Neighbors,

We recently wrapped up the 2022 Legislative Session after passing policies and making investments that will help our communities grow and recover as we come out of this pandemic.

Though we had some long days (and some very late nights), I’m so proud of what we were able to accomplish. We took historic steps this year to support families, protect our communities, and help our small businesses get back on their feet.

We passed new laws to increase access to free and reduced health care to 2.2 million Washingtonians by standardizing the way hospitals provide “charity care,” create a statewide alert for missing Indigenous people, provide funding to support refugees, ensure more school nurses and counselors are available to our students, and provide support for struggling businesses by increasing the small business B&O tax credit. In addition, we passed the Digital Equity Act, increased language access in schools to ensure all parents can engage with their child’s learning, and much more. I invite you to keep reading for an update on more of our work this session.

It’s an incredible honor to represent you in Olympia,
INVESTING IN RECOVERY
Everyone deserves to come out of this pandemic better than they went into it. To that end, we built on the 2021 Washington Recovery Budget to help every community recover with better access to child care, fully funded schools, a better-paid health care workforce, and strategic investments in our small businesses and entrepreneurs. We also passed a historic transportation package that ushers in a sustainable transportation future for our state. It invests in everything from zero-emissions ferry technology and transit to “bike-ped” grants and EV charging stations. Finally, our capital budget makes significant investments in housing, early learning and behavioral health facilities, wildfire prevention and more.

FUNDING LOCAL PROJECTS
I’m excited to report that multiple provisos I championed were included within the three supplemental state budgets passed this session. Those investments – most of which are right here in the 11th District – include:

- $17M to replace the 42nd Street bridge
- $37M in additional funding for the Weatherization Plus Health program, which supports low-income communities
- $3.2M for Northwest Harvest’s new distribution facility and food pantry
- $3M to improve quality of life and facilitate transit-oriented living in downtown Kent by taking actions to reduce train noise
- $258K to help fund a Teen and Senior Center in Tukwila
- $135K to expand sexual assault education programming in Renton Schools
- $250K for Renton’s May Creek Trail pedestrian boardwalk, making connections to public transit and extending a historic trail for hikers
- $600K to develop an equitable initiative to reconnect the South Park neighborhood, currently divided by WA 99

MOVING TO A CLEAN ENERGY FUTURE
One of my top priorities this session was to continue the great work we began last year with the Climate Commitment Act and low-carbon fuel standards, including tackling more of our state’s major sources of pollution. To address some of the root causes of the climate crisis, we passed legislation targeting greenhouse gas pollution from landfills (HB 1663, HB 1799) and our state’s building sector (HB 1770), including the Senate companion to my bill to expand energy performance standards (SB 5722). In addition, I was proud to pass a new law that allows for electric vehicle charging stations in HOAs and condominiums. Our state already has over 86,000 electric vehicles on the road – a number which will only rise as we continue to incentivize EVs and build our electric infrastructure. With this expansion, it’s imperative to ensure affordable and convenient access to electricity as a transportation fuel, including at home. HB 1793 helps achieve that by removing barriers for the one-third of Washingtonians who live in common interest communities.

ADDRESSING OUR HOUSING CRISIS
Washington was in a housing and homelessness crisis before the pandemic, and the economic downturn made it worse. Record investments in 2021 helped stave off a wave of evictions and kept people housed, and this session we built on that work by protecting renters, making it easier to build affordable housing quickly and reducing homelessness so that all Washingtonians can find accessible, quality and climate-friendly housing.

These efforts included the passage of HB 1643, which I introduced to provide non-profit developers and public housing authorities with a new tool to preserve existing housing and/or acquire land for new development. This new law does so by exempting such transfers from the real estate excise tax (REET), creating an incentive for property owners to sell to non-profit and public entities and helping them compete in negotiations against private purchasers.

PROMOTING SAFE COMMUNITIES
Last year, the Legislature passed a comprehensive package of police reform legislation designed to set clear expectations for officers’ behavior, set a baseline for acceptable use of force, tactics, and equipment, and ensure accountability and transparency. This session, we clarified portions of that package to strike the right balance to keep communities safe without jeopardizing the important progress we’ve made. In addition, we also passed legislation to curtail mass shootings and other gun violence, protect survivors of domestic abuse and harassment, and crack down on catalytic converter theft.

I’m also glad to report the success of my bill to protect the sensitive information of current and formerly incarcerated individuals (HB 1956). The Department of Corrections collects extremely sensitive information about the currently and formerly incarcerated, including Trans individuals. Failure to protect this kind of information can not only follow a person after release, but also result in inmates failing to provide critical information needed to investigate allegations of sexual abuse, make housing and classification decisions, and maintain safety.