

# Senator Craig Pridemore

WASHINGTON STATE SENATE

49th LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT

SPRING 2012

Dear Neighbors:

I want to deeply thank you for the eight years you've chosen to let me represent you as the state senator from the 49th district. I've been honored to provide that service in a variety of roles within the Senate.

As vice chair of the Senate Environment, Water & Energy Committee, I had the opportunity to assert my concern for the environment and author the piece of legislation of which I am most proud — Senate Bill 6428, which established Washington's recycling program for electronic products ranging from TV sets to computers to monitors. Today it's easy to recycle electronics products; it wasn't when I entered the Legislature. This is a legacy that I will be proud of in years to come.

As vice chair of the Senate Ways & Means Committee, I've written budgets that affect the lives of everyone across our state. My experience in private-sector and county finances helped greatly there and in my roles on the state Revenue and Forecast Council and the Joint Legislative Audit & Review Committee, both as a member and as chair.

Most recently, I embraced the challenges presented by chairing the Senate Government Operations, Tribal Relations & Elections Committee for the past two sessions. It was my responsibility to run a committee that routinely hears the most, and the most varied, number of bills that move through the Legislature. Hearing and acting on that much legislation requires cooperation from all concerned, so I made it my goal from the start to run the most nonpartisan committee in the Legislature. And from all accounts, we were very successful.

More than anything, though, I'm obliged to you for the confidence you placed in me and your trust in allowing me to represent you.

I hope, as you sit here today, that you feel it was a wise choice.

Sincerely,



Sen. Craig Pridemore  
49th Legislative District



## Stay in touch!

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- Ways & Means
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## 2012 Legislative Session Update

Closing the state's revenue shortfall and balancing the budget was rightly the primary focus of the 2012 regular and special legislative sessions, but we didn't get there nearly as efficiently as we could have. To be blunt, the 31 days of special session were unnecessary and merely a consequence of the Republicans' takeover of the Senate floor six days from the close of the regular session.

This is evident when you compare either of the Republicans' budget proposals to what the Legislature ultimately passed, which did not include anything significantly different from what was in the Senate Democrats' proposed budget prior to the Republican takeover. All the takeover did was force us to work an extra 31 days to get to the same place.

When it was all said and done, I was pleased that the budget protects K-12 and higher education from further cuts and preserves family planning, food assistance and the Disability Lifeline that is so vital to so many of our most vulnerable residents.

For all the drama surrounding the budget battles, the Legislature also made headway in other important areas I'd like to highlight for you. Except where specifically noted, these are all bills I strongly supported because they position our state and our communities for healthier futures; where I opposed a bill, I explain why.

**Marriage Equality** — I was proud to vote to pass SB 6239 to allow marriage between same-sex couples here in Washington state. This precious right had long been denied to many of our neighbors and family members for no good reason, and I'm glad to put that sad history of discrimination behind us. The legislation provides an exemption and immunity for religious organizations, religiously affiliated educational institutions and ministers, priests, imams, rabbis and similar officials of religious organizations.

**Tribal Jurisdiction** — In another fairness issue, HB 2233 establishes a procedure by which the state may retrocede to the federal government criminal or civil jurisdiction over federally recognized Indian tribes located in the State of Washington, upon the request of the tribe, and requires the state to retain the civil jurisdiction necessary for the civil commitment of sexually violent predators.

**State Government Procurement** — An efficiency measure, HB 2452 reforms the process for procuring goods and services across state government. Rep. Sharon Wylie, my seatmate, deserves strong credit for working this legislation through the House.

**Discover Pass Reform** — In response to citizen comments, HB 2373 makes the Discover Pass for our state parks transferable between two vehicles and creates a new Family Discover Pass to make the passes easier to use and increase revenues to keep our parks open.

**Implementing the Affordable Care Act** — To further the state implementation of federal health care reforms, HB 2319 creates a health exchange marketplace that will make



*Sen. Pridemore speaks during a committee hearing.*

it possible for 300,000 or more residents and small business employees to obtain coverage.

**Higher Education Efficiencies** — HB 2585, which eliminates a series of administrative regulations that have proven costly and unnecessary to universities and colleges, is a terrific reform. For the University of Washington alone, savings from the bill could exceed \$1 million.

**Child Abuse Reporting** — SB 5991 extends the mandatory reporting of child abuse and neglect to administrative, athletic and academic personnel in institutions of higher education, including student employees, to help prevent a Penn State-type scandal from happening here.

**Online Identity Theft** — HB 1652 lets victims of online identity impersonation sue for damages when someone has electronically impersonated them for the purpose of harassing, threatening, intimidating, humiliating or defrauding the other person.

**Vehicular Homicide** — HB 2216 raises the seriousness level for the crime of vehicular homicide while driving under the influence of alcohol, more than doubling the standard sentence range to 78 to 102 months for a violator with no prior offenses.

**DUI with Child in Vehicle** — HB 2302 increases certain requirements, penalties, enhancements and sentences for driving while under the influence of drugs or alcohol with a child under the age of 16 in the vehicle.

**Sex Trafficking** — SB 6251 establishes the crime of Advertising Commercial Sexual Abuse of a Minor for publishing adult escort advertisements featuring minors and provides a defense for publishers who can document a bona fide attempt to determine the age of the person featured in the advertisement. SB 6253 authorizes civil forfeiture actions on the proceeds of, or the property used to commit the crimes of, Commercial Sexual Abuse of a Minor, Promoting Commercial Sexual Abuse of a Minor, or Promoting Prostitution in the first degree.

