

Bills/messaging

HB 1024 (died) | Concerning labor and income of incarcerated persons | Johnson/Hansen

- Would require an incarcerated person participating in a Correctional Industries work program be paid no less than the state minimum wage.
- This bill does not strike the balance between the offender and their victim. We need to prioritize victim restitution and make sure individuals receive the help they need so they don't revictimize once released.

HB 1025 (died) | Creating a private right of action against police officers | Johnson/Hansen

- Would allow police officers to be sued personally while doing their jobs protecting our communities.
- This bill would drive police officers from the profession. And discourage people from pursuing the profession.
- We already face a critical shortage of police officers in our state. This bill would make the problem worse.
- Our police officers are already held to a very high standard. We cannot make that standard an impossible one.
- This is another unfair, anti-police bill. And it will make our communities less safe.
- We want to hold bad police officers accountable. There are processes in place for this.

HB 1047 (passed House) | Use of toxic chemicals in cosmetic products | Hill

- Would restrict the manufacture, sale and distribution of cosmetic products containing nine chemicals or classes of chemicals, beginning January 1, 2025.
- Republicans have supported the regulation of chemicals in children's toys, firefighting equipment and water bottles.
- This chemical regulation is on a limited set of products in cosmetics that people apply to their bodies and which washes into Washington water as we bathe.
- There is evidence of disproportionate exposure to certain populations to hazardous chemicals in cosmetics.
- On the other hand, the Safer Products Washington law provides a balance for industry between regulation and certainty by having product regulation occur at predictable five-year cycles.
- A study funded by the Legislature on this issue is not yet complete.

HB 1048 (passed House) | Enhancing the Washington Voting Rights Act | Grose

- Would allow highly partisan, left-wing, out-of-state groups to challenge local electoral systems, regardless of if there was any proof of harm done.
- Would enable these partisan actors to artificially redraw district lines (for political benefit), change electoral systems, and even add new county commissioner districts – even if they do not receive an affirmative judgement from the court.
- Under this law, the court no longer would need to observe racial polarization in order to find discrimination in voting practices. This would allow them to determine the validity of a challenge purely off of political polarization, which may be constitutionally dubious.
- The WVRA, as it currently stands, has been highly successful in fulfilling its intent. The changes made in HB 1048 would be simply partisan, not further protect voting rights of minority communities, and only serve left-wing groups that seek to financially gain from these changes.

HB 1110 (passed House) | Middle housing | Woods

- Would requires certain cities planning under GMA to authorize minimum development densities in residential zones, establish requirements for middle housing development regulations, and require the Department of Commerce to provide technical assistance to cities in implementing the requirements and to develop model middle housing ordinances.
- Reasons to support:
 - We're in a housing crisis and need more housing fast, this bill would require cities to build increased density primarily around public transit, schools and parks to meet the housing need.

- This bill, combined with HB 1337 and HB 1245, would create new pathways for developers to cut through red tape and start building sooner.
- This would strike a balance between single family and multifamily housing. Demand will direct which housing is built where.
- More housing will increase competition and reduce both house prices and rents.
- Reasons to oppose:
 - This could be construed as an unfunded mandate. Many cities will have to create a large number of new regulations which costs time and money.
 - Cities should be able to address the housing crisis in a way that meets their unique needs. HB 1110 is too prescriptive and robs cities and counties of local control.
 - Neighborhoods are going to start looking different. Renters or homeowners who chose a neighborhood for certain characteristics may see new fourplexes and sixplexes in their formerly single-family subdivision.

HB 1131 (died) | Solid waste management outcomes | Hill

- Would create a complex bureaucracy to manage the waste stream from paper products and packaging and require manufacturers to pay fees to fund a producer-responsibility organization to oversee the collection and recycling of the waste.
- Washington ranks #10 in recycling rate for common containers and packaging (#15 if cardboard is excluded). Washington residents generate the least waste per capita.
- The costs of this bill to consumers, businesses and taxpayers are unknown. The fees paid by producers are determined after the bill passes. Costs to administer are unknown. A workload analysis for Ecology is to be done after the bill passes.
- The environmental benefit of this bill is unknown. The actual increase in recycling to be achieved is unknown. The greenhouse gas impact of additional collection and recycling are unknown. Provisions in the bill to assess GHGs were stricken.
- The bill contains too many subjects violating the state constitution's single subject rule.

