

# BAILEY BULLETIN



## Representative Barbara Bailey<sup>★</sup> 10th District

Dear friends and neighbors,

I hope this letter finds you well in the New Year.

The 2010 legislative session began on January 11 and is scheduled to run 60 days. A front and center issue for state lawmakers is the economy. Too many people have lost their jobs or are fearful that they could. This uncertainty continues to take its toll on our communities in different ways.

These difficult times have also brought financial problems to state government. Our state is facing a \$2.6 billion budget shortfall, which the governor and majority party in the Legislature say may be addressed by a federal bailout and raising taxes. I am against tax increases. State government should adjust to having less – just like families, individuals and employers have had to do.

Our state must use its challenges as an opportunity for real reform. This means building an economic foundation for the future and restructuring state government. I am promoting a plan that would create jobs through regulatory relief, health care reform and renewable, low-cost energy. I am also supporting efforts to prioritize state government by focusing on education, public safety and the protection of our most vulnerable citizens.

While you will hear a lot about the economy and budget from me this year, I continue to also work on other issues such as health care, education, public safety, and veterans' assistance. I welcome you to be a part of the process. Please contact me if you have ideas, would like to visit Olympia, or if I can ever be of assistance.

In closing, I would like to thank our law enforcement personnel and military, and their families. The last year was a difficult one, and my heart and prayers go out to those who put their lives on the line to protect our communities and freedom.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Barbara Bailey". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Rep. Barbara Bailey



**Office:**

406 John L. O'Brien Building  
P.O. Box 40600  
Olympia, WA 98504-0600

**Web site:**

[www.houserepublicans.wa.gov/Bailey](http://www.houserepublicans.wa.gov/Bailey)

**E-mail:**

[bailey.barbara@leg.wa.gov](mailto:bailey.barbara@leg.wa.gov)

**Phone:** (360) 786-7914

**Toll-free legislative hotline:**

1-800-562-6000

*If you would like to receive my e-newsletter, please send your e-mail address to me at [bailey.barbara@leg.wa.gov](mailto:bailey.barbara@leg.wa.gov) or give me a call*

# Representative **Barbara Bailey** • 10th District



*Rep. Bailey speaks about ferry issues on the House floor.*

## **RESPONSIBLE STATE SPENDING TAKING TAX INCREASES OFF THE TABLE**

State budget negotiations should begin with taking tax increases off the table. We simply cannot ask more from struggling families, individuals and employers who now have less.

We also need an open, honest discussion on how state government can sacrifice and become more efficient. While we have wonderful state employees, it is not fair that many will be getting pay increases this year and continue to receive rich health care benefits. There is a mentality in Olympia of preserving state government at all costs, when the emphasis should be on preserving private-sector jobs. Tax increases will only set our economy back further.

## **ESTABLISHING PRIORITIES OF STATE GOVERNMENT**

As assistant ranking member on House Ways and Means, the committee that writes the state budget, I am helping lead an effort to prioritize state government. It is not about what our state should cut, but rather establishing priorities and finding ways to do deliver programs and services more cost effectively.

For example, our state should not be

running insurance companies and liquor stores. If the private sector can provide a product, state government should get out of the way. Our state should also look at contracting out more services to save money.

We must establish a priorities of state government budgeting model, which we used in 2003, and focus on education, public safety and the protection of our most vulnerable citizens. This will lead to budget sustainability and ensure that core functions are properly funded.

## **ADDRESSING THE PENSION PROBLEM**

As a member of the Select Committee on Pension Policy, I am involved with issues facing our state's 15 pension plans. These plans pay life-time benefits to enrolled public employees from state and local governments that must be available to members when payments come due.

Skipped payments by the state and enhanced benefits have created unprecedented financial challenges for these plans. If the problems are not addressed soon, I fear an extra burden could fall on taxpayers.

We must ensure our state is financially responsible with employer contributions, keeps its promises to all members, and that all pension plans are financially sound. I am proposing legislation aimed at these goals.



