



Senator Margarita Prentice



11th Legislative District

Legislative Review

July, 2009

Dear Friends:

The 2009 Legislature adjourned as scheduled on April 26th. During this difficult 105-day session, my colleagues and I passed many bills to balance our state's historic shortfall. This newsletter contains some of the highlights that directly impact our district. Please contact me on these or other issues of interest so more information can be provided to you.

Thanks to all who have contacted my office or the Legislative hotline during session. Your comments and concerns are essential to my representing the current issues of our diverse and dynamic district. I am very proud to serve as your Senator and appreciate hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Margarita Prentice



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HEALTHCARE

HB 2128 Healthcare for kids

Apple Health for Kids is a new concept in state medical assistance. Instead of making families apply for different programs, the process has been streamlined so that any child in a family that meets the income eligibility standards will be covered. No struggling for details or choosing between programs. It's easy to check your eligibility. Just fill in a quick checklist and compare your income and family size to the criteria at: http://hrsa.dshs.wa.gov/applehealth/am_i_eligible.shtml. DSHS administers the Apple Health for Kids program and will look for additional federal funding. The nonsubsidized program for children with family income above 300 percent of the federal poverty level is delayed to January 1, 2010, and the program will allow options for an affordable benefit package. Effective date: July 26, 2009

HB 1869 Healthcare cost information

Healthcare providers and facilities are required to provide an estimate of fees and charges for a specific service or visit when a patient requests information. A sign must be posted in medical facilities indicating that information about these estimated charges is available upon request. Effect date: July 26, 2009

SB 5629 Pregnancy prevention

State agencies can apply for sexual health education funding for programs that are medically and scientifically accurate and proven effective in teaching the goals of the state's Healthy Youth Act. Effective date: July 26, 2009

HB 1123 MRSA

HB 1123 requires all hospitals adopt a policy on methicillin-resistant staphylococcus aureus (MRSA) by January 1, 2010. The policy must include: (1) testing risk-identified patients; (2) testing all intensive care unit patients within 24 hours; (3) procedures in place to prevent transmission; and (4) provide aftercare instructions to patients with MRSA. Effective date: July 26, 2009

LONG-TERM CARE

SB 5547 Respite care

Respite care services are provided under the Individual and Family Service Program for any family member who resides with and is the primary care provider to a person with developmental disabilities. The Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) must assess family care providers in order to provide respite care services. Effective date: July 26, 2009

SB 6009 Long-term care

Long-term care facilities must fully disclose their Medicaid policy as a payment source to residents before they are admitted. Notification must be done orally, in writing, and in the language the potential resident or that person's advocate understands. Effective date: July 26, 2009

EDUCATION • K-12

HB 2261 Basic education reform



The state's basic education system is expanded and will be fully implemented by 2018. Changes include a program for gifted students, increased instructional hours, an opportunity to graduate high school with 24 credits, transportation to and from school using a new funding formula, and all-day kindergarten. The Quality Education Council is created and composed of eight legislators and others to recommend and inform the ongoing implementation by the Legislature. Work groups are also created to develop details of the funding formulas, the basic education program of early learning, employee compensation, and a new system of levies and levy equalization. Effective date: July 26, 2009

SB 5414 Statewide education testing

The number of extended response questions on the WASL will be limited; and, recommendations for improvements to alternative tests will be made including an appeals process and alternatives for students with significant disabilities. The Superintendent of Public Instruction (SPI), the State Board of Education (SBE), and the Professional Educator Standards Board, must develop an implementation plan to ensure all students learn the new science and mathematics standards. Effective date: July 26, 2009

SB 5551 Recess periods

The Superintendent of Public Instruction is required to work with the statewide parent-teacher organization to conduct and report the results of a survey of elementary schools regarding recess periods. Effective date: July 26, 2009

SB 5410 Online learning

The Office of Online Learning is created within the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI). OSPI is responsible for the online provider approval process, the website, model agreements, and technical assistance. A review of online courses and programs must be conducted and reported back to the Legislature by December, 1 2009. Providers who offer online courses or programs must be accredited by the Northwest Association of Accredited Schools or another national, regional, or state accreditation program listed by OSPI after consultation with the Washington Coalition for Online Learning. Effective date: July 26, 2009

HB 1110 Advertising to home-school students

School districts are prohibited from distributing unsolicited information to students and their parents who have filed a declaration of intent regarding home-based instruction. Sending generic district mailings and materials provided in response to a parental request are acceptable. Effective date: July 26, 2009

HIGHER EDUCATION

College tuition rates

Four-year universities tuition rates are raised by 14% per year and community and technical colleges rates by 7% per year.