HB 1143 (passed House) | Requirements for the purchase or transfer of firearms | Johnson/Payne

- Would prohibit firearm dealers from selling or transferring guns unless the person has a valid permit to purchase firearms, mandate background checks and 10-day waiting periods for all transfers of firearms and require dealers to record every transfer. Would also require prospective gun buyers to apply directly to a state or local law enforcement agency to obtain a purchase permit prior to approaching any seller.
- There's no other constitutional right where training is required in order to exercise it.
 - Constitutional rights are unique, you should not be charged "fees" for exercising them.
 - You should not need to have "training" to exercise a constitutional right.
- We need to do more to prevent violence in our society. The right solution is to try to reach the violent mind.
- Arbitrary waiting periods limit the actions of law-abiding citizens, including those who want a firearm for self-defense or hunting.

HB 1155 (passed House) | Collection, sharing and selling of consumer health data | Handy

- Everyone wants to protect sensitive health information of consumers.
- The definitions in this bill are overbroad.
- We do not support the private right of action.
- This bill would have negative impacts on consumers' activities.

HB 1158/SB 5082 (passed Senate) | Eliminating advisory votes | Handy

- Advisory votes were established by voter-approved I-960 in 2007. We respect the will of the voters.
- This bill takes away the voices of voters on tax issues. Voters should be able to express themselves.

- There was a **headline** that said: “With the results always ignored, Washington’s tax advisory measures may be dropped from the ballot.” Not true. Advisory votes inform state lawmakers and the legislative process.
- Advisory votes are not “confusing” to voters. We have confidence in voters. What’s truly confusing is how the majority party continues to ignore the will of the people when it comes to raising taxes and fees.

HB 1169 (passed House) | Legal financial obligations for criminals | Johnson/Handy

- Would eliminate criminals having to pay a penalty to fund services for victims of crimes and shift these costs to taxpayers.
- This is another example of Democrats again prioritizing criminals over victims and survivors and their families.
- House Republicans believe in accountability and stand with victims and survivors of crime.

HB 1181 (passed House) | Adding climate change to GMA | Quam/Hammond

- Would mandate a new climate change and resiliency element to impose greenhouse gas emissions reductions and add environmental justice principles.
- According to a recent study, as much as 24% of housing price increases may be attributed to the GMA. This bill would add another layer to the GMA – increasing costs and exacerbating the state’s affordable housing crisis.
- The bill references “overburdened” more than 10 times. Government rules and regulations such as GMA have put these communities in this position. This bill is not going to unburden communities. It adds to the problem.
- The several climate-change related laws in place have not had a chance to play out. HB 1181 adds another climate policy at the expense of more burdensome rules and regulations at the local level. This will continue the trend of making housing unaffordable and bog down the permitting process.

HB 1189 (passed House) | Release of incarcerated individuals from total confinement prior to the expiration of a sentence | Johnson

- Would establish additional ways for incarcerated individuals to be released from prison prior to the completion of their sentence, including those sentenced aggravated first-degree murder.

HB 1240 (passed House) | So-called assault weapons ban | Johnson/Payne/Handy

- Would prohibit the manufacture, importation, distribution, sale, or offer for sale of any assault weapon, subject to various exceptions for licensed firearm manufacturers and dealers, and for individuals who inherit an assault weapon.
- Would provide a violation of these restrictions constitutes a gross misdemeanor and is actionable under the Consumer Protection Act.
- This bill would restrict foundational constitutional rights. It is important to protect all constitutional rights – not just some of them.
- With more crime and fewer police officers in our communities, now more than ever, people are turning to firearms to protect themselves and their families.
- Whether it be for protection, sport or hobby – generations of Washingtonians have owned and used guns responsibly. And they will continue to.
- Responsible gun ownership is a way of life for many – in urban, suburban and rural Washington.
 - Imagine living in a rural area where law enforcement response time is an hour or more.
 - Seconds and minutes can matter in urban and suburban settings.
- We all want to reduce gun violence – including gun owners. We all want to keep guns out of the hands of people who want to do harm to others or themselves.
- This policy would burden law-abiding gun owners and be ignored by criminals who have intent to cause harm.
- We need to come together and address the root causes of all violence: poverty and economic despair; drug addiction; isolation; untreated mental health needs; and parental neglect.

