

2016 Session in Review

Rep. Joel Kretz & Rep. Shelly Short

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

PRSR STD
US POSTAGE
PAID
SEATTLE, WA
PERMIT NO. 1885

STATE REPRESENTATIVES

Joel Kretz & Shelly Short

2016 SESSION IN REVIEW



Representative
Joel Kretz

Deputy Minority Leader
Committees: Agriculture and Natural Resources, Rules (Assistant Ranking Member)

CONTACT INFORMATION

Legislative Assistant: Daphne White-Hall
Olympia Office: (January – March)
335A Legislative Building
P.O. Box 40600
Olympia, WA 98504-0600
(360) 786-7988

District Office: (April – December)
240 Queen St.
P.O. Box 1177
Okanogan, WA 98840
(509) 557-6565

E-mail:
Joel.Kretz@leg.wa.gov
www.representativejoelkretz.com



Representative
Shelly Short

Caucus Chair
Committees: Environment (Assistant Ranking Member), Health Care and Wellness, Rules

CONTACT INFORMATION

Legislative Assistant: Jacquelin Maycumber
Olympia Office: (January – March)
427A Legislative Building
P.O. Box 40600
Olympia, WA 98504-0600
(360) 786-7908

District Office: (April – December)
147 North Clark Ave. Suite 5
P.O. Box 184
Republic, WA 99166
(509) 775-8047

E-mail:
Shelly.Short@leg.wa.gov
www.representativeshellyshort.com

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

HEARING-IMPAIRED HOTLINE: 1-800-635-9993



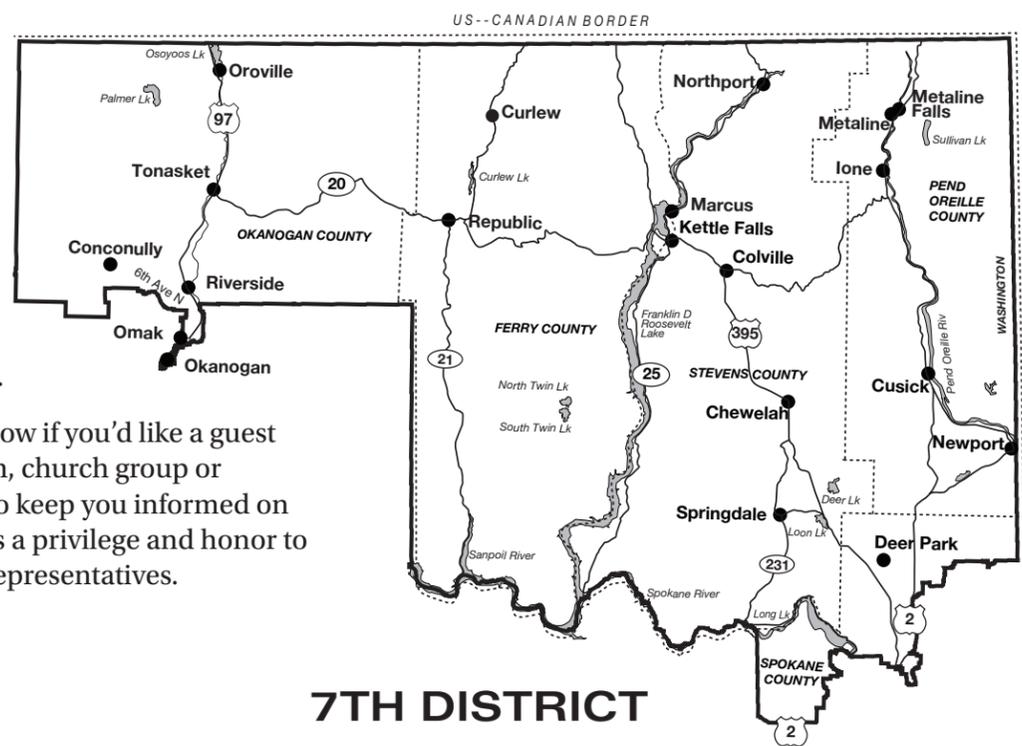
State Representatives Joel Kretz & Shelly Short

We want to thank you for your continued involvement in your state government. Your phone calls, e-mails and letters help us represent you in Olympia. We appreciate your support as we try to educate some on the West side of the state that Puget Sound policies don't always work in rural Washington.

Please stay in touch and let us know if you'd like a guest speaker at your civic organization, church group or community event. We're happy to keep you informed on what's happening in Olympia. It's a privilege and honor to serve you in the state House of Representatives.

Sincerely,

Joel and Shelly



7TH DISTRICT

Dear Friends and Neighbors,

The 2016 session and special session are over and we are excited to be back home in Northeast Washington. This year, some in Olympia again tried to raise taxes to increase the size and scope of state government, which resulted in another special session before they came to their senses.

However, we're happy to report the final supplemental budget does not raise taxes on you and only taps the state rainy day fund to pay for last year's wildfires (House Democrats wanted to use one-time money from the rainy day fund to give raises to government workers).

We're also pleased that a solution was found to keep our state's voter-approved charter school system alive and serving the needs of many of our students and parents. We also passed legislation that further spells out how the Legislature will meet the McCleary obligation to fully fund education in next year's budget.

