

Sen. Javier Valdez · Rep. Gerry Pollet · Rep. Darya Farivar

YOUR 46TH DISTRICT LEGISLATORS WORKING TOGETHER FOR YOU

Environment & Energy

Building on the critical investments made by the Climate Commitment Act last year, this year we focused on continuing to decarbonize our economy and bolster environmental resilience. Key efforts included advancing zero-emission school buses (**HB 1368**), promoting utility electrification (**HB 1589**), optimizing organic material management (**HB 2301**), linking Washington's carbon market with California and Quebec (**HB 2201/SB 6058**), fostering geothermal energy development (**HB 2129/SB 6039**), and enhancing restitution for environmental crimes (**SB 5884**). By mitigating climate change impacts, improving public health, and promoting sustainability, Washington can remain a leader in clean energy innovation and environmental stewardship.

Housing

Recognizing housing as a critical need for fostering healthy communities, we've confronted the persistent housing shortage in our state head-on during this legislative session. We 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. These initiatives underscore our commitment to tackling housing affordability and accessibility issues statewide, offering potential solutions to meet the diverse housing needs of our residents.

College Access & Workforce Development

Providing pathways to economic resiliency for all communities is critical in supporting the economy of tomorrow. This year, we focused on expanding access to financial aid and workforce development programs by streamlining financial aid application for students on public assistance (**HB 2214**), improving access to Public Service Loan Forgiveness (**HB 1950**), and creating scholarship programs for Native American apprentices and incarcerated individuals (**HB 2019**). We also passed bills to increase opportunities for work-study students (**HB 2025**) and streamline licensing for physician assistants (**HB 1917**) and social workers (**HB 1939**).

Human Services, Youth, and Early Learning

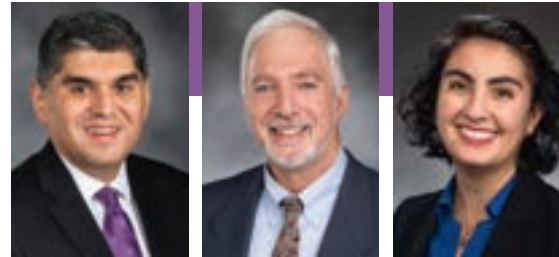
Our commitment to children, youth, and families extends beyond policy to reflect our core values and shape the kind of society we envision for present and future generations. This year, we've prioritized providing our youngest residents with optimal beginnings, ensuring infants and toddlers receive essential early support (**HB 1916**), streamlining access to early childhood education and care by dismantling administrative barriers (**HB 1945**), and aiding families facing short-term financial challenges through increased grant amounts for Diversion Cash Assistance (**HB 2415**). In addressing behavioral health, our efforts focus on facilitating easier access to services for children and young adults (**HB 2256**), ensuring minors receive timely care during mental health crises (**SB 5853**), and relieving juveniles of unenforceable legal financial obligations (**SB 5974**). Additionally, we extend foster care services for youth aged 18 to 21, aiding in smoother transitions to adulthood (**SB 5908**).

Reducing Gun Violence

As gun violence continues to impact communities across our state and children in our schools, we took decisive action to build on legislation from 2023 to protect our communities. We successfully passed legislation to reduce the number of stolen firearms and worked with gun dealers to improve security. When combined with last year's assault weapon ban (**HB 1240**), waiting periods to purchase firearms (**HB 1143**), and holding manufacturers and retailers accountable (**SB 5078**), we are moving closer to a Washington that prevents gun violence and saves lives.

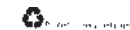
Fostering Inclusivity

Rectifying historical injustices and fostering inclusivity is an ongoing commitment for the legislature. Meaningful legislation from 2024 includes strengthening government-to-government relationships with Tribes (**HB 1877**), expanding equal pay protections (**HB 1905**), celebrating diversity by recognizing Lunar New Year (**HB 2209**), supporting refugees and immigrants (**HB 2368**), and promoting multilingual education (**HB 1228**). These efforts reflect a commitment to equity and representation, while also addressing systemic barriers to education, healthcare, and economic opportunity.



