



Senator Mike Carrell

28th Legislative District

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Committees:

- Human Services and Corrections
- Health and Long-Term Care
- Judiciary
- Rules

Spring 2012

Dear Friends and Neighbors,

Because of the ongoing budget shortfalls, you haven't received many mailings from me in the past few years. I've been using a number of other cost-saving approaches, like frequent **telephone town halls and e-mail newsletters**. I've had as many as 2,400 people participate in several of my hour-long telephone town hall meetings, and more of you have continued to sign up for my "Kitchen Cabinet" e-mail newsletter in the past several years.

A special thanks to everyone in my Kitchen Cabinet advisory group for your feedback. Your real-time comments expressed through my online survey questions have been instrumental in helping me know what you are thinking on important issues. Both my telephone town hall meetings and Kitchen Cabinet e-mail updates often include survey questions, and **the technology allows me to share with you what your friends and neighbors are thinking in these surveys.**

If you're already a member then you're familiar with the information I send out that you can't get anywhere else. **If you haven't signed up yet, please take a few moments to visit www.SenateRepublicans.wa.gov/Carrell and become a member of my Kitchen Cabinet.** These Kitchen Cabinet updates and alerts contain information on developing issues at the state capitol and here in the 28th District.

You can always contact me by e-mail or phone any time you have questions, concerns or comments. If you provide your phone number, I will personally call you back. It remains my honor and privilege to serve you in the Washington State Senate, and look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely

Mike Carrell
State Senator, 28th District

MY 2012 BUDGET PRIORITIES: Sustainability and controlled spending

We began the 2012 session in January facing a billion-dollar budget shortfall. My goals were to **adopt a budget that protects the most vulnerable** – the mentally ill, developmentally disabled and the medically fragile elderly – and **was sustainable in the future through a series of reforms**. To that end, I wanted to make sure that the two wards at Western State Hospital that the state was threatening to close remained open.

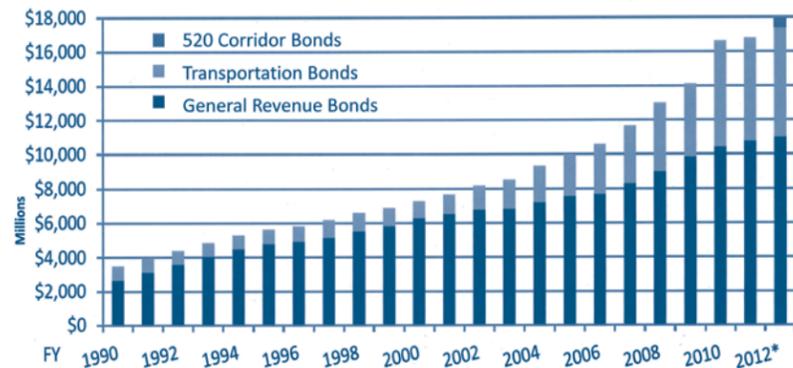
Thanks to a bipartisan Senate coalition of Republicans and Democrats, we were able to reach most of the goals we set out to accomplish this session. We felt that 20th century solutions simply weren't going to work for 21st century problems, and we stood firm by insisting that a final budget be **sustainable and implement long-term reforms**. That's why I joined 43 other senators in approving the final budget.

The budget we adopted:

- Balances the budget at the end of the biennium with no projected deficit for the next two years;
- Includes major reforms (pension reform, four-year balanced budget requirement, and school employee health insurance reforms) that will help us build a more sustainable future;
- Did not cut education or make major reductions in public safety (and I succeeded in saving Western State Hospital from the threatened ward closures); and
- Leaves nearly \$320 million in reserves.

As you can see, we were able to stop the fiscal bleeding of state programs instead of just slapping another Band-Aid on the problem and calling it a session.

Washington State Outstanding Debt



However, one area of state government that you should be concerned about is our growing debt. As you can see from the chart above, **Washington currently owes roughly \$18 billion in debt**. In the current operating budget, \$3.2 billion is allocated to debt repayment – an amount greater than what the state spends on community college education (\$2.6 billion) or corrections (\$1.7 billion).

You can see that in 1994, the state's outstanding debt was about \$4.5 billion. By 2004, it had doubled to \$9 billion, and by this year it had doubled again to \$18 billion. This is clearly the beginning of a steep "J" curve that threatens to put the state in a very precarious fiscal position. If the trend is to double the state debt every 8-10 years, then **by 2020 we will have more debt than the entire current operating budget!** This appears to be a completely unsustainable path that we are on, and I invite you to contact me with your thoughts on this matter.

A special thanks to our district's pages

Throughout the legislative session, several teens from our area have had the opportunity to serve as Senate pages for a week. The Washington State Legislature has one of the finest page programs in the country. Each year, hundreds of students throughout Washington State get to take part in the legislative process and observe state government in action.

Deelyn Cheng, Katherine Howard and Brielle Tuohy from Steilacoom High School, Homeschoolers **Stephen Kvamme** and **Lauren Brielle King**, and **Donnell Diego** from Curtis High School were all extremely helpful and it was an honor to work with them in Olympia!