**Short Sales, Foreclosures and Voided Trustee Sales** — HB 2614 updates the Foreclosure Fairness Act by

protecting homeowners who lose their homes due to mistakes in the foreclosure process or who agree to a short sale of a home by requiring lenders to notify sellers within three years if they intend to go after the remaining debt on their homes.

**Reproductive Parity Act** — HB 2330 did not pass, unfortunately. I was a strong supporter of this legislation because it would have protected women's health by requiring health plans that provide coverage for maternity care to also provide coverage to permit the voluntary termination of a pregnancy.

**K-12 Health Benefits Merger** — I strongly opposed SB 6442 and was saddened by its eventual passage in another piece of legislation. This problematic legislation is likely to increase costs at the local level and represents a first step in the state taking over more of the K-12 system that is better left to local school boards.

**Failures on the health care front** — I was disappointed that HB 2228 did not pass, as it would have allowed practitioners, pharmacists, medical facilities, drug manufacturers

and drug wholesalers to donate prescription drugs and supplies to pharmacies for redistribution to individuals who are low income and uninsured. I was likewise frustrated by the Senate's failure to pass SB 6309, which would have required rest breaks for nurses and other staff, improving patient safety. If anyone needs regular breaks, it's the nurses and other staff whose alertness affects others' health care and could truly mean the difference between life and death.

**Theater Beer and Wine Licenses** — Last but not least, I was sorry to see the failure of HB 2558, sponsored by Rep. Jim Moeller in the House (I sponsored the companion legislation in the Senate). This bill, which would have allowed certain movie theaters to serve alcohol to legal-age customers, died when Republicans called the Senate to the Ninth Order and locked up floor action on all but five measures on the final day for passage of bills from opposite chambers during the regular session. This was just one of numerous bills important to southwest Washington that died that night as a result.

## Legislation that continues to pay off for the 49th

As I hope will be apparent, my votes and support of bills this year are consistent with legislation I have sponsored while representing the 49th District.

I'm most proud of Senate Bill 6428, which lets folks turn in old TV sets, computers and monitors at no expense to themselves to be recycled instead of dumped in landfills, where their toxic components would contaminate our groundwater. This program has so far resulted in the diversion of more than 100 million pounds of electronic waste from landfills and has proven so effective that it is being duplicated across the country and in other countries, including Canada, Brazil and among the European Union.

In my very first year in the Senate, I amended HB 1386 to allow county commissioners to assess a \$1 document recording fee to support programs that preserve history. I spotted the need for this during my prior service as a Clark County commissioner, and since its passage this option has been widely used to the benefit of local communities across the state.

I take strong pride in creating the Working Families Tax Credit, which was the only tax relief bill for working people that passed the Legislature in my eight years here. Passed in 2008, SB 6809 lets working families qualify for an earned-income tax credit and receive refunds in sales tax payments. Unfortunately, due to our ongoing economic difficulties, we have not been able to fund and implement this program. I look forward to the day when we can.

In 2007, my SB 6001 established one of the first greenhouse gas emissions caps in the country and specifically blocked construction of two new coal plants because they could not comply with the standard. This legislation set

the stage for closure of the Centralia coal burning plant, the single largest source of air pollution in our state, in 2025.

In 2005, my first year in the Senate, I sponsored the Senate version of legislation that ultimately passed the House that allows college freshmen and sophomores into Washington State University Vancouver instead of having to attend community college for two years and then transfer. In addition, I later sponsored legislation that enabled WSU to offer a doctorate program in nursing.

On multiple occasions through the years, I included budget provisos that boosted local infrastructure critical to our district's growth and prosperity. One of the most visible, now and as it progresses, is the redevelopment of the former Boise Cascade lumber mill into a mixed-use, commercial and residential development that will connect the Vancouver waterfront to our downtown. The overall project will house approximately 3,000 residents, create 2,500 jobs, and contribute to the city, state and county tax base.

I also steered funds that are helping to preserve history and create opportunities for community interaction by reconditioning and rehabilitating the Vancouver Barracks for transition from military use to civic uses, rebuilding the existing Visitors Center and rehabilitate the West Barracks Artillery Building.

Lastly, I secured tens of millions of dollars for initial studies, permit processes, public engagement, alternatives analysis, to set the stage for a project that will be critical to our future — the Columbia River Crossing. This urgently needed new bridge from Oregon to Washington will be the largest public works project in the history of southwest Washington and is essential to our regional vitality, particularly in these difficult economic times.

## Eight proud years of serving the 49th Legislative District

Dear Friends,

For eight years, I've been proud to serve you in the Senate and am grateful you gave me this opportunity. I can only hope I justified your faith in me.

This is the final newsletter you will receive from me. I write it with mixed feelings.

On one hand, I believe I have done everything I could within my legislative opportunities to further the interests of the 49th Legislative District and our state, and that it is time to move on. On the other hand, the 49th will always be my home. It's where I was raised and where I've worked for years to improve our community and opportunities for everyone who is a part of our community. Representing our district has been an honor and a vested interest; it's a rare privilege to have the opportunity to help shape one's own community so profoundly.

So in this, my final newsletter, I'd like to update you on the budget and other legislation this year, along with a recap of significant legislation I've supported during my time in the Senate and why I think it made sense then and makes sense now for our district and our state. I've tried to be consistent and hope you'll conclude that that is the case.

Thank you for trusting me to represent our district.

My Very Best Regards,



Sen. Craig Pridemore  
49th Legislative District

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