Sen. Javier Valdez Rep. Gerry Pollet Rep. Darya Farivar

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Olympia, WA 98504-0600



END OF SESSION UPDATE 2024 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

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You can always reach out to my office with any questions or comments. Below you will find ways to stay up to date on my work. I look forward to hearing from you!

Sign-up for my newsletter:

<https://senatedemocrats.wa.gov/valdez/e-newsletter/>

Or follow me on social media for more updates:

<https://www.facebook.com/SenJavierValdez>
<https://www.instagram.com/senatorjaviervaldez>
<https://twitter.com/SenValdez46th>

Please join me at my "traveling town hall" drop-in discussions in-person or online on Saturday mornings. **Email me for a location or zoom link** or any input: Gerry.Pollet@leg.wa.gov

Sign-up for my newsletter:

<https://housedemocrats.wa.gov/pollet/e-news/>

Or follow me on Facebook for more updates:

<https://www.facebook.com/RepresentativeGerryPollet>

If you have any questions, want to share comments, or just want to say hello, then please do not hesitate to contact my office.

Sign-up for my newsletter:

<https://housedemocrats.wa.gov/farivar/e-news/>

Or follow me on Facebook for more updates:

<https://www.facebook.com/RepDaryaFarivar>

TOWN HALL MEETING NOTICE

IN-PERSON

46TH LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT
COMMUNITY TOWN HALL

WED., MAY 1, 6:30-8:30 PM

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SEN. JAVIER VALDEZ REP. GERRY POLLET REP. DARYA FARIVAR



PUTTING PEOPLE FIRST

Toll Free Hotline: 1-800-562-6000 • TDY: 1-800-833-6388

Legislative Update from Senator Javier Valdez

During the 2024 legislative session, we remained dedicated to putting people first, leading to significant progress in key areas. From bolstering public safety to protecting our democracy, we've made big strides in our communities and statewide. Here's a rundown of some of the important work we did this session.

Keeping Our Communities Safe from Gun Violence

Throughout my tenure, I've been a major proponent of improving gun safety laws in Washington, always prioritizing the safety and well-being of our neighbors. This year was no different. I'm proud to share that we passed several bills aimed at safeguarding our families. One such measure, **Senate Bill 5444**, which I introduced, prohibits firearms in places like zoos, aquariums, libraries, and transit stations. This new law aims to reduce risks and create safe spaces where families can enjoy their time without fear. Additionally, other gun safety laws successfully passed include:

- **House Bill 1903** requires gun owners to report stolen guns to law enforcement within 24 hours.
- **House Bill 2118** requires gun dealers to ensure their inventory is kept safe and secure, keep standardized records, make timely reports of loss and theft, preserve video recordings of transactions, and carry liability insurance.
- **House Bill 2021** authorizes the Washington State Patrol to destroy firearms they have seized.

Taking A Stand Against Hate

Hate crimes in the U.S. are on the rise, and unfortunately, our state is no exception. This year, we took another meaningful step to make it clear that hate and violence have no place in our communities. I introduced **Senate Bill 5427**, which establishes a support system for victims of hate crimes and bias incidents by creating a hotline for reporting these incidents. The hotline will accept reports and provide appropriate crisis intervention, as well as victim-centered, culturally competent, and trauma-informed information. These services will be accessible to as many Washington state residents as possible, regardless of the language they speak. It's more than just collecting reports; it's about standing up for our neighbors, offering them meaningful support, and fostering an environment where everyone feels safe, valued, and heard. The bill has been signed into law and takes effect January 1, 2025.

Protecting Our Democracy

The right to vote is essential to democracy, as it allows people to influence the direction of their communities. This year we continued to strengthen voter access and protect election integrity in Washington state. **Senate Bill 5890** tackles the pressing issue of ballot rejections by requiring county auditors to promptly contact voters via phone, text, or email, providing them with an opportunity to correct any issues in a timely manner. This proactive approach aims to mitigate disparities revealed by recent reports, particularly affecting younger voters and communities of color. Meanwhile, **House Bill 1241** aims to provide protections to election workers by making it a class C felony for a person to threaten election officials with injury through words or conduct. Someone convicted under the law could face up to five years in prison or a \$10,000 fine.

