

STATE REPRESENTATIVE
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COMMITTEES ASSIGNMENT:

- Community & Economic Development & Housing
(Ranking Minority Member)
- Capital Budget
- Local Government

COMMITTEES APPOINTMENTS:

- Economic Development Commission
- Aerospace Task Force
- Interstate Compact on Military Children Council
- Legislative Committee on Economic Development and International Relations
- Ocean Acidification Blue Ribbon Panel

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STATE REPRESENTATIVE
NORMA SMITH
10th LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT

PO Box 40600
Olympia, WA 98504-0600



TENTH DISTRICT

STATE REPRESENTATIVE
NORMA SMITH

Dear Friends and Neighbors:

Thank you for the opportunity to serve as your representative in Olympia. The last few months have been full of difficult decisions during the regular and special legislative sessions. While often it is the few contentious issues that make the news, there was also significant bipartisan work done this session on many important issues.

I would also like to thank all of you who contacted me this year. Your personal stories and views via emails, letters and phone calls help to inform my decisions in Olympia. Please continue to keep in touch with me. I hope you find this newsletter informative. Please accept my gratitude for the honor of representing you - the people of the 10th Legislative District.

Warm regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Norma Smith". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Norma Smith
State Representative
10th Legislative District

JOBS AND ECONOMY



Washington state has an extraordinarily diverse economy with robust industry sectors, from aerospace to agriculture, to biomedical sciences, energy and technology. For the thousands of small businesses that drive Washington's economy, we must promote policies that improve our business climate and create certainty to encourage our employers and entrepreneurs to expand and invest in our state.

Addressing our competitive disadvantages is key to a sustainable economic recovery. The two areas where we consistently receive low grades are in our state's cost of doing business and regulatory environment. Taking steps to tackle these disadvantages by eliminating duplicative rules and regulations, and addressing significant cost drivers to business in Washington is critical. We need to recognize our competitive advantages, protect and enhance them. For instance, compared to states across the nation, our low cost of clean, renewable hydro energy is of great benefit to our job creators, and a 'must' if we are to maintain and grow our advanced manufacturing sector. I will continue my work to improve opportunity, defeat legislative proposals that threaten our economic vitality, and end adversarial practices by agencies that create unneeded and costly burdens.

I look forward to working with our small business owners, farmers and others throughout the district this interim to advance positive solutions to accelerate our economic recovery and create jobs.

CAPITAL BUDGET

The most concerning issue at all levels of government right now is debt. For this reason, the capital budget was probably the most difficult piece of legislation negotiated this session. As a member of the House Capital Budget Committee I was very involved in our successful effort to pass a strong, bipartisan budget.

It is a reasonable and responsible plan that provides important infrastructure for our education and higher education systems, correction facilities, hospitals and sewer and water projects. By investing in our state's infrastructure through capital provisions, we put people back to work while making solid statewide improvements for the future.

PRIORITIZE EDUCATION SPENDING



Our caucus introduced a **Fund Education First** proposal this session. The idea is simple, and would change the way that education is funded in Washington state by adding a requirement that the Legislature 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 constitutional duty and the expectations of the state Supreme Court decision, *McCleary v. State of Washington*. The court stated we are not complying with our constitutional duty to make ample provision for the education of our children. This proposal sends a strong message of financial commitment to our students, teachers and schools. I will continue looking at innovative ways to make sure our students are receiving the resources and tools they need to succeed both in and outside of the classroom.

OPERATING BUDGET

During the final days of negotiations, House Republicans' insistence that we provide the first dollars to education, caring for the most vulnerable and public safety resulted in a significantly different budget than the one introduced by majority leadership. It is important to note that the rigorous debate resulted in a package of positive reforms that will set us on a more fiscally sustainable path. I was pleased to support these measures.

As budget leadership brought the budget before us at around 4:00 a.m. on the last day, I still had too many concerns to vote in favor. It leaves our budget reserves dangerously low, meaning we are just one natural disaster, or one bad revenue forecast away from yet another special session at a significant cost to the taxpayers. While I commend the hard work that went in to this budget by leadership on both sides of the aisle, ultimately I don't believe it gets us where we needed to be.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

I'm grateful for the strong support from my colleagues on both sides of the aisle in passing a bill this year I introduced requiring the Department of Commerce to emphasize cost effectiveness in projects funded through the Housing Trust Fund. This is an important step to ensure that every tax dollar is used wisely and efficiently.

FOUR-YEAR BUDGET OUTLOOK

One of the major concerns I have had with our budget process since I have been in Olympia is the failure to examine and take into consideration spending policies and how they impact future budget cycles.

One of the reforms we passed will require operating budgets to balance over four years. Before the Legislature adopts an operating budget it will be required to balance in the current two-year budget cycle – and also in the next two-year cycle. I supported this legislation because it will force lawmakers to take into account the long-term effects of their spending decisions. Washington is the first state in the nation to adopt this budgeting practice.

LEGISLATIVE PAGES



Rep. Norma Smith with
House Page Desmond Thorpe



Rep. Norma Smith with
House Page Lauren Granroth



Rep. Norma Smith with
House Page Annika Riise

Each week during the legislative session our hallways are filled with terrific young people 14 to 16-years-old. They are "pages" assisting with the legislative process. They observe the Legislature in action and are responsible for delivering messages and documents to legislators during committee hearings and floor debates.

I am excited we have so many young people engaged with the political process. We are at a very important time in politics, and the more students stay involved the better understanding they will have of their government and issues impacting their lives and families. To learn more about the page program, visit:

www.leg.wa.gov/PageSchool/Pages

I had the privilege of sponsoring three wonderful pages this session, pictured at left.

During the interim, I would be happy to meet with you and your neighbors, community group, or work colleagues, to discuss issues that are important to you. Please contact my office to schedule a time that is convenient for you.

Thank you again.