HB 1244 (died) | Increasing the maximum per pupil limit for enrichment levy authority | Gatto

- Would increase the cap on local school district enrichment levies from \$2,500 per pupil to \$3,000 per pupil for all districts except Seattle (which is already capped at \$3,000 per pupil).
- Levy creep: The state's continued expansion of, and reliance on, local levies has led to districts using local levies for basic education, which has consistently led to finding that the state is not fully funding basic education. This bill undermines the McCleary-related levy reforms that were meant to prevent "levy creep" and to guard against future McCleary-type litigation.
- Uniformity/inequities: Many school districts cannot generate \$2,500 per pupil at a rate of \$2.50 and even fewer will be able to generate \$3,000. This bill perpetuates a system where students in urban, affluent areas receive more enrichment opportunities than students from rural or less affluent areas.

HB 1268 (passed House) | Sentencing enhancements | Johnson/Handy

- Would eliminate sentencing enhancements for involving a minor in a criminal street gang offense, as well as possession of narcotics with the intention to deliver or sell in a school zone.
- Would eliminate requirements that firearm enhancements be served consecutively, and would remove restrictions on partial confinement and early release for all sentencing enhancements.

HB 1333 (died) | Domestic Violent Extremism Commission | Grose/McDonald

- Would establish the Domestic Violent Extremism Commission.
- There are no definitions for "domestic violent extremism," "disinformation," or "misinformation," in the RCW. This bill does not even attempt to define those terms.
- The bill would allow a largely unelected commission to determine which group of citizens are a threat to society, what is true, and what is not.
- The AG's report makes no mention of Antifa and/or anarchist violence.
- This bill could weaponize state government against ordinary citizens, turning neighbor on neighbor and escalating our political polarization problem.
- This bill would create a chilling effect on free speech, expression and political engagement. Ordinary people will avoid speaking up or being politically engaged for fear of being labeled a threat to society.

HB 1363 (died) | Vehicular pursuit | Hansen/Handy

- Since 2021, when House Bill 1054 passed, criminals have felt emboldened and law enforcement has felt abandoned. And our communities have suffered from it.
- Criminals know if they can get to a vehicle, they can simply drive away from law enforcement.
- This experiment has failed and has had tragic consequences. It was a mistake. It's time to fix that mistake.
- The solution is simple: We need to restore the initial pursuit threshold back to 'reasonable suspicion.'
- House Bill 1363 is a bipartisan solution, with 20 Republicans and 20 Democrats. We need to roll the bill back to its original version – like everyone signed on to.
- Law enforcement, local elected officials, business groups, editorial boards and concerned citizens from across our state are asking us to do something.
- Many communities are not safe. Law enforcement wants to help. We need to restore this important tool so they can.
- Credit the media on this issue. They have been covering the stories since the summer of 2021.

HB 1389 (died) | Rent control | Woods/Livingston

- Would require Commerce to establish an annual rent increase maximum that landlords must adhere to which will range from 3-7% based on the rate of inflation, allow landlords to participate in a "banked capacity program" to increase rents more later (up to 10% total) if they forego increasing rent in a year, and apply the Consumer Protection Act and increases the AG's power and scope of authority.
- Rent control will decrease the supply of rental housing.
- Less access to rental housing will further exacerbate the homelessness crisis.

- Small landlords will be hurt by these rules and may ultimately leave the business altogether.
- Financing rental properties will be more difficult with uncertain rental rates.
- Landlords would be incentivized to use the maximum allowed increase every year because next year's cap may not be enough.