Transportation Investments

The budget includes investments specific to the 46th District, including safety improvements to North Aurora Avenue such as the installation of new sidewalks, medians, lighting upgrades, signalized crossings, and changes to roadway channelization. This year, the legislature passed a **\$14.6 billion** budget that prioritizes public safety, preservation, and maintenance of existing infrastructure, and investments in the ferry system. The budget also includes:

- **\$100 million** into the preservation of roads, bridges, and more statewide.
- **\$30.8 million** is invested in traffic safety measures.
- **\$150 million** is included toward fish barrier removal to help expand the salmon population and restore river ecosystems.

This year we've made great progress together. But our work isn't finished yet. We still have challenges ahead that need our teamwork and determination. I'm excited to keep working with you to make our communities safer, happier, and more prosperous. Thank you for the honor of representing you.

Thank you,



Senator Javier Valdez



Legislative Update from Rep. Gerry Pollet

My priorities on behalf of the 46th District for this session were to improve school funding and support for students with disabilities, increase access to postsecondary education, increase the availability of affordable housing, respond to the opioid crisis, and protect our neighbors from lead poisoning. I had an ambitious agenda – and passed two first-in-the-nation pieces of legislation and laid the groundwork for 2025 on other efforts.

Improving School Funding

Seattle Public Schools, along with most districts, is facing a large deficit driven primarily by the duty to fund special education, while the State continues to cap how many students with disabilities it will pay for. In 2023, I was the prime sponsor of legislation to eliminate this unconscionable cap. Unfortunately, we were unable to remove the cap, but we worked to increase funding by over **\$400 million** for school districts. This year, I once again prime sponsored Superintendent of Public Instruction Reykdal's request to eliminate the cap. We only slightly increased the level of the cap and the Legislature included a civil rights study I proposed for the State Auditor to conduct a review of the prevalence of disabilities in school children (**House Bill 2180**). While we were able to make progress, limiting our support for special education services is unconscionable and I will continue to work to fully end the cap on special education funding.

The legislature also slightly increased allocations for paraeducators, office support staff, and noninstructional aides in the prototypical school funding model (**Senate Bill 5882**) and increased state funding for materials, supplies and operating costs (**House Bill 2492**). We also funded **\$5 million** which I requested for urgently needed roof repairs at Seattle schools. I will be working with our educators and Seattle Schools to make significant improvements in school funding in 2025.

Stabilizing Rents

The 46th legislators prime sponsored legislation last year to end the state preemption that prohibits cities like Seattle from taking action to stabilize rent. This year, a statewide rent stabilization bill (**House Bill 2114**), which I strongly supported, didn't make it to the governor's desk. We also were unable to pass legislation that would increase housing near transit and ensure **affordable** housing is included. These were missed opportunities to address our affordable housing crisis. Housing affordability is one of the biggest challenges facing our state and we need to act.

First-In-Nation Legislation to Address Opioid Overdoses Among Students

Across Washington, fentanyl and opioid deaths are rising fastest among youth and young adults. Two-thirds of overdoses among teens and college students occur at home and with someone else present. That's why I worked with pediatricians to propose and pass the first-in-the-nation funding to provide high school students and students at our public colleges with cost and barrier-free access to opioid overdose reversal nasal spray (naloxone). This is an important step to ensure all students are prepared to offer lifesaving treatment in the event of an overdose.

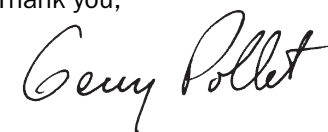
Getting Lead Out of Cookware



I have long fought to protect families, from lead poisoning and contamination, including as a UW School of Public Health faculty member. Recently, the Seattle/King County Public Health and KC Hazardous Waste Program found that more than 40% of some immigrant children had high levels of lead in their bodies – enough to lower children's IQ and cause other major health effects. This contamination was especially prevalent in the Afghan immigrant community. These instances of poisoning were traced to pots, pans and pressure cookers sold with extremely high levels of lead. Unfortunately, these products continue to be widely marketed to families in retail stores in Washington and online.

