

Representatives  
**J.T. Wilcox &  
Andrew Barkis**  
P.O. Box 40600  
Olympia, WA 98504-0600

## 2016 LEGISLATIVE REVIEW

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State  
Representatives  
**J.T. Wilcox  
&  
Andrew  
Barkis**



**Keeping in  
touch throughout  
the year**

This is the final newsletter we can send out for 2016 since it is an election year. We also cannot send out email updates. Fortunately, we are allowed to respond to constituents who contact us. If you ever have feedback or questions, please contact us using the information on the front of this letter.

# 2016 LEGISLATIVE REVIEW

## State Representatives J.T. Wilcox & Andrew Barkis

### 2<sup>nd</sup> Legislative District

#### REPRESENTATIVE

#### J.T. WILCOX

House Republican Floor Leader

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#### COMMITTEES:

- Appropriations (Assistant Ranking)
- Finance
- Rules



#### REPRESENTATIVE

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#### COMMITTEES:

- Business and Financial Services
- Local Government



**TOLL-FREE HOTLINE:  
1-800-562-6000**



*Dear Friends and Neighbors,*

*The legislative session adjourned on March 29, after a 60-day regular session and 20 days of special session. Though it took more time than expected, we passed a true supplemental budget.*

*The supplemental budget addresses wildfire recovery, and invests in education and mental health services. Most importantly, it balances over the next four years as required by state law and did not include the major tax increases proposed by the governor and House Democrats.*

*Finally, there's a new member of your legislative team: Rep. Andrew Barkis. Rep. Barkis was appointed to the Legislature in February by the Thurston County Commission and Pierce County Council. His experience as a small-business owner and years of involvement in community organizations make him a strong advocate for the 2nd District. You can read more about Rep. Barkis inside.*

*Sincerely,*

J.T. Wilcox  
State Representative

Andrew Barkis  
State Representative

#### 2016 SUPPLEMENTAL BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS

##### K-12 EDUCATION

- \$5.2 million for the Beginning Educator Support Team (BEST) program and paraeducator certification.
- \$4.2 million to keep public charter schools open and operating in Washington.

##### HIGHER EDUCATION

- \$7.8 million for reimbursement to state colleges and universities for last year's historic tuition cuts.
- \$18 million to maintain state need grant funding with the College Bound program.

##### MENTAL HEALTH

- \$2 million for expanding the number of mobile crisis teams.
- \$6.8 million for additional state hospital registered nurses at Western State Hospital.

##### HEALTH CARE

- \$4.3 million for health home services.
- \$29 million for home health care individual provider overtime.

##### WILDFIRE RECOVERY

- \$190 million for wildfire suppression costs related to the 2015 wildfire season.



State Representative  
**J.T. Wilcox**

# 2016 LEGISLATIVE REVIEW

State Representative  
**Andrew Barkis**



## HOLDING STATE GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABLE

I have serious concerns about how the executive branch is operating state government. Two areas of particular concern are the Department of Corrections (DOC) and our mental health system.

The early release of 3,200 prisoners by DOC is unacceptable. It is not just a political scandal, it's a public safety issue and we must hold those

responsible accountable. Officials in the executive branch have known about this for at least three years and delayed correcting the problem many times. This information was either ignored, mishandled or suppressed at the highest levels until December. This is a cause for great concern.

The current state of our mental health system simply is not good enough. It is a human tragedy that affects families and communities. The governor requested large increases in funding last year and as the session developed, the Legislature funded those requests and added funds for additional capacity. Unfortunately, as this plan was implemented at the executive level, the problem has gotten worse. The state is now threatened with the loss of certification at Western State Hospital and the additional funding capacity has been poorly implemented.

It is the governor's job to operate most state agencies, however the Legislature must step in if operations threaten the public.