SB 5676 Higher education for middle-school students

Funding for middle school students enrolled in career and technical education courses are provided at the same level high schools receive for such courses. Effective date: July 26, 2009

HB 2119 Dual credit opportunities

Running Start students must begin paying mandatory fees at community colleges and technology fees at the four-year institutions. These fees are prorated based on credit load and fee waivers must be available to low-income students. The State Board for Community and Technical Colleges, other institutions of higher education that participate in Running Start and the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction will report to the Legislature by September 2010 with an assessment of alternatives for this program. Effective date: July 26, 2009

ENVIRONMENT



State parks

Parks across the state will continue to stay open year-round through a \$5 fee on license tabs for all vehicle owners for renewals coming due on or after September 1, 2009. The vehicle owners have the option to “opt out” at the time of renewal.

SB 5560 Greenhouse gas emissions

All state agencies are required to meet the statewide greenhouse gas emission limits and reduce their emissions to meet certain levels by specified dates. Fuel economy standards for motor pools and leased vehicles must average 36 mpg for passenger vehicles and meet fuel economy standards for vehicles purchased after 2010. Effective date: July 26, 2009

HB 2287 Conserving paper

Each state agency must implement a paper conservation and recycling program by July 1, 2010. By December 31, 2009, state agencies will be required to purchase 100 percent recycled content paper. Print projects that require the use of high volume production equipment must utilize the highest recycled content that can be utilized efficiently. Effective date: July 26, 2009

AGRICULTURE

SB 5350 Poultry permit provisions

Poultry specie producers can apply for a special permit to slaughter and directly sell poultry to the ultimate consumer on the producer’s farm. A one-year permit is \$75 and a two-year permit is \$125. The same health, sanitation, and inspection rules apply to both permits. Effective date: July 26, 2009

SB 5677 Dairy nutrient management

The State Department of Agriculture has authority to inspect dairy farms for compliance with dairy nutrient management requirements rather than having to rely on the statutory authority of the Department of Ecology. If access is denied, authority is provided to apply to court for a search warrant. The time period for maintaining records of nutrient applications is extended from three years to five years. Effective date: July 26, 2009



SB 5839 Administration of irrigation districts

Irrigation districts can contract or form separate agreements with public and private entities in order to purchase and sell power as well as develop and own power generating and transmitting facilities. Effective date: July 26 2009

JUDICIARY

HB 1517 Felon voting rights

A convicted felon’s right to vote can be restored if restitution has been paid, legal obligations have been met and he is no longer under the authority of the Department of Corrections (DOC), such as serving a jail sentence or in community custody. The right to vote may be permanently restored by a certificate of discharge or court order from the sentencing board, a final order of discharge from the indeterminate sentence review board, or a certificate of restoration from the Governor. Effective date: July 26, 2009

HB 1138 Access to restrooms

Retail businesses that have employee-only restrooms must allow customers to use them during business hours if the customer has a medical condition such as Crohn’s disease, ulcerative colitis, other inflammatory bowel diseases, or any condition that requires immediate access to a restroom. The customer must provide evidence of the condition in writing, and meet one of the following: (1) the employee restroom is reasonably safe and not located in a high-risk area; or (2) a security risk is not posed to the business. Effective date: July 26, 2009

HB 1362 Prostitution-related offenses

A vehicle used in a prostitution-related offense will be impounded if the person arrested has a previous conviction for a similar offense or if the violation is within a designated area. A \$500 fine must be paid before the vehicle is released from impoundment with funds going to the Prostitution Prevention and Intervention Account. Effective date: July 26, 2009

CORRECTIONS

SB 5166 Failure to pay child support

A responsible parent who has received notice that the parent’s license is going to be suspended for the failure to pay child support may request a hearing if the parent believes he or she has made a good faith effort to comply with the support order. If an Administrative Law Judge (ALJ) finds that a parent has made a good faith effort to comply with a support order, the ALJ may order a reasonable payment schedule instead of suspending the parent’s license. The Department of Social and Health Services is given more flexibility in formulating a payment schedule for the parent that takes into account the parent’s ability to pay. Effective date: July 26, 2009

SB 5261 Sex offender notification

The Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs (WASPC) has developed the Sex Offender Notification and Registration system (SONAR) for implementation in Washington. SONAR is designed to be a statewide data system that will:

- allow counties and the Department of Corrections to directly input sex offender information into the database so that updated information is immediately available to counties across the state;
- allow counties to utilize the system on their website to provide public access to local sex offender information as authorized by statute; and
- provide a notification system allowing citizens to request and receive notification regarding sex offenders who move within a given proximity. WASPC anticipates bringing most counties online by February of 2009. Effective date: July 26, 2009

HOUSING

SB 6033 Foreclosure program

The new PROOF program is a pool of unpaid, volunteer legal and financial professionals to help all residents in mortgage difficulties stay in their homes. The program is administered and staffed by the Housing Finance Commission with funds coming from state, federal, and private sources administered by the Department of Financial Institutions. Effective date: July 26, 2009

SB 5368 Property revaluation

My prime-sponsored bill requires all taxable property in the state be revalued each year in order to provide citizens accurate property values and more subsequently fair taxing rates. Effective date: July 26, 2009

CONSUMER PROTECTION

SB 5963 Unemployment insurance

Unemployment insurance benefits will be charged back to employers in the same amount that are paid out. The eligibility period for extended benefits is modified for emergency unemployment compensation. Effective date: July 26, 2009

HB 1127 Debit card information

Debit card receipts may only include the last five digits of the debit card number. Effective date: July 26, 2009

HB 1709 Payday lending

Consumers using payday loan are limited to borrowing \$700 at one time. The average payday loan is used for everyday expenses, not long-term emergency needs. A database is created to track how many loans a customer has. Effective date: July 26, 2009

SB 5340 Internet tobacco sales

My prime sponsored bill prohibits a person from shipping tobacco products, other than cigars, purchased by mail or through the Internet to anyone in Washington other than a licensed wholesaler or retailer. The cigarette delivery sale statute is repealed. Effective date: July 26, 2009

GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS

SB 5321 Renton annexation

Up to \$2 million in state funding will help offset annexation costs for the City of Renton and a couple of other cities that meet specific population requirements. When cities take on additional residents, property tax revenues sometimes fall short of costs needed to provide these new services. Cities can annex these areas, giving residents access to higher quality services. Annexation can be accomplished two different ways: a local vote by the people or residents can sign a petition. Effective date: July 26, 2009

SB 5599 Electing the President

Our state entered into the same national popular vote contract enacted by Hawaii, Illinois, Maryland, and New Jersey. This is an agreement to award the state's electoral votes to the presidential candidate who receives the most popular votes in the country as a whole. If enough signatures are gathered, this will be on the November ballot for voters to have final say. Effective date: July 26, 2009

SB 5688 Domestic partnership expansion

SB 5688 expands domestic partnerships to include using sick leave to care for a partner; pension benefits; workers' compensation coverage; and, the right to unemployment and disability benefits. Since the domestic partner registry was created in 2007, nearly 5,000 couples have registered. Effective date: July 26, 2009

VETERANS

SB 5035 Improving veterans' access

The Washington Department of Veterans Affairs (WDVA) will develop a five-year plan to identify all veterans in our state as the population changes. WDVA must improve referral methods and communication tools so veterans can be directed to available state and federal aid programs. A report is due back to the Legislature on January 1, 2010. Effective date: July 26, 2009

HB 1049 Veterans' relief

The definition of veteran for purposes of relief programs is expanded to include current members of the National Guard and Armed Forces Reserves who have been deployed to serve in conflict. Effective date: July 26, 2009

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

SB 5723 Small business assistance

The Small Business Development Council (SBDC) will work with specified state and local economic and workforce development organizations to integrate, target, coordinate, and tailor its services and to establish and expand satellite offices when financially feasible. The SBDC is required to submit a written final report on December 1, 2010, on accomplishments and outcomes of the act's directives. Effective date: July 26, 2009



HB 1290 Local tourism

Counties with populations greater than one million can form Tourism Promotion Areas (TPA) if two or more local governments agree to join together. A local government must contract with the Department of Revenue for collection of the hotel-motel tax. Effective date: July 26, 2009

HB 1701 High-speed internet

Prime-sponsored by Rep. Zack Hudgins, HB 1701 allows the Department of Information Services to conduct a survey of high-speed internet owned or leased by state agencies, create a geographic information system map of state controlled high-speed internet infrastructure, and conduct a competitive bidding process to obtain a geographic information system map of high-speed internet infrastructure, service availability, and adoption based on publicly available data. In carrying out mapping activities, federal trade secrets and privacy protections apply. Private information is to remain private and public information is to remain public. Effective date: July 26, 2009