Let's be clear, there are no safe levels of lead in food or water. Fortunately, the legislature passed and the Governor signed my **House Bill 1551**. Washington State will now lead the nation in prohibiting the manufacture, distribution and sale of cookware containing lead levels over 5 parts per million (ppm). There will also be a new program to test cookware for lead.

Thank you,



Representative Gerry Pollet

Legislative Update from Rep. Darya Farivar



The 2024 session will be memorable for its bipartisanship and efforts to tackle large systemic issues. Below is an update on our work that I hope you'll find useful!

Civil Rights & Judiciary Committee Update

As Vice Chair of the House Civil Rights & Judiciary Committee, I focused on measures to combat the behavioral health crisis, particularly within Tribal and state healthcare systems. Legislation further empowered survivors of sexual abuse (**House Bill 1618**) and outlawed child marriage (**House Bill 1455**). Moreover, legislation was passed to hold individuals accountable for non-consensual removal of sexually protective devices (**House Bill 1958**) and to ensure that child support payments reach low-income families without deductions (**House Bill 1652**). These efforts underscore a commitment to prioritizing people's well-being and safety across various spheres of life.

How Your Feedback Guides My Work

Last interim, many spoke out at town halls to share the daily issues they faced from running a small business to family members struggling to access services after incarceration. As a result, I developed a legislative agenda to address your issues and passed the following bills:

- **House Bill 1541:** Requiring task forces, workgroups, and advisory committees tackling issues affecting underrepresented communities to include three or more individuals with direct lived experience on that issue.
- **House Bill 2072:** Increasing penalties for businesses engaging in antitrust practices that harm our competitive economy from \$900,000 to triple the unlawful gains or loss avoided.
- **House Bill 2099:** Providing identification cards for those exiting state care or custody. While often overlooked, an ID is a critical resource in accessing secure employment, housing, and social services.
- **Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion:** This year's supplemental operating budget includes **\$2.5 million** for diversionary programs supporting essential behavioral health programs and to serve potential and former Trueblood class members.

Capital Budget Wins for the 46th Legislative District

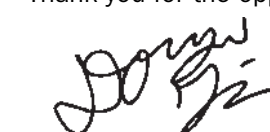
The Capital Construction Budget improves infrastructure and public facilities across the state. This year's budget prioritizes critical areas like schools, mental health services, and affordable housing including the following projects in our community:

- **\$7 million** for CoLead Northgate to provide transitional housing and wrap around services for unmet behavioral health needs and income instability.
- **\$2.4 million** to construct and modernize early childhood education and assistance facilities at the Northgate Jose Marti Early Learning Center which is operated by El Centro de la Raza.
- **\$1.3 million** for an open learning center at Northaven.
- **\$2 million** for utility plant planning at the University of Washington's Medical Center NW Campus.
- **\$527,000** for improved access to construction trades skills at Ingraham High School.
- **\$200,000** allocated to drive an inclusive community engagement process and needs assessment for the new Lake City Community Center.

The Work Ahead

Both 2023 and 2024 give us lots to celebrate. Going forward, I remain laser focused on helping our most vulnerable individuals and communities by passing legislation to empower judges to offer treatment options and address the root causes of recidivism (**House Bill 1994**). I also plan to address patterns of systemic police misconduct to reduce excessive force and stop discriminatory practices (**House Bill 1445**), promote local democracy via elections in even-numbered years instead of odd-numbered years (**House Bill 1932**), and reduce gun trafficking and gun-related crimes through clearer bulk purchasing guidelines (**House Bill 2054**). As the youngest elected legislator in the 46th district and the daughter of Iranian immigrants, I remain honored for the opportunity to improve and invest in our community.

Thank you for the opportunity to serve you,



Representative Darya Farivar