

2024 LEGISLATIVE SESSION WRAP-UP

State Representative

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22ND LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT



STAY CONNECTED

Please do not hesitate to contact my office to share your questions, comments, or ideas!

You can email me directly at:
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Sign-up for my newsletter to get legislative updates:
housedemocrats.wa.gov/bateman

Or follow me on Facebook for more updates:
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I look forward to hearing from you!



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Committees:

- Healthcare & Wellness (Vice Chair)
- Capital Budget
- Housing



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22ND LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT

Dear friends and neighbors,

The 60-day legislative session wrapped up on Thursday, March 7 when the House and Senate adjourned Sine Die around 6:00PM after passing our final bills for the 2024 supplemental budget.

While there's definitely some big bills that make headlines, a lot of the work that happens in the legislative session flies under the radar, which is why I'm excited to share with you the historic investments we made in priorities like education, behavioral health, and affordable housing. We funded projects across the state, including in the 22nd District through our \$1.3 billion construction budget, and added \$1 billion to our transportation budget for things like highway improvements and traffic safety.

More than \$900 million of our budget revenue came from Climate Commitment Act funding, meaning the companies who emit the most pollution in our state are investing in zero emissions technology for school buses and alternative fuel charging infrastructure.

While there isn't enough room in this newsletter to list all of the new budget investments or talk about all of the great bills that passed the legislature this session (373 total bills!) I'll share with you some of the highlights.

I appreciate everyone who took the time this session to reach out to me by phone or email, attended the town hall, or stopped by the office. Your advocacy is important. Ideas for new bills often come from folks in the district who have taken the time to share a story that shows where a system needs to be changed or updated.

With gratitude,

Jessica Bateman
State Representative
22nd Legislative District



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AFFORDABLE HOUSING

In a short session it can be tough to pass big bills, but we still made significant progress towards creating more middle housing options to put our state on track to meet the demand for more than 1 million new homes in the next 20 years.

I sponsored a bill that makes [technical changes](#) to last year's affordable housing legislation so that cities can better understand the requirements and stay in compliance with the Growth Management Act. We also passed a bill to [legalize co-living](#), and created incentives to [convert existing commercial structures into residential housing](#).

Our \$1.3 billion supplemental construction budget also included \$127.5 million for the Housing Trust Fund to develop affordable housing, \$34 million for local homelessness services, and \$19 million for housing vulnerable populations, supporting tenant's rights, and encouraging homeownership.



BEHAVIORAL HEALTH AND HEALTHCARE

Demand is outpacing supply for behavioral health care services and we need more providers in our state to ensure consistent care. That's why I sponsored a policy to accelerate workforce growth by [creating an associate level license for psychologists](#) to allow them to train in state and get into the field quicker.

Part of responding to the workforce shortages we're seeing in many areas in the state, including behavioral health and healthcare, is taking care of the employees who are working long hours and extra shifts to keep patients treated and our communities safe. These folks work hard and deserve to keep the vacation hours they've earned, which is why we passed my bill to [raise the yearly vacation hour accrual cap for state employees from 240 to 280](#).

During the COVID-19 pandemic Washington state received a federal waiver to try out a hospital at home program that was very successful but would have ended this year. That's why I sponsored a bill to [continue that program](#) allowing people to receive routine care from a healthcare provider in their home.

We also passed a bill that is very specific to Thurston County to [give the board of county commissioners the authority to reduce the number of county commissioners](#) that are members of the local board of health. This gives the board more flexibility and ensure the members represent the community and have expertise in health care.

This year's supplemental budget investments in behavioral health include \$82.7 million in behavioral health community capacity grants to build more facilities in communities across Washington, and \$230 million for increased inpatient behavioral health capacity.

Other highlights include \$215 million to increase access to opioid use disorder treatment, programs and supplies and \$6 million for outreach and support for Tribal communities where people are four times more likely to overdose and die from opioids than the state average.

EDUCATION

Despite a national rise in book banning, [students in Washington will always have access to materials written by and about people from marginalized groups](#) thanks to a bill we passed on the first day of session.

We also passed legislation [advancing the adoption of zero-emission school buses](#) throughout Washington to give our students cleaner air to breathe and a healthy environment to grow in.

In the operating budget we increased the cap for special education funding to 16% (\$26 million in new funding) and supported our paraeducators through an increase of \$72 million for prototypical school staffing. Through the capital budget we added \$79 million for local school construction and put \$69 million into skill center and career/technical education development.



22ND LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT

THE STORY BEHIND THE AED BILL

Often bills are drafted because a person took the time to share their story with their lawmaker and advocated for a change. That's what happened when Kim and Karli Reiter came to us with their story. Kim's husband Brian (Karli's dad) suffered a heart attack during a workout at their local gym. Had there been an automatic defibrillator device (AED) in the building and staff trained to use it, Brian might have been one of the 9 in 10 cardiac arrest victims who survive if they receive a shock in the first minute.

Every 40 seconds in the U.S. someone has a heart attack. Kim and Karli wanted to prevent other families from experiencing the same heartbreak their family went through, so they brought us the idea for a bill [requiring an AED in all fitness centers and training staff to use it](#). We passed that bill this session and now, thanks to Kim and Karli Reiter, fewer public cardiac events will end in tragedy.



FUNDING FOR DISTRICT PROJECTS

Hearing about the millions of dollars the state is investing into key areas is great, but I know a lot of folks are wondering, "what does that mean for our district?" Here's how some of those dollars are going to work right here in the 22nd:

- \$250K for the medical equipment bank
- \$2M for the Tumwater Mazama Pocket Gopher Habitat Acquisition & Restoration Project
- \$50K for the City of Lacey Regional Public Safety Training Center
- \$250K for the Puget Sound Estuarium Property
- \$1.5M for the Boulevard Affordable Townhomes Project

Curious about any of these projects? You can find more information about the state budget at <https://fiscal.wa.gov/statebudgets/statebudgetoverview> or use this project map to learn more about projects funded in our district: <https://fiscal.wa.gov/statebudgets/capitaldistrictmap>.