SB 5391 Regulating body art industry

A license is now required to practice body art, body piercing, and tattooing. The Department of Licensing will develop minimum standards for body art, body piercing, and tattooing businesses. The Department of Health will set minimum safety and sanitation standards for practitioners. Effective date: July 26, 2009

OPERATING BUDGET

This year's \$31.4 billion operating budget, HB 1244, is comprised of mostly reductions in programs to balance the state's historic shortfall. With the housing market crash, international trade issues, and a huge decrease in consumer spending, our state's deficit increased to over \$9 billion in 8 months. Following are highlights of HB 1244:

- Program and public employee compensation cuts: \$4.3 billion
- Use of federal stimulus funds: \$3 billion
- Public employees and teachers: up to 8,000 layoffs
- All management and staff salaries frozen for one year
- State contributions to pensions reduced
- The Basic Health Plan: 40,000 slot reduction
- Medicare Part D premium support and adult vision retained
- In-home adult day health services reduced
- Nursing homes: 4 percent reduction
- Average school district: 2.6 percent reduction
- Initiative 728 (class size reduction) and Initiative 732 (teacher raises) suspended
- Colleges and universities: 9,028 enrollment slot reduction

SB 5995 Elimination of certain boards and commissions

In an attempt to eliminate unnecessary state costs, SB 5995 establishes an intent section that states that the Legislature, during interim, will identify criteria to evaluate advisory boards, committees, and commissions that may be eliminated or consolidated. Eighteen boards and committees are eliminated including Adult Family Home Advisory Committee, Firearms Range Advisory Committee, Pest Management Coordinating Committee, and the Sexual Offender Treatment Providers Advisory Committee. Effective date: July 26, 2009

HB 1694 House supplemental budget

HB 1694 passed early in session to cut costs for the remaining budget biennium ending June 30th and saved the state roughly \$400 million. Effective date: July 26, 2009

CAPITAL BUDGET

The capital budget, SB 5222, is 29 percent smaller than previous years for two reasons: loss of state revenues and the transferring of \$743 million to the operating budget to help with the overall deficit. This budget covers all K-12 construction commitments and the most critical higher education projects statewide, including three new buildings essential for our economic future: a Molecular Engineering Building at the University of Washington and a Global Animal Health Building and a Biomedical Sciences Facility at Washington State University.

11th district capital projects:

- Renton Small Business Center: \$50,000
- Renton Hawks Landing project: \$1.7 million
- Glendale Elementary School-Beverly Park safe soil remediation: \$30,000

THANKS TO OUR 2009 SENATE PAGES

Each legislative session, I look forward to sponsoring local students as Senate pages. They must be at least 14 years old and not yet 17. Pages perform a variety of important tasks such as delivering information to Senate offices and working in the Senate chambers. For more information, visit: <http://www.leg.wa.gov/senate/administration/pageprogram/>

*Rebecca Clayton,
Komachin Middle School*



*Heather Brown,
Home Schooled*



*Miranda Sita,
Aviation High School*



*Alison Wood,
Kent-Meridian High School*



*Jeffery Marks,
Highline High School*



TRANSPORTATION

The transportation budget, SB 5352, provides \$4.3 billion in funding for over 400 projects statewide. These projects are primarily funded by the state gas tax that is constitutionally dedicated to building, maintaining and operating state highways and ferries. This budget helps to jump start the economy and create jobs.

Major highway projects

- I-405 Corridor Projects
- I-90/Snoqualmie Pass East
- SR 395 North Spokane Corridor
- I-5/Tacoma HOV Improvements
- SR 520/Bridge Replacement and HOV
- SR 99/Alaskan Way Viaduct Replacement
- Purchase of 4 ferry vessels

11th district transportation projects

- Strander Blvd/SW 27th St Connection: \$3.65 million
- Lander Street Rail Crossing
- SR 99/S 138th St Vicinity to N of S 130th St: \$709,000
- SR 99/Spokane St Bridge - replace bridge approach: \$2.05 million
- SR 99/14th St Interchange - illumination rebuild: \$2.279 million
- SR 167/S 180th St to I-405 - southbound widening: \$3.135 million

Alaskan Way Viaduct

SB 5768 limits the amount of state funding for a deep-bore tunnel at \$2.4 billion and must include \$400 million in toll revenue for the state. Although I am supportive of refurbishing or replacing the existing viaduct, it is important to protect our state dollars against future unforeseen costs. On January 13th of this year, the Governor, City of Seattle, and King County agreed to a deep bore tunnel design, with four general purpose lanes to replace the Viaduct. This bill was signed into law by the Governor.

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