HB 1394 (passed House) | Creating a developmentally appropriate response to youth who commit sexual offenses | Woods

- Reasons to oppose:
 - Registration provides the harmed community as well as the victims themselves with a sense of security.
 - Sexual offenses must have strict consequences, reducing these requirements is being soft on crime.
 - Reducing the severity of failing to register from a felony to a gross misdemeanor makes skipping out on registration an almost unpunishable crime.
- Reasons to support:
 - There is little to no empirical evidence that sex offender registration reduces recidivism or increases community safety. In fact, it's argued that registration only impedes reintegration.
 - Extending parole will increase supports for youth who have committed sexual offenses while also establishing structure and consequences for misbehavior.
 - Reducing registration allows youths to apply for jobs, go to school and put their lives back together. Registration often makes that near difficult.

HB 1445 (died) | Concerning law enforcement and local corrections agency misconduct through investigations and legal actions | Johnson

- Would unnecessarily duplicate the investigation and prosecution of law enforcement misconduct by local prosecutors by allowing the state Attorney General to also investigate and prosecute such matters.
- Would authorize the Attorney General to investigate and bring actions against law enforcement and corrections agencies for violations of the Washington Constitution or state law.

HB 1474 (passed House) | Creating the covenant homeownership account and program to address the history of housing discrimination due to racially restrictive real estate covenants in Washington state | Woods/Handy

- This bill would establish a down payment assistance program for people of color to compensate for past racial covenants.
- This new policy would be funded with a \$100 document recording fee which bumps it up to over \$300.
- This passed with only 53 votes and had bipartisan opposition.

HB 1508 (passed House) | Health Care Cost Transparency Board | Bronkema/Wold

- The authority granted to the transparency board is akin to judge and jury.
 - Not meeting benchmarks set by the board, or not complying with specific data requests exactly how the board wants, leads to fines levied by the board. This is too much power – power that can be abused.
- This could exacerbate staffing shortages. This would add more burden on providers who are already dealing with staffing shortages. By hamstringing income, how can we expect these institutions to raise wages?
- There are serious concerns about privacy and data collections. The state has a proven track record of being hacked. This bill would increase the potential of more private information falling into the hands of those with nefarious intent.
- This flies in the face of government accountability. The state is once again abdicating its authority and handing it over to an unelected, unaccountable board appointed by the governor and an executive agency.

**HB 1513 (died) | Limiting police officers' use of stops and detentions for non-moving violations as a primary offense
Johnson/Hansen**

- Would prohibit law enforcement from stopping drivers committing certain violations, including nonmoving violations, certain suspended or revoked licenses, or certain misdemeanor warrants, and would require written consent of the driver and passengers to search a vehicle.
- Last year, 745 Washingtonians lost their lives on public roadways. It was the most dangerous year on our roadways in 30 years. Now is not the time to deprioritize traffic infractions.
- Safety on roadways is critical. Traffic enforcement helps keeps roadways safe.
- This bill would be detrimental to public safety especially at a time when people want relief from laws favoring criminal activity.

HB 1533 (passed House) | Exempting the disclosure of certain information of agency employees or their dependents who are survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, harassment, or stalking | Grose

- Would exempt from disclosure under the Public Records Act personally identifying information of certain agency employees or their dependents who are survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, harassment, or stalking.
- State agency employees, K-12 employees, or their dependents who are victims of sexual assault, stalking, or a few other offenses can apply to have certain personal information exempt from public records disclosure.
- Personal information that can be exempt includes information such as birthdate, job title, addresses of workstations and locations, work email address, work phone number, bargaining unit, or other similar information.
- Actual work product is still open for disclosure.
- To qualify for the exemption, the person either must already participate in the address confidentiality program or file an attestation with their employer under the penalty of perjury.

HB 1550 (passed House) | Establishes the Transition to Kindergarten Program (TTK) | Gatto/Nelson

- OSPI overstepped its legal authority by promoting the Transitional Kindergarten (TK) program and allowing districts to claim state basic education dollars.
- This bill would rein in OSPI by repealing and replacing TK with a new program authorized by the Legislature: The Transition to Kindergarten Program (TTK).
- TTK would harmonize the Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program (ECEAP) with TTK so the two programs are no longer in direct competition.
- As with any change to an existing program, the bill may be disruptive to current participants of the TK program, many of which have been successful.

