



REPRESENTATIVE

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REPRESENTATIVE

**Christopher
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Spring 2014



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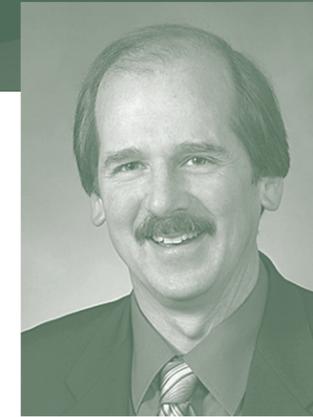
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Oversight (Chair)
Agriculture & Natural Resources
Business & Financial Services

Dear neighbor,

With the close of the 2014 Legislative Session in Olympia, we want to take this time to update you on the work we did on behalf of the citizens of the 31st Legislative District. The best part of the legislative session was getting our work done and coming back to our district and local communities to hear from you and help folks with constituent problems or concerns.

We are pleased to report that for the first time in recent years the Legislature got its work done on time and there were no special legislative sessions. Although the two of us work very well together as a team, that's not necessarily true of all of our other colleagues in the House and Senate in Olympia. As your State Representatives, we welcome the reduction in partisan bickering on the political landscape and greater collaboration.

We passed a bipartisan budget, enacted important public safety bills, put more money into education and continued to protect our most vulnerable citizens.

Our job is to bring the views and values of the citizens who elected us to the Legislature and fight to make sure those views are heard. Working together to turn your views and values into workable legislation is our goal.

Sincerely,

Cathy Dahlquist

Christopher Hurst



TRANSPORTATION

With all the talk of a transportation tax package this year, we were surprised that little movement was made on important transportation reforms. Prior to the taxpayers considering more revenue, it is important to ensure gas tax dollars are maximized and the Washington State Department of Transportation addresses the many costly mistakes (Bertha shutdown, faulty 520 Bridge pontoons—including cost overruns, and waste in the ferry system). The supplemental transportation budget approved continues to support many construction projects throughout the state and supports over 47,000 jobs in Washington state.

IN CONCLUSION

Governing is not an ongoing epic battle between good and evil or political parties. Governing is about rational representation, collaboration and getting effective results for everyone. As Americans, we are all in this together and we need to work as a team.

As your two State Representatives for the 31st Legislative District, that is our vision and how we represent you. Being from different parties should increase the opportunity for constructive discussion and debate rather than be an impediment to success. We respect your views and sincerely hope you like the work we are doing on your behalf.

If you have any issues that you would like to bring to our attention, please feel free to contact us.

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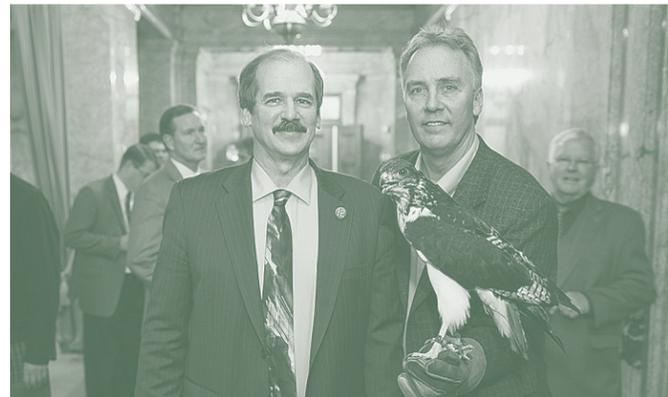


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SUPPLEMENTAL BUDGET

Every two years the Legislature passes a supplemental budget to make necessary changes to the two-year biennial operating budget. The bipartisan supplemental budget we passed this year increased funding for education without raising taxes. This budget left \$296.7 million in unrestricted reserves and \$583 million into our state's Rainy Day Fund. This is a fair and responsible budget focused on K-12 education, higher education, early learning, child care, long-term care, mental health and people with developmental disabilities. An additional \$59 million was invested in K-12 education, giving schools flexible funding for books, supplies and technology. The developmentally disabled community also gained 5,000 new slots for services to protect our most vulnerable. The final supplemental budget also put an additional \$5 million in funding to the State Need Grant and placed a freeze on college tuition increases,



Chris and the official Seattle Seahawks' mascot at the Capitol on the day the Legislature honored the Seahawks Super Bowl win.

which is great news for folks who have friends or family members headed off to college this year. We feel that educational opportunities are crucial to the success of the next generation and important to our overall economic future.

SUPPLEMENTAL CAPITAL BUDGET

One sad note from this session was the failure of the Senate to pass the supplemental capital budget, which passed almost unanimously in the House. This hasn't happened in 18 years. The biennial capital



budget pays for important infrastructure projects like flood control, prisons, water systems, waste water treatment plants and schools. This budget passed out of the House with a 92-4 vote yet Senators said this year's supplemental budget was unnecessary. We disagree.

One item in the capital budget that we passed out of the House but which failed in the Senate, was more funding for flood control projects that could have possibly helped prevent flooding and erosion events like the Oso mudslide in Snohomish County from happening here in the 31st Legislative District. Our public health and safety is put at risk when we don't keep our infrastructure in good condition.

EDUCATION



During a break in floor action, Cathy enjoys a conversation with the chair of the House Appropriations Committee.

The State Supreme Court has tasked the Legislature with fully funding K-12 education by 2018. This year, we made additional meaningful steps toward achieving that mandate. As stated earlier, the supplemental budget added an additional \$59 million on top of the \$15.1 billion we allocated in the 2013-15 biennial operating budget.

The House also passed a number of important bills to ensure our children are ready to learn, but unfortunately few of them made it through the

Senate. Bills like House Bill 2536 would have ensured our kids aren't learning on empty stomachs. Many of our state's less fortunate public school students are already eligible for free and reduced meals at school, but this program has left out the most important meal of the day—breakfast. As we work to meet our responsibilities of improving education, it's important to provide healthy and quality learning environments for our children. House Bill 2166 would have directed the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction to collect data on students from military families; these students often move from school to school but it is our job to ensure that they still receive the best education our state has to offer. We owe it to the children of our veterans and current service members who have defended our freedom with their lives.

We are hopeful we will be able to advance both these, and many more important bills, in coming sessions and meet the goal of fully funding a world class, quality education system by 2018.

PUBLIC SAFETY

One of our top priorities this year was to pass legislation to combat the theft of hard alcohol by juveniles from retail stores after the passage of the liquor privatization initiative in 2012. House Bill 2155 is legislation we sponsored which has been signed into law and will now hold retailers accountable if they allow liquor to get into the hands of those who are underage. Retailers who do not keep their spirits properly secured and out of the hands of kids will face sanctions up to, and including, the loss of their license to sell alcohol. This is an important public safety measure that will help protect all of us and reduce drunk driving fatalities and injuries related to juvenile alcohol abuse.