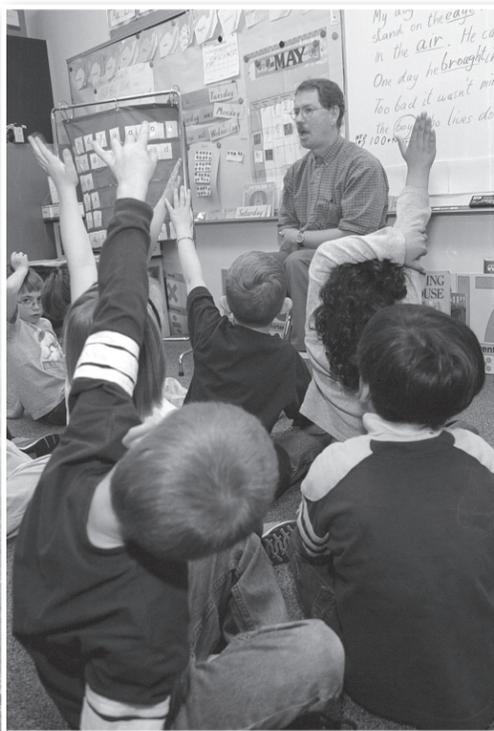


## SAVING WASHINGTON'S PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOLS

When the House took up a bill to save the eight public charter schools serving students across the state, the debate was vigorous and healthy. Thanks to 48 disciplined and motivated Republicans and a handful of Democrats, House Republicans controlled the floor in order to pass this bill, which was opposed by a strong majority of Democrats.

House Democrats proposed 27 amendments. Although several were out of scope and object, we chose an open debate rather than attempting to squash them. House Republicans and their Democratic allies accepted more than one-third of the remaining amendments, showing that we are committed to listening to the other side and improving legislation.

The governor did not sign the bill, but it became law on April 2 due to provisions in our state constitution. It is disappointing the governor ignored the will of the people, but I'm glad we solved this issue for students and families.



It is an honor and privilege to serve as your 2nd District representative. This opportunity is the fulfillment of a lifelong dream of mine in being of service as a member of this historic body. My leadership, experience and involvement in our communities, both as a business owner and citizen, combined with my passion for public policy, allows me to dive into the current issues and make good, informed decisions that matter most to our district.

## MY PRIORITIES CENTER ON LIMITED, BUT EFFECTIVE GOVERNMENT THAT IS FOCUSED ON:

- Fiscal responsibility;
- Creating new job opportunities;
- Fostering small business growth; and
- Meeting our paramount duty to fully fund K-12 education.

We are working hard to change the culture in Olympia by focusing on reform, regulatory issues and no major increases in spending or taxes. Through exemplary leadership, we are moving away from everything being a crisis to the ability of solving problems. We continue to find commonalities and compromise to achieve a fundamental, solution-oriented change to better serve the people of Washington state. Our accomplishments this session include:

- Saving our public charter schools;
- Passing a supplemental operating, transportation and capital budgets;
- Giving pay increases for Washington State Patrol troopers; and
- Enacting the Washington Cybercrime Act.



## SUPPLEMENTAL OPERATING BUDGET

Unfortunately after all the hard work during session, we were immediately called into a special session over disagreements with the House Democrats' fiscally irresponsible supplemental operating budget. Supplemental budgets should make minor adjustments based on caseload changes and emergencies.

In the end, these criteria were met in the final supplemental budget even though House Democrats offered a spending package that was not sustainable. Their plan would have put more money into failing state agencies without reforms, drained the "rainy day" fund, gone backwards on funding K-3 classroom size reductions, raised taxes by \$120 million, and ignored the four-year balanced budget requirement.

Their strategy missed the mark. With revenue forecasts coming in lower than anticipated, fiscal responsibility must be at the forefront of the budget process. Budgets aren't just about numbers. They reflect the values we believe should be upheld in financing our obligations responsibly rather than growing the size of state government.

I look forward to getting out and about to meet and interact with you. I welcome you to share your thoughts on the issues covered in this newsletter, and any other issues important to you, your family, and your business. Please don't hesitate to contact me using the information on the front of this newsletter.

It is an honor to serve you.

