

# 2014 Legislative Session

30<sup>th</sup> LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT



Federal Way Boys & Girls Club

## District office open house Tuesday, April 1

I would like to personally invite you to my district office open house on **Tuesday, April 1**, from **11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.** This is an opportunity for us to meet and share ideas. I have this office because I think it's important to have a local, convenient place to meet with the people I represent. Please consider stopping by on **April 1**. I look forward to seeing you.

## Weekly "coffee talks"

If you can't make it on April 1, I will also be hosting "coffee talks" in my district office every **Friday** from **11:00 a.m. to noon**. You are always welcome.



How to reach me:  
930 South 336th Street  
Suite A  
Federal Way, WA 98003  
linda.kochmar@leg.wa.gov  
Phone: (206) 429-2378  
Toll-free: 1-800-562-6000

Rep. Linda Kochmar  
30th District

Presort Std  
U.S. Postage Paid  
Olympia WA  
Permit # 92



REPRESENTATIVE  
LINDA KOCHMAR

## KEEPING IN TOUCH

**DISTRICT OFFICE:**  
(April - December)  
930 South 336th Street  
Suite A  
Federal Way, WA 98003

**PHONE:**  
(206) 429-2378

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

**TDD**  
(HARD OF HEARING):  
1-800-635-9993

**E-MAIL:**  
linda.kochmar@leg.wa.gov

**WEB PAGE:**  
representativelindakochmar.com

**HOUSE COMMITTEES:**

- Local Government  
Assistant Ranking Republican
- Business and  
Financial Services
- Technology and  
Economic Development
- Transportation
- Rules

# Linda Kochmar

STATE REPRESENTATIVE  
30<sup>th</sup> DISTRICT

Dear Friends and Neighbors:

The 60-day legislative session ended on March 13. It feels good to be back home full time and enjoying everything that our great community has to offer.

The 2014 legislative session included some successes and disappointments. One success was the passage of a supplemental operating budget that prioritizes education and our most vulnerable Washingtonians – without raising taxes. One disappointment was the Legislature's inability to do more to help struggling families and employers in this fragile economic recovery. I discuss these issues and others in this newsletter.

These weren't the only important issues state lawmakers looked at this year. We considered hundreds of bills and all of them meant something to someone. It's what makes our citizen Legislature so inclusive and interesting.

It's an honor to represent you and our community in the Washington State House of Representatives. While the legislative session is over, I'm your state representative year-round. I'm here to answer your questions, listen to your ideas and assist you with state government. Please consider attending my district office open house on April 1 or one of my "coffee talks" on Fridays. I look forward to hearing from you.

In your service,

Rep. Linda Kochmar



# 2014 Legislative Session

30<sup>th</sup> LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT

**Linda Kochmar**  
STATE REPRESENTATIVE

## Bipartisan supplemental operating budget focuses on education, most vulnerable

One of the most important responsibilities of the Legislature is to pass a state operating budget. This is the largest of the three state budgets and funds priorities such as K-12 education, higher education, health and human services, the state correctional system, debt service and other areas of state government.

In even-numbered years, such as 2014, state lawmakers make mid-course adjustments to the two-year operating budget passed the previous year. This is called a supplemental operating budget.

Due primarily to an improving economy and modest revenue growth, the Legislature was able to make some additional investments in the supplemental budget. I supported the final proposal because it prioritized: K-12 education; higher education; and long-term care, mental health and people with developmental disabilities.

This does not mean our work toward meeting the expectations of our state constitution and Supreme Court for K-12 education spending and reforms is done. We took a big step forward for our schools last year – and we will need to take another big step forward next year.



Valhalla Elementary School

## Transportation tax package, reforms

There was a push in Olympia to raise our state gas tax to pay for transportation projects. If it had passed, you would have had to pay around 10 cents more per gallon of gas.

Many communities across our state, including ours, have transportation infrastructure needs. These needs must eventually be met. How we go about meeting these needs is critically important.

Unfortunately, the high-profile failures of the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) have eroded our confidence in the state to deliver on previous gas-tax promises. We've seen problems with the Bertha tunneling machine, faulty pontoons for the S.R. 520 Bridge replacement and waste in our state ferry system. It's clear our scarce gas tax dollars are not always being used wisely.

It would be unfair for the Legislature to ask you to pay more at the pump to fuel the same old problems at WSDOT. Until there are meaningful reforms in place to ensure more accountability and better outcomes in our state transportation system, I will not consider voting for a transportation tax package. You deserve this assurance.

## Budget principles

When I vote for a state budget, I want to know three things: is it prioritized, sustainable and fair to taxpayers?

Like your household budget, state budgets should set priorities. I continue to believe our state's main priorities are K-12 education, public safety and protecting our most vulnerable. State spending plans must also be sustainable over time. Simply put: our state should live within its means and be mindful of the size and scope of its programs and services. Finally, state budgets should not further financially burden individuals, families and employers. If you are expected to tighten your belt in tough times – so should state government.



## Helping employers and creating jobs

I have heard from many people who have had trouble finding a job or are worried they might lose the one they have currently. I understand these concerns and feel the Legislature must do more to help.

My job as state representative is to find ways to help employers grow, be successful and hire more employees. Unfortunately, our businesses face too many unnecessary challenges that are barriers to growth – including a costly workers' compensation system, a confusing tax structure, a cumbersome permitting process, and a maze of growing rules and regulations.

We need to address these problems one-by-one.

I supported bipartisan legislation that will help economic development by enhancing the transparency and predictability of state agency permitting and review processes. **House Bill 2192** is expected to be signed into law.

There are more solutions on the table in the Legislature – and it's time to come together in bipartisan ways to move them forward. We must do more to accelerate the pace of our state's economic recovery. This will be one of my areas of focus this interim.

## Thank you for your feedback

I would like to thank those of you who answered the survey questions from my last newsletter. Hundreds of you mailed the survey back, while others called or e-mailed me with feedback. This information is valuable to me as I navigate the legislative process.

Many people told me that good-paying jobs and a quality education for their children were high priorities. Several individuals also said the state's primary budget responsibilities should be K-12 education, public safety and tax relief. These constituent priorities are my legislative priorities.

I also heard from people who said the Affordable Care Act (Obamacare) has caused their premiums to rise and limited their access to doctors. They have a right to be upset with these outcomes. We need to fix these problems step-by-step, in common-sense ways – including giving Washingtonians the option of keeping their cancelled health insurance policies.



### Meet my legislative assistant

I'm fortunate to have a hard-working, talented legislative assistant. His name is **Joe Atkinson**. We are committed to serving you and our community. Please don't ever hesitate to call, e-mail or send us a letter. **Joe's** e-mail address is [joseph.atkinson@leg.wa.gov](mailto:joseph.atkinson@leg.wa.gov)