HB 1554 (passed House) | Reducing public health and environmental impacts from lead | Hill/Sattgast

- Reasons to support:
 - Lead is poisonous to the body and can be especially harmful to children. When lead is absorbed into the body, it can cause damage to the brain and other vital organs. Lead may also cause behavioral problems, learning disabilities, seizures and, in extreme cases, death.
 - The move away from lead in paint and standard fuels has had good health effects. However, it is still in aviation fuel. That's a risk to families and children.
 - Lead in aviation gasoline is the largest source of lead in the air.
 - This bill would reduce the risk from leaded aviation fuel until we have an alternative.
 - The substitute bill was negotiated by two House Republicans with over 80 years of experience in flying and working on older airplane engines. The new bill is voluntary with no regulatory mandate or imposed fines. It also has an education component.
- Reasons to oppose:
 - This bill is mostly unnecessary as aviation fuel is a relatively small portion of all gasoline sold. Some studies do not find evidence of lead near airports.

- The presence of lead in aviation is better handled at the federal level to ensure compliance with FAA rules. FAA regulations were developed over 100 years to prioritize safety. This bill would decrease safety at Washington airports.
- This bill does not have the support of aviation stakeholders.
- One part of this bill speaks to blood testing by physicians. However, the measure did not go through the House Health Care and Wellness Committee for complete review.

HB 1628 (died) | Modifying the state and local real estate excise tax (REET) | Quam/Hammond

- Would increase the maximum REET rate/threshold and allow additional local REET.
- Washington has one of the highest real estate taxes in the country. Adding more than \$150,000 in taxes does not make homes more affordable.
- Real estate excise taxes and the current economy are taking people's investment opportunities away from them.
- Increased taxes impact the feasibility of making investments.
- This empowers government instead of families and people.
- More than \$2 billion has been spent on this type of housing, but no one can tell us how many homes have been built. There needs to be some accountability.
- The increased real estate excise tax will just be part of the final price tag and make housing more expensive. We want affordable housing for all.

HB 1670 (died) | Raising the limit factor for property taxes | Grose/Handy

- Would allow cities, counties, and other taxing districts to triple their annual increases in property taxes.
- Property taxes are already high and increasing. People are being forced out of their homes due to the costs.
- If we are serious about affordable housing, we shouldn't be raising property taxes. This is especially hard for those on fixed incomes.
- Voters have said they want a 1% cap. We need to respect the will of the voters.

HB 1832 (died) | Per-mile charge on vehicle usage | Quam/Hammond/Handy

- Would implement a new per-mile charge on vehicle usage of public roadways. This has been branded the Road Usage Charge Program (RUC Program). But let's call it what it is: A vehicle miles traveled tax.
- This would hurt rural residents who often travel long distances to access work, education, health care and groceries.
- There are also concerns with privacy and data collection. The state's track record on protecting private information is poor.
- The revenue received from the RUC program is not 18th Amendment protected like the current gas tax. If a charge is going to be collected to use the roadways, the revenue needs to be protected and used only for its intended purpose: filling potholes, repairing bridges, and construction projects that increase capacity and safety.
- There are other ways to fund our transportation system. House Republicans have again introduced legislation ([House Bill 1472](#)) that would direct state sales tax paid on motor vehicles to preservation and maintenance of our state's transportation system.
- The current intent of the RUC is revenue neutral; however, the goal of the program is to pay for the needs of the transportation system. To meet these needs, it's likely the 2.5 cent per-mile charge will increase.
- There are concerns that those driving gas powered vehicles may be taxed twice – paying the gas tax at the pump and a per-mile fee. We need to ensure the gas tax is properly phased out to ensure Washington state citizens aren't paying a double tax for their choice of vehicle.

Issues/messaging

Agriculture and natural resources

- Access to water is a fundamental right. To ensure there is enough water for farms, families, fish, wildlife and our marine ecosystem, it is crucial we properly manage and preserve our water resources to ensure quality and volume while being good stewards of the environment.
- We need to focus our efforts on preserving forests, farmland and rural communities from catastrophic wildfires by promoting forest health and properly managing our forests.
- The COVID pandemic created new challenges for our ag industry. We need to ensure our ag industry can continue to provide fresh food to families, with a safe, stable and sustainable workforce.
- Our state needs to plan for and be resilient against both floods and droughts.

