Let me be clear: Our natural gas plant is one of the cleanest burning, most efficient electrical plants in the country. It is the specific kind of plant recommended by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to oppose proposals from the Governor’s office to implement a carbon tax and increase clean air standards higher than the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) requires. This would have negatively impacted the Clark County PUD natural gas plant and, under the Governor’s proposal, be considered “dirty” energy.

We also passed legislation to expand telemedicine and family medical residency opportunities in high-demand areas. This session, we strengthened our mental health system by improving access to and delivery of critical services. We also passed legislation to expand child care facilities. Many do not realize how unregulated this industry has been and the danger these products pose to our children.

Improving our health care system

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Preserving low-cost, clean energy

During the last biennium, I worked with our local Clark County Public Utility District (PUD) to oppose proposals from the Governor’s office to implement a carbon tax and increase clean air standards higher than the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) requires. This would have negatively impacted the Clark County PUD natural gas plant and, under the Governor’s proposal, be considered “dirty” energy.

Let me be clear: Our natural gas plant is one of the cleanest burning, most efficient natural gas plants in the country. It is the specific kind of plant recommended by the EPA’s Clean Power Act to replace dirtier coal and oil plants. But our Governor wants to make it prohibitively more expensive by taxing our power and increasing the cost of natural gas plants in the country. It is the specific kind of plant recommended by the EPA’s Clean Power Act to replace dirtier coal and oil plants. But our Governor wants to make it prohibitively more expensive by taxing our power and increasing the cost of increasing the cost.

I will continue to advocate for smart energy policies, utilize our own home-grown hydroelectricity and natural gas, and oppose pet-project policies that would increase energy costs.

As the assistant ranking member on the House Health Care and Wellness Committee, I concentrate a lot of my efforts on health care issues. On the final day of the 2016 session I was very pleased we passed a bill that will help keep a trophy and vapor products out of the hands of our young people. While I wanted more safety and vapor products out of the hands of our young people. While I wanted more safety and vapor products out of the hands of our young people. While I wanted more safety and vapor products out of the hands of our young people. While I wanted more safety and vapor products out of the hands of our young people. While I wanted more safety and vapor products out of the hands of our young people.

Health care costs limit patient access to care. We can draw down costs by reducing government mandates on health insurance and expanding patients' care options.

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Analizing the supplemental operating budget

In even-numbered years, such as 2016, state lawmakers make midcourse adjustments to the operating budget. These changes are represented in the Supplemental Operating Budget, which is based on current technical errors, and paying for emergencies.

The House Democrats had a different approach in mind, including new tax increases, not accounting for K-3 class-size reductions, tapping the rainy-day fund for non-emergencies, and abandoning the four-year balanced budget requirement. Fortunately, a bipartisan solution was found this year.

The final supplemental operating budget passed by the Legislature did not raise taxes, kept K-12 sizes, froze reductions, only used the rainy-day fund in years for our demands of reducing class sizes, and abandoning the four-year balanced budget requirement. Fortunately, they finally realized on these unrealistic demands during the special session.

Voting “no” on the transportation package

Governor Inslee signed SB 6194, the transportation package, on July 1, 2015. The package included a 7-cent state gasoline tax increase and a 9.5-cent state gas tax increase in 2016, to help fund transportation projects. A lot of the money went to Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) and Sound Transit. Many were opposed to this package, arguing that it did not go far enough to provide transportation project costs would be reduced and WSDOT would be held accountable. Finally, it was simply not a good deal for the people we represent. The resolution, enacted, would not end the possibility of future tax increases. Rather, it would require any such proposals to have broad-based support from the public to pass.

Making it harder to raise taxes is a good thing. The resolution, if enacted, would not end the possibility of future tax increases. Rather, it would require any such proposals to have broad-based support from the public to pass. Making it harder to raise taxes is a good thing.

Supporting the victims of domestic violence

Sadly, too many families in our communities are forced to endure domestic violence. There were nearly 50,000 reports of domestic violence incidents in 2014 – 70 percent of these reports involved physical violence, and nearly 18 percent of reports involved sexual assault. We must end the violence and help those who find themselves in, or recovering from, these terrible situations.

I was recently appointed to the bipartisan Joint Administrative Rules Review Committee (JARRC). This committee’s general rules written by state agencies are following the intent of the laws passed by the Legislature. These rules have been the jurists. Many of these agencies have significantly overread their powers with these rules and regulations.

I sponsored a measure, House Bill 2554, which would have required JARRC to review a state agency every 10 years, rather than 16 years. It would have been a very good tool for our citizens, courts, and the Legislature to look for more and better oversight of these rules. Many of these rules arise from local governments and the building and transportation industry. It received a public hearing, but did not advance out of committee. State agencies must understand the rules and actions affect employers, local governments, and taxpayers. We need systems in place to ensure state government is working for us, not against us.

Respecting the rule of the voters on tax increases

The best way to increase tax collections is to reduce the state tax to its economic. Preparing and creating jobs, improving our business climate, and strengthening communities have been our legislative priorities since the day we entered office. Our bill sponsorships and voting records reflect these priorities.

It is also critical we protect the few economic advantages of our state – including our low income tax rate, competitive real property taxes, and our low utility access tax. These taxes will support the continued growth of the government. We will be keeping a keen eye on this as the program develops. Lastly, it leaves a mere $9 million in the ending fund balance.

We continue to oppose these ideas. Our state should live within its means. This is not the time to raise taxes on our citizens, ourselves, and our state agencies. It is time to respect the will of the voters on tax increases.

State Representative Lynda Wilson

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