Center and \$2 million for repairs and upgrades to the levee system near Signature Point on the Green River in Kent to a 500-year flood protection level as part of our ongoing flood and disaster response efforts following the December 2025 floods in our area.



The \$16.5 billion supplemental transportation budget prioritizes bridge and highway preservation, Washington State Ferries reliability, and fish passage barrier removal in partnership with Native Tribes – an essential environmental and treaty obligation. It includes multiple projects here in the 47th District, such as Meet Me on Meeker multimodal improvements, establishing the Rapid Ride I Line from Renton to Auburn, and a pedestrian bridge over State Route 516 in downtown Covington. We also maintained funding for the State Route 18 corridor widening project from Auburn to Interstate 90. You can find more information on the budgets at fiscal.wa.gov.

LEGISLATIVE VICTORIES

Reimagining investment in public safety (HB 2015)

A lot of work has been done by the Legislature on the topics of police accountability, making sure our communities are safe, and defining what public safety looks like. Public safety does include police, but it also includes much more. Public safety is also housing the homeless, pursuing economic development in underdeveloped communities, and providing opportunities for young people through after-school and summer employment programs. This new law ensures that public safety funding is no longer dictated by top-down decisions but instead is driven by the needs of communities, with a focus on equity and real outcomes. It includes two critical components:

1. It gives cities and counties the authority to impose a 0.1% sales tax, allowing local governments to invest directly in community safety and criminal justice services. This measure empowers local leaders, ensuring that resources are allocated where they are needed most.
2. The Criminal Justice Training Commission will administer competitive grants for local and tribal law enforcement agencies, with funding tied to clear accountability metrics. These metrics include training on de-escalation, use-of-force policies, crisis intervention, and trauma-informed care. Law enforcement agencies must demonstrate transparency on officer hiring, retention, and vacancy rates, ensuring that resources are spent effectively to build stronger, more trustworthy police departments.



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Clarifying the authority of the Office of the Independent Investigations (HB 2508)

Originally established in 2021, the Office of Independent Investigations (OII) was intended to help rebuild the trust between law enforcement and communities of color by ensuring that there is true accountability for unnecessary police violence. This new law updates the authority of the OII to strengthen transparency while protecting privacy. It makes changes to help align the office's authority with the legislature's intent and helps ensure accountability in law enforcement oversight.

Expanding the covenant homeownership program (HB 1696)

As recently as 1969 in Washington, systemic racism denied many people access to homeownership because of racially discriminatory laws and covenants. This new law expands the Legislature's work to dismantle systemic racism in the real estate industry through the Covenant Homeownership Program. Launched in 2024, the program provides zero-interest loans to help first-time homebuyers cover down payments and closing costs. This expansion will allow loan forgiveness for certain individuals who qualify for the program and increase the income eligibility level.



Expanding tuition waivers for high school completers (HB 1556)

Previously, only students aged 19 and older were eligible for tuition waivers for high school diploma or certificate courses. This new law removes this age restriction, allowing younger students—starting at age 16—to receive financial support as they pursue alternative high school completion pathways, including General Educational Development (GED) programs. Lowering the age requirement removes financial barriers for students, supports faster paths to the workforce, and expands access to education. Every student deserves a chance to succeed, no matter their age or circumstance. By removing this barrier, we're making sure that students who are ready to complete their high school education have the support they need to move forward—whether that's into the workforce or toward a college degree.