Crime

- Democratic policies have emboldened criminals and limited law enforcement's ability to respond. As a result, people do not feel safe in their communities.
- Violence, retail theft, vehicle theft, car break ins, catalytic converter theft, drug sales and graffiti.
 - The media are covering these stories. The problems are clear to anyone paying attention.
- We must enforce the laws we already have on the books, support law enforcement and not normalize the use and sale of hard drugs. And most importantly: Restore the vehicular pursuit standard to reasonable suspicion.

Education

- We must help students recover from the learning loss created by Gov. Inslee's decision to shut down in-class instruction in public schools. The remote learning experiment failed many students and caused new mental health challenges.
- **HB 1328** would create a new, temporary program designed to improve student performance in math and English language arts. The proposal would provide funding for districts to increase the number of students meeting grade-level standards on state tests. If public schools are not successful, parents of struggling students could qualify for a stipend to access direct tutoring or other academic supports.
- House Republicans have also offered real solutions for special education funding, school choice, dual credit programs and school safety.

Emergency powers reform

- Washingtonians should not be ruled by orders and proclamations for months on end.
- One person should not have absolute power, including how billions of dollars in federal funds are spent, which businesses are essential and whose livelihoods will be devastated.
- We must restore balance and trust in state government. House Republicans have offered common-sense, reform legislation.
- Facts:
 - Our state emergency powers allow the governor to waive or suspend laws and prohibit certain activities.
 - Waivers or suspensions of laws are limited to 30 days and require approval from the Legislature to extend.
 - Prohibitions can last longer if a state of emergency is in effect and do not require legislative approval to remain in place.

Environment and energy

- Our state does not have to mandate electric vehicles, remove dams or eliminate natural gas. This is the Democrats' agenda. We need pragmatic, affordable and sustainable energy policies.
- Republicans have supported several environmental bills in the past because they have been balanced:
 - Promoting healthy forest initiatives, providing incentives for solar energy, cleaning up toxic sites, removing legacy nets, dealing with derelict vessels, clearing fish passages and ensuring oil-train safety.

- House Republicans introduced real solutions for Washington’s environment in 2023: **Cooler, cleaner and healthier water**
- House Republicans introduced the Outdoor Recreation and Climate Adaptation (ORCA) Plan in 2022.
 - It focused on forest health, Puget Sound restoration, drought resiliency and flood mitigation.
- Senate Republicans introduced the **Power Washington** Plan in 2023. It has seven major goals.

Gun rights

- It is important to protect all constitutional rights – not just some of them.
- With more crime and fewer police officers in our communities, now more than ever, people are turning to firearms to protect themselves and their families.
- Whether it be for protection, sport or hobby – generations of Washingtonians have owned and used guns responsibly. And they will continue to.
- Responsible gun ownership is a way of life for many – in urban, suburban and rural Washington.
 - Imagine living in a rural area where law enforcement response time is an hour or more.
 - Seconds and minutes can matter in urban and suburban settings.
- We all want to reduce gun violence – including gun owners. We all want to keep guns out of the hands of people who want to do harm to others or themselves.
- We can pass more gun laws. But they will be ignored by criminals who have intent to cause harm.
- We need to come together and address the root causes of all violence: poverty and economic despair; drug addiction; isolation; untreated mental health needs; and parental neglect.

Homelessness

- We must address the root causes of homelessness: Drug addiction, mental health and economic despair. Our state also needs housing that is affordable.
- We want to help those who are in the grips of addiction. People deserve second chances. But no one should be allowed to continually commit crimes to fund their drug habits.
- **Seattle is Dying** and the **follow up** highlighted that enforcement and intervention are the keys to addressing this crisis.
- There must be accountability in both local and state governments.