Fighting fraud, waste and abuse in state programs

When my 2011 bill creating the new Office of Fraud and Accountability within DSHS was signed into law, one of the first areas the OFA would need to address would be the state-subsidized daycare program. This session, I introduced **Senate Bill 6386** to encourage the OFA to coordinate with the state auditor's office and the state Department of Early Learning to improve the prevention, detection and prosecution of fraudulent activity (among other welfare fraud issues). The bill passed both the Senate and the House of Representatives unanimously and will become law on June 7.

Another of my bills this session stemmed from the state's investigation into unethical behavior on the part of former Department of Corrections Communications and Outreach Director Belinda Stewart. Since the investigation began after my original ethics complaint in early 2011, four top-ranking officials at DOC and DSHS have resigned or were transferred.

Senate Bill 6009, which passed the Senate unanimously but did not receive a vote in the House, would have:

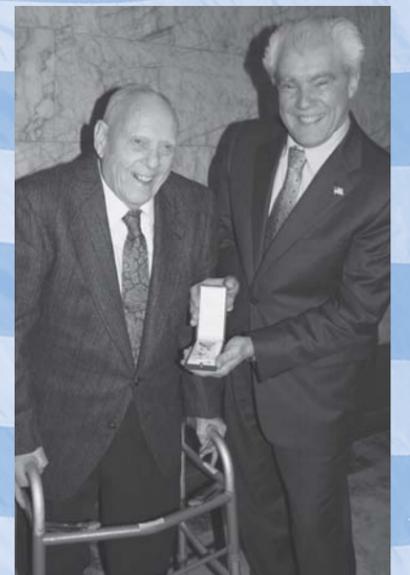
- Allowed the State Ethics Board to use the Office of the Attorney General or a contracted investigator to conduct or assist with investigations;
- Required state agencies to terminate an executive-level state employee in cases where an ethics board makes specific findings that it designates a serious violation (as it did in the Belinda Stewart case);
- Required state agencies to designate an ethics advisor or advisors to provide informal ethics advice to state officers and employees and to ensure uniformity in the agency's operations with respect to the ethics in public service law; and
- Required state officers and employees to attend ethics training approved by the appropriate ethics board within one month of taking office or employment, and at least every two years thereafter.

Management-level state employees should be held to a high standard and any questionably unethical behavior should not be tolerated. This issue will be pursued again next session.

Another 28th District World War II hero honored by State Senate

On March 6, members of the Washington State Senate stood proudly and applauded after adopting **Senate Resolution 8705**, honoring World War II veteran Douglas Elms for his courageous action and heroism. Elms, a Tacoma resident and native Washingtonian, enlisted in the Army in 1938 as a private

Elms was named **Chevalier of the Legion of Honor** by French President Nicolas Sarkozy on December 7, 2011. You might recall another French Legion of Honor recipient from our district who was honored a few years ago. In 2007, Chris Navarre (one of our neighbors who lives at Patriot's Landing in DuPont with his wife, Bernice) was also named a Chevalier of the Legion of Honor for his efforts during WWII. Chris served as a tank gunner with the 761st Black Panther Tank Battalion, and spearheaded several attacks that allowed General Patton's 4th Armored Division to drive into Germany. He fought elements from 14 different German divisions in the drive across the Rhine River.



first class and served in the anti-tank company of the 424th Regiment of the 106th Infantry Division. Their mission was to defend a part of the Allied front line in the Ardennes Forest of France in what would later be called the Battle of the Bulge, and Elms took part in what was recorded as one of the greatest strategic Allied successes of the war in Europe.

Elms battled relentlessly to save the lives of more than two-dozen men of the 112th Regiment during that battle, and fought with his company for almost forty consecutive days without enough food, minimal shelter and a severe lack of manpower, to defend against the encroaching Nazi forces. Tacoma, the 28th District and the state of Washington are humbled to have such a man call this his home.

A great debt is owed these gentlemen and we are honored to have them, along with all military servicemen and women in the 28th District, as our neighbors.

Preserving the history in our backyard

Recently, officials at Western State Hospital considered a plan to expand parking onto the parade grounds at Fort Steilacoom in Lakewood. However, paving over the old parade grounds at the fort would have desecrated an important and unique part of Washington State History.

Fort Steilacoom was established by the United States Army in 1849. One of the first cross-state roads in Washington (then Washington Territory) was a military road stretching from Fort Walla Walla to Fort Steilacoom, then the first US Army settlement on the Puget Sound. **Hundreds of troops were reviewed by their commanding officers on those parade grounds during the fort's active years until 1868.**

In the past, I've made it my duty to protect iconic pieces of our state's storied past, such as helping to restore the dynamite train in DuPont, fighting an idea to sell Fort Steilacoom Park to build condos, securing funding to repair the roofs on the fort's historic buildings, helping to preserve the historic red barns that used to be part of Western State Hospital, and others. I believe all of us have a responsibility as stewards of Washington State history to protect areas like this, which is why I wrote a letter to the



CEO of Western State Hospital asking him to find a new staff parking solution that wouldn't destroy part of our state's history.

In a return letter, CEO Jess Jamieson stated that the paving project had been abandoned in favor of a new focus on pedestrian safety on hospital grounds, leaving the fort's parade grounds intact. **My thanks go out to Jamieson and others who were instrumental in helping to preserve state history.**

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