

# Jim McCune

## MY LEGISLATIVE APPROACH



Many of you know that my approach to laws and policy is grounded in the principles of liberty. We need legislation that returns us to the governing system as envisioned by our Founding Fathers.

The educational bills I introduced were focused on allowing our schools the academic freedom to teach our heritage without fear of repercussions, an idea similar to what passed recently in Tennessee.

Veterans are and always should be at the top of our priority list. I introduced **House Bill 2378** requiring the Department of Licensing (DOL) to devise a system allowing a veteran's license to be used for identification purposes and easily prove eligibility for benefits. This bill passed as part of the transportation budget and the DOL will report their plan December 1, 2012.

Our 2<sup>nd</sup> Amendment rights are always under attack, which is why I sponsored **House Bill 2382**. This bill was written to protect the constitutionally guaranteed right to the lawful possession of firearms during an emergency. It was no surprise when the controlling party did not schedule a hearing.



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## 2012 LEGISLATIVE SESSION REVIEW

State Representative  
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# Jim McCune



## 2012 Legislative Session Review

Dear Friends and Neighbors,

On April 11, the Legislature adjourned the second special session. Our job to adjust the state's budget and create new policies is finished until next January - barring any tragic financial forecasts that would require us meet again to further adjust the budget.

Washington state can boast of many things: our great parks, markets, fishing, hunting, coffee, computers, airplanes, ski resorts, etc. Unfortunately, decades of state spending on projects and programs without considering projected revenues put us in dangerous financial territory.

The session was not without its highlights and lowlights, some of which will be discussed in this newsletter. I focused on being a good steward of your tax dollars and promoting solid policies that preserved your freedoms, cared for our most vulnerable, educated our children, supported our military, maintained public safety and still left a responsible budget reserve for emergencies.

Serving as your 2<sup>nd</sup> District state legislator has been an honor, to which I offer my sincere appreciation. Many of you are aware that due to redistricting, I no longer reside in the 2<sup>nd</sup> District and am ineligible to run for this position in the upcoming election cycle. This means that I will be moving on to a new adventure. I will continue to work for you during the interim by gathering your input and relaying that information to legislative committees that work on formulating policy, and to the other legislators representing the 2<sup>nd</sup> District.

Please continue to contact my office with your questions, concerns and thoughts. There is still much work to be done. We must always be vigilant!

Sincerely,

**Jim McCune**  
State Representative

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## OPERATING BUDGET



Rep. McCune speaks on House floor to fishing industry bill.

For the first time in many years, both parties in the Legislature were at the negotiating table for the supplemental operating budget discussion. The final budget was one of the better budgets we have seen in recent years -- it funds education, protects the most vulnerable citizens, keeps public safety intact, and does not push education payments into future biennia, but we are still exposed to financial risks.

I am concerned with the dangerously low reserve left in the budget. Of the approximate \$360 million in reserve, about \$238 million is one-time money because of an accounting maneuver. Last year the budget had \$745 million in reserves and most of that was gone after one bad revenue forecast.

Our reliance on federal funding is comparable to relying on foreign oil. For every federal dollar returned to us, 42 cents of it is borrowed. Does anyone have a financial planner who recommends such tactics? Government spending is a problem, not a solution. We must urge our elected leaders to embrace the proper role of limited government as enshrined by our federal and state constitutions.

## FUND EDUCATION FIRST

In January, the state Supreme Court ruled in the *McCleary v. State* case that the Legislature is not complying with its constitutional duty to make funding education its "paramount duty."

This fell right in line with what my House Republican colleagues and I were working on. We introduced a **Fund Education First** proposal this session, requiring the Legislature to pass a separate K-12 education budget before any other state appropriations. If we fund education first, prior to any other state programs or services, it will ensure that we are meeting our duty and expectations of the court. The Fund Education First legislation also sends a strong message of financial commitment to our students, teachers and schools.



## WOODSTOVE LAW

**House Bill 2326** was passed, giving the Department of Ecology authority over woodstove use. Apparently, parts of Pierce County did not meet federal air quality standards about ten days of the year. Rather than risk losing federal transportation dollars, we gave up some of our liberties. Of noted concern, is the newly-released information that the Department of Homeland Security has announced it is creating an "environmental justice" unit to help local governments enforce environmental laws.

## CLIMATE REGULATIONS ON STEROIDS



Massive, commerce killing and financially draining restrictions under the guise of "combatting climate change" have been designed by the Department of Ecology (DOE) in collaboration with the state departments of Agriculture, Commerce, Fish and Wildlife, Health, Natural Resources, and Transportation under the direction of Executive Order 09-05. In 2009, the governor and Legislature directed the DOE to study the issue and report their findings. DOE recently released the 207-page study "*Preparing for a Changing Climate: Washington State's Integrated Climate Response Strategy*," which plans for our health, ecosystems and habitats, oceans and coastlines, water resources, forests, communications, and infrastructure and the built environment, and more.

This plan will not only require massive investment to implement in public and private sectors, it will direct and guide (control) every aspect of your everyday life. Basically, you won't be able to participate in life without the government's seal of approval. One example they propose is "to develop risk maps and decision-support tools to identify climate change risks for specific geographic areas throughout the state." I believe this will have **significant impact on your property and water rights**. Also, the report has a section for education: "Promote effective integration of climate change education into K-12 educational programs and school curricula," along with "Bolster the network for climate educators, such as hosting peer-to-peer networking events and summits to share and exchange information, experiences, and best practices."

This direction, imposing the principles of the foreign document Earth Charter as described on the DOE's Web site, needs to be voted on by the people. At a time when the cost of living is outpacing our ability to pay our expenses, I find it outrageous for government to confiscate your earnings and transfer it to the *sustainable crowd* (my term) because of predictions made by computers and the non-scientific method of consensus.

## MARRIAGE MATTERS



Public policy is often created based on the passions of the heart in our quest to be altruistic, as opposed to reason and sound research. This session, the Legislature passed **Senate Bill 6239**, which alters the definition of marriage, from the union of a male and female (RCW 26.04.010 and 020) to include homosexual couples.

I did not support this bill. Under our state's "domestic partnership" laws, homosexuals have all the legal rights, privileges and benefits of a married man and woman. Not being satisfied with total equality under the law, homosexual couples demanded the name "marriage" itself.

Senate Bill 6239 does **not** fully protect the religious freedom of clergy and does not protect the religious freedom of businesses. The proponents of the bill refused to accept amendments that would have protected the rights of conscience, religious freedom and free speech of individuals and entities opposed to homosexual marriage or the homosexual lifestyle. It is now up to the citizens to provide the means for the people to have a voice on such a societal-changing issue.

This new law raises the question of whose code of ethics we shall live by. What other lifestyles or behaviors, such as polygamy, will claim discrimination and demand to be included in the definition? After all, if we changed the meaning of marriage once based on *love or the appearance of fairness*, why not again? I stand firm on my vote.

## JOBS AND ECONOMY

The 2012 session should have been used to address the budget shortfall and pass reforms to promote private-sector job creation. Despite our best efforts to advance important job-creating bills, House majority leaders refused public hearings on nearly all of our measures:

- **HB 2290** – would simplify and reduce tax rates for small businesses;
- **HB 2276** – would enact major regulatory reform – including legislation I originally sponsored;
- **HB 1961** – would require agencies to make permit decisions in 90 days; and
- **HB 1125** – would recapture our state's competitive advantage of offering abundant, affordable clean energy for manufacturers and consumers by classifying hydropower as renewable energy.

These basic reforms would have helped create economic certainty and made Washington state more business friendly.