Housing

- Washington lacks housing that is affordable due to unnecessary regulatory costs and fees, permit delays, restrictive zoning laws and an antiquated Growth Management Act.
- A recent **study** says Washington state will need more than 1 million homes in next 20 years.
- Every year, Democrats talk about affordable housing. And every year, they **pass bills** to make housing more expensive.
- Let’s get out of the way of the private sector. Our problems will not be solved by the public sector alone.
- We want people to stay in their homes. But landlord/tenant laws must have balance and be fair to both parties.

Law enforcement

- The Defund the Police movement has failed. We should not be defunding or disarming the police. The policing bills passed in 2021 made communities less safe.
- Democratic policies have emboldened criminals and limited law enforcement’s ability to respond.
- We can’t take away tools police officers rely on to deescalate situations – tools they use to avoid the necessity of using deadly force.
- Our police officers are already held to a very high standard. We cannot make that standard an impossible one.
- We need to bridge the gap of the fragile relationship between law enforcement and the communities they serve.

Long-term care insurance program and payroll tax

- The long-term care insurance program and payroll tax are unpopular, insolvent and regressive.
 - Unpopular: Nearly 63% of voters said the bill should be repealed through [Advisory Vote No. 20](#) in 2019.
 - Insolvent: The numbers don't work. This means premiums will likely have to be increased in the future. You can read what our State Actuary had to say [here](#).
 - Regressive: Someone could pay into the system for several years and either not need or not be able to access the modest [benefit](#).
- House Republicans have introduced bills to reform, repeal, and repeal and replace this program.
- This is a major policy mistake. It cannot be fixed; it should be fully repealed.
- Changes to the program could result in more costs for the people who couldn't opt out of it.

Nursing shortage

- As nursing shortage is found throughout our state. Nursing is an occupation in demand by employers.
- The nurse shortage is not only a problem for hospitals. Long-term care facilities, such as nursing homes and adult family homes, also face a crisis.
- Washington state is not producing enough nursing school graduates, even though there is interest by students.
- Our state needs to expand nursing credential opportunities, grow pathways into health-care credentials and eliminate bottlenecks in training.

Siting a new major airport in Washington state

- In 2019, the Legislature created the Commercial Aviation Coordinating Commission (CACC) and tasked it with finding a new solution to the state's insufficient major airport capacity.
- The CACC last year narrowed its search for a possible new airport to three locations, including two in rural Pierce County and one in rural Thurston County. All locations have been met with strong opposition in those areas.
- The issue of siting a new major airport has been – and will continue to be – controversial.

School safety

- We want to ensure that when we send our children to school in the morning, they come home safe at the end of every single day. All Washington state students deserve a safe and positive learning environment.
- We need to look at issues such as mental illness, depression, suicide, bullying, gang violence, family values, technology, responding to threats and how to protect our schools. "See something, say something" must be followed up by "do something."
- School districts need to have easy access to tools and resources needed to prevent, mitigate, respond and recover from violent events.

State government accountability

- We have talented and dedicated state employees who deliver important services and programs to Washingtonians. However, high-profile failures in Gov. Inslee's state agencies – including DOC, DSHS and ESD – are having tragic consequences and wasting tax dollars.
 - The media has done a great job covering these [stories](#).
- We need to hold the governor and state agencies accountable for their actions and results. And we need Democrats in the Legislature to acknowledge these problems exist.
- A smarter, more effective state government will lead to better results and more public confidence in how tax dollars are being used.

Washington State Ferries

- In recent years, Washington State Ferries has experienced a reduction in employees, which has negatively impacted service on ferry runs – including cancelations.
- Gov. Inslee's vaccine mandate has exacerbated the staffing shortage. WSF workforce challenges will continue to be an issue.

Water rights

- We will protect private property rights.
- We must protect water rights from relinquishment, intrusion by state agencies and takings by the state in the name of habitat conservation.

Wildfire prevention and response

- We need to focus our efforts and our limited resources on preventing catastrophic wildfires, not just fighting them.
- We have weak and diseased trees, too many stems-per-acre and not enough access to our back country.
- Prescribed burns, selective thinning and firebreak planning – these all have to be part of the overall discussion. The best thing we can do to prevent catastrophic wildfires is to properly manage our forests.
- One bad wildfire can negate years of any progress we've made in terms of reducing carbon in the air. Wildfire carbon, with high particulate matter, has real and measurable costs for those with health and breathing issues.