We hope you find this 2016 session overview helpful. Please feel free to contact one of us with questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

Rep. Joel Kretz
7th Legislative District

Rep. Shelly Short
7th Legislative District

Inside:

- Voters want it to be difficult to raise taxes
- Holding government accountable
- Unelected bureaucrats say men can use girls' bathrooms and showers?
- Addressing wildfires and public safety
- Keeping our drinking water safe while helping rural development
- 7th District Representatives receive hunting awards



State Representatives Joel Kretz & Shelly Short



Voters want it to be difficult to raise taxes

Six times in the past 22 years, citizens have voted to require 2/3 of the House and Senate to agree before raising taxes. In each instance, either the courts or the Legislature has negated the will of

the people to kill this important taxpayer protection. We believe it's time for a constitutional amendment. This year, we supported House Joint Resolution 4215 and even tried a procedural move on the House floor to bring it up for an immediate vote, but were denied by majority Democrats.

Holding government accountable

Government, at all levels, needs to be held accountable. This session, the state Senate exercised its constitutional oversight authority by not confirming Transportation Secretary Lynn Peterson. There were just too many missteps and unanswered questions within WS-DOT to allow the status quo to continue.



In addition, the head of the Department of Corrections, Secretary Dan Pacholke, resigned as a result of his agency's early release of 3,200 inmates, resulting in the deaths of two innocent people. Again, holding state agencies accountable is part of our job as members of the legislative branch.

Unelected bureaucrats say men can use girls' bathrooms and showers?

We've heard from many of you with concerns over the Washington State Human Rights Commission's recent ruling allowing people to use whichever bathroom or locker room they choose. As you might imagine, there has been a state-wide uproar about this issue, and rightly so. Legislation was introduced to repeal this rule; however, the Democrat chair of the House Judiciary Committee did not hold a hearing on any legislation dealing with this issue. We doubt this is the end of this issue as rumblings of further legislation or initiatives persist.



Joel Kretz

Addressing wildfires and public safety

After the worst fire season on record in Okanogan County, we knew we needed to act this session to bring forward legislation to improve our forest health and reduce our risk of further catastrophic wildfires. Under Rep. Kretz's House Bill 2928, the Department of Natural Resources will conduct a forest resiliency burning pilot project. The goal of this project is to monitor and evaluate the benefits of forest resiliency burning and the impacts on ambient air quality.

Forest resiliency burning mimics the natural cycle of a wildfire and helps reduce the threat and fuels of a catastrophic fire. What most people don't realize is fire is essential for the natural health of our forests. Prescribed burning is a good forest management tool in conjunction with proper thinning methods. The thinning process creates space between trees to make it more difficult for fire to spread from tree to tree. Without proper forest thinning, when a wildfire occurs, the trees create a fuel ladder which leads to the catastrophic wildfires we have seen. Proper thinning methods and the prescribed burning process go hand-in-hand. One is not successful without the other. There are many tools in the forest management tool box and this legislation adds another tool to protect our forests and the environment, while avoiding devastating wildfires in the future.

This bill marks progress in our efforts to protect our forests and the environment, while avoiding devastating wildfires in the process. We want to thank everyone who put forth a huge effort, long hours, and many miles traveled to support the passage of this bill.

During any emergency, it is important to utilize as many resources as possible. A good example is during a catastrophic wildfire. It is essential to have all available public

2016 Session in Review

safety resources to assist with evacuation notices, road closures and other pertinent tasks.

One of our greatest resources is our park rangers. Most don't realize park rangers have limited authority to the areas of which they can perform law enforcement duties. This year, Rep. Kretz sponsored House Bill 2765 which will extend park rangers' law enforcement authority to state

roads within park boundaries and also within a one-mile radius outside a park's jurisdictional boundary.

The ability of our park rangers to respond and assist in the event of an emergency is paramount to ensuring public safety. This bill closes the gaps in our current system and we are pleased that it passed.



Shelly Short

Keeping our drinking water safe while helping rural development

Several years ago, the state Department of Health decided to no longer regulate Group B water systems, instead allowing local jurisdictions to approve them. However, the rules put in place by the department required more stringent standards than previously required.

In an effort to create a hybrid solution to protect our drinking water quality and to help rural development, Rep. Short worked with local officials and introduced House Bill 2061. This bill would have created a pilot project to allow certain rural counties to approve small-scale water systems based on the water delivered instead of the raw water source. She worked across the aisle and the rotunda to get broad bipartisan support in both the House and Senate. Unfortunately, Gov. Jay Inslee chose to trust state agencies more than locally elected officials who know the issues and problems we face in rural Washington. He vetoed the legislation.

We're disappointed in the governor's action but we're not done with this issue. We'll continue to work for solutions to help rural development that also keeps our water clean and safe.



7th District Representatives receive hunting awards

We were pleased to receive recognition this year for our work on behalf of hunters in our state. Rep. Kretz was inducted into the Hunters Heritage Council Hall of Fame and Rep. Short was awarded Legislator of the Year for our continued efforts in wildlife conservation and protecting hunting and gun rights.

The Hunters Heritage Council is Washington's largest hunting-rights organization with nearly 50 organizations representing 45,000 members advocating for hunting, fishing and wildlife conservation.

Those of us in rural Washington know hunting is part of our rural lifestyle and our economy. Not only do we have families who rely on hunting to consistently put food on their tables, we have hotels, diners, retail stores, guides, land owners and more who depend on hunters spending money in our area. The economic activity that results from a healthy, thriving hunting community benefits us all.

Whether it's managing our predators in a more efficient way or finding solutions to encourage the next generation of hunters, we'll continue to work hard to make sure hunting continues to be a successful, viable option for those who want to participate.

According to Hunting Works for Washington, a hunting advocacy group, hunting supports 5,600 jobs, creates over \$600 million annually in economic activity for Washington state, and generates approximately \$40 million in state and local taxes.