



Representative

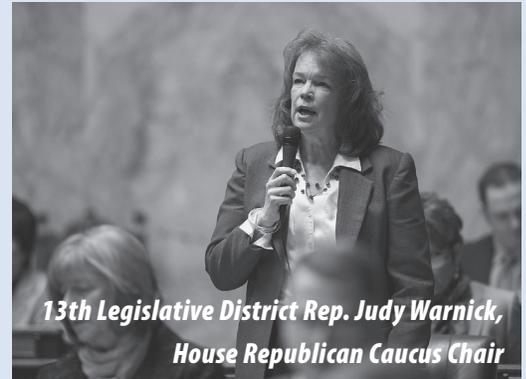
JUDY WARNICK

2014 Legislative Report

13th Legislative District

Bipartisan, balanced supplemental operating budget – no new taxes

With state tax revenues slightly up, major adjustments were not needed to the operating budget. We were able to pass a true supplemental budget plan without significantly overhauling the biennial budget like we have had to do many times in the last decade. It was a strong, bipartisan budget with priorities such as K-12 education, higher education, health and human services, corrections, debt service, and other areas of state government. I voted “yes” on the budget for several reasons including:



13th Legislative District Rep. Judy Warnick, House Republican Caucus Chair

- We put more money into K-12 education to help our local schools;
- Public college tuition rates remain frozen for students;
- We prevented tax increases. (Democrats had proposed to increase taxes on bottled water, recycled fuel, prescription drugs, e-cigarettes, and eliminate the sales tax exemption for out-of-state shoppers);
- Of the \$155 million in new spending, nearly two-thirds are directed toward education funding;
- It increases the state’s ending-fund balance to \$315 million, up from \$56 million in the two-year budget passed last year; and
- It also increases the Budget Stabilization Account and it is balanced four years out.

Education

We passed a major piece of education legislation this session that will provide funding, flexibility and higher expectations to classrooms and our education system. **Senate Bill 6552** implements a 24-credit graduation requirement, directs school districts to grant math/science credit for certain CTE courses, and provides flexibility to districts to help meet increased instructional hour requirements.

With the slight growth in revenue, we were able to make additional investments in education, including:

- Public education K-12 – \$64 million;
- Higher education – \$35 million; and
- Early learning/child care – \$26 million.

We did miss an opportunity in education. A bill that would have simply made a minor adjustment to our state’s teacher and principal evaluation system did not make it through the Legislature. Its failure has resulted in Washington being the first state in the nation to lose its waiver under the No Child Left Behind Act and the loss of flexibility for at least \$38 million in federal funding. Losing the waiver will revive a federal program that provides money for low-income parents to pay for transportation to send their child to a better school or provide \$1,500 in private tutoring for struggling students.

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Dear Friends and Neighbors,

I am excited to share with you an end-of-session update so early in the year. After three special sessions last year and lawmakers being in Olympia until the end of June, the Legislature adjourned on time. It was the first time since 2009.

That isn’t the only positive news coming out of Olympia this session. House Republicans continue to be part of the solution in the budget process and policy decisions. This update will give you a brief overview of legislation passed impacting the 13th Legislative District, some of the session’s accomplishments and concerns that remain moving forward.

I am pleased to be back in the district and local communities. I look forward to hearing from you. Please feel free to contact my district office if you have any questions, comments or concerns. My door is always open.

Sincerely,

Rep. Judy Warnick
House Republican Caucus Chair
13th Legislative District

If you would like to sign up for my e-newsletters, visit my Web page and go to the “sign up for my periodic e-mail updates” at the top of the page. You can also send me your e-mail information.

www.representativejudywarnick.com

Legislation signed by the governor

A number of bills I prime- or co-sponsored this session have been signed into law, some very relevant to the 13th Legislative District. In fact, many people from our district made the trip to Olympia to testify on legislation this year. The following bills have been signed into law:

- **House Bill 1634** allows solar, geothermal and biomass energy facilities to be treated the same as wind power facilities for taxing purposes;
- **House Bill 1417** makes numerous changes to the administration of irrigation districts;
- **House Bill 2547** gives Kittitas County the option to create a less than countywide port district, if voters approve the proposal before Dec. 31, 2020; and
- **House Bill 2674** allows more subagents to process quick titles if they choose to go through the Department of Licensing process.

I want to thank all of those who testified on any legislation this session. They are the ones who make the difference. Legislators always hear from lobbyists and other lawmakers, but how legislation impacts the constituency is what legislators need to hear. I appreciate the effort of all those who traveled, sent e-mails, called the office or left messages on the legislative hotline.



Members of Congress, Doc Hastings and Cathy McMorris-Rodgers, visit the House Republican Caucus

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Governor vetoes CERB Bill

A piece of legislation utilized by local communities for infrastructure projects has been vetoed by the governor. **House Bill 1260**, relating to the **Community Economic Revitalization Board (CERB)**, would have restructured and modernized **CERB** by improving the board's flexibility in providing loans.

This was a bipartisan vote and a well-worked bill, even though the measure wasn't everything either side wanted. Unfortunately, the governor vetoed the legislation under pressure from labor interests. This is frustrating because there was even compromise on the portion of the bill the labor groups did not like. I would point out this was also agency-request legislation by the Department of Commerce and CERB. I do not recall a governor vetoing agency-request legislation. Finally, no one testified against the bill in the public hearing process. The governor's action makes me very concerned as we continue to look for tools and innovative ways to provide job creation and infrastructure to all of Washington.

Obamacare numbers concerning

One of the most worrisome issues of the session actually comes from the federal government—Obamacare. We should have at least passed legislation offering more health care plan options or work on easing the transition. Recent enrollment numbers we are seeing nationally show 28 percent of enrollees are in the 18 – 34 age group. This is concerning because we need to have a 40 percent enrollment rate in this age group to ensure this is a viable and stable insurance pool. The state number for this age group as of the end of March is 25.3 percent, while 31.6 percent of enrollees are between 55-64 year olds.

With open enrollment ending on March 31, and only a limited number of individuals with a qualifying event, such as a change in marital status or change in employment status being allowed to enroll in coverage this year, it is likely these numbers will not change much, if at all, and we are likely to see large premium increases during next year's renewal.