## **HELPING VETERANS**

### **JOINT COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' AND MILITARY AFFAIRS**

As a member of the Joint Committee on Veterans' and Military Affairs, I have the opportunity to be involved with military issues at the state level. The purpose of this bipartisan committee is to introduce ideas, invite collaboration and eventually have legislation evolve.

I had the honor of chairing the last two hearings of this committee in October and December. With the help of external partners, some good bills are being considered in the Legislature that would impact:

- Washington soldiers home
- Veterans' lay-off and re-employment rights
- Veterans and overseas voters
- In-state tuition for active military stationed in Washington
- Military leave for public employees

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## **PRESERVING AND CREATING JOBS**

Too many employers – from small businesses to the Boeing Company – have closed their doors or relocated to other states. It has cost our communities jobs and brought hardships to families and individuals.

It is time for Olympia to be a part of the solution – not the problem. Unfortunately, business as usual in state government is preventing entrepreneurs and employers from reaching their potential.

I am supporting a plan that would shake up the status quo. The goal is to preserve and create jobs through regulatory relief for employers, true health care reform at the state level, and renewable, low-cost energy.

## **ASSISTING EMPLOYERS**

Over-reaching state regulations are burdening our employers with extra time and resources. Business owners are buried in bureaucratic paperwork at a time they are struggling to get by and retain employees.

We can help employers by ensuring more accountability from state agencies when it comes to rule-making and enforcement. Our state must also change definitions in its unemployment insurance system, allow choice in its workers' compensation insurance system and streamline its permitting process. These reforms would help employers with costs, time and certainty moving forward.

We must always remember that employers provide jobs and are customers of the state – not the other way around.

## **RENEWABLE, LOW-COST ENERGY**



Our state has been the envy of the nation for its renewable, low-cost energy. This economic advantage is being threatened by proposals that would increase the costs of energy.

I am supporting a balanced approach that would enhance renewable energy sources such as solar, wind and biomass. This can be accomplished through incentivizing innovation, as opposed to new regulations and taxes. Employers need the assurance of low-cost energy. We must enhance our energy supply, including renewable sources such as hydro, while not increasing its costs.



## **TRUE HEALTH CARE REFORM AT THE STATE LEVEL**

Lost in the national health care debate is the fact that much of what ails states can be directly addressed by states. Many of the problems facing our state originated when major changes were made to our health care system in 1993. We are still dealing with the aftermath of these so-called reforms today – including higher costs, fewer options, and an unsustainable state-run Basic Health Plan.

I am supporting solutions that would lower costs, increase access and repair the state's safety net for vulnerable citizens. They are based on preserving what is working well in our health care system, and fixing what is broken. Five of the solutions include:

- Offering small employers and self-employed individuals with a tax credit for providing health insurance.
- Providing more health insurance options that meet the needs and budgets of small employers.

- Letting Washingtonians choose from a variety of health insurance offered in other states.
- Allowing health insurance specifically designed for young adults ages 19 to 34.
- Preventing health care lawsuit abuse.

These solutions are not popular in all corners of Olympia because they are market-based and lead our state away from a government-run health care system. However, it is absolutely necessary we break down government barriers, protect our freedoms, and limit government growth when it comes to health care.

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## Tele-Town Hall Meeting

### PLEASE JOIN ME IN A TELE-TOWN HALL MEETING

I would like to invite you to participate in my tele-town hall meeting **Tuesday, February 2**. The call will begin at **7:00 p.m.** and last an hour. This format allows you to participate from the comfort of your own home. Please call **1-877-229-8493** and enter **15431**. I hope you can join us.



*If you would like to receive my e-newsletter,  
please send your e-mail address to me at  
[bailey.barbara@leg.wa.gov](mailto:bailey.barbara@leg.wa.gov) or give me a call*

P.O. Box 40600  
Olympia, WA 98504-0600

Representative  
**Barbara Bailey**

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