Wildlife management

- We need state agencies to operate with fairness and transparency on wildlife management. And like all state agencies: They need to be held accountable.
- Responsible wildlife management creates more recreational opportunities for Washingtonians.

House Republican priorities

- Reducing your cost of living
- Making communities safer
- Fixing our housing crisis
- Empowering families

Reducing your cost of living

- Instead of providing tax relief with record tax state collections in recent years, Democrats have prioritized growing the size and scope of government and passing punitive policies that make life more expensive.
- House Republicans are fighting for tax relief and meaningful legislation to help alleviate financial burdens for struggling families, students, small business owners and the most vulnerable.

Real solutions:

- Sales tax relief | [HB 1704](#) | Provide broad-based relief to all Washington state taxpayers, especially those who spend a large portion of their income on taxable goods and services.
- Property tax relief | [HB 1483](#) | Reduce the state portion of the property tax to provide broad relief to homeowners.
- Repeal the Long-Term Care Trust Act and payroll tax | [HB 1011](#).

Making communities safer

- Communities face the challenges of crime, chronic homelessness, addiction and untreated mental health needs. Unfortunately, the Democrats' ineffective and destructive policies have made these problems worse.
- With a focus on compassion and accountability, House Republicans are working to keep neighborhoods, families and businesses safe – while supporting those who serve and protect our communities.

Real solutions:

- Restore reasonable suspicion standard for initiating vehicular pursuits | [HB 1363](#) | Restore the initial threshold to begin a vehicle pursuit to reasonable suspicion that a crime has or is being committed.
- Confront drug addiction | [HB 1415](#) | Recriminalize the possession of hard drugs, like fentanyl and heroin, by making the knowing possession of a controlled substance a gross misdemeanor offense.

- Put more officers on the streets | [HB 1380](#) | Fund the recruitment, retention and support of law enforcement officers.
- Close illegal encampments | [HB 1373](#) | Fund the removal of illegal encampments near schools, childcare centers, parks and courthouses.
- Address the rise in auto thefts | [HB 1682](#) | Increase funding for preventing, investigating and prosecuting auto theft statewide.

Fixing our housing crisis

- Washington is producing the fewest housing units per household of any state in the country due to unnecessary regulatory costs and fees, permit delays, restrictive zoning laws and an antiquated Growth Management Act.
- House Republicans want to eliminate barriers, so more Washingtonians can build and afford homes.

Real solutions:

- Expedite housing permits | [HB 1401](#) | Establish a low-cost, expedited permit process for single family homes, duplexes, triplexes, and ADUs for low-income to moderate-income households.
- Expand development boundaries | [HB 1402](#) | Create a path forward for local governments to welcome more housing development and expand urban growth boundaries in communities throughout the state.
- Increase housing options through lot splitting | [HB 1245](#) | Authorize the splitting of lots to create more small parcels of land to build starter homes and other forms of affordable housing.
- Create a Homes for Heroes Program | [HB 1633](#) | Provide down payment assistance for heroic professions Washington state needs more of, including police officers, firefighters, EMTs, and nurses. Service members and veterans of the armed forces are also eligible.

Empowering families

- While our state ranks 1st in the nation in teacher salaries and 4th in teacher benefits, it ranks 28th in overall student performance, 30th in SAT scores, and 42nd in high school graduation rates. We can and must do better.
 - Learn more: [K-12 education facts](#)
- House Republicans are focused on addressing pandemic-related learning loss, improving reading and math scores, and giving parents the flexibility necessary to help their children succeed in school and in life.

Real solutions:

- Expand the Working Families Tax Credit | [HB 1000](#) | Expand the Working Families Tax Credit by doubling the income thresholds and the eligible credit amount for those with qualifying children in order to help with child care and other expenses.
- Recover from learning loss | [HB 1328](#) | Create a new temporary program to boost math and reading scores, with funding prioritized for low-income districts and those whose students have suffered the most learning loss.
- Provide school choice | [HB 1615](#) | Establish the Students First Program that funds education savings accounts for students whose needs are not being met in the public school system. The program targets students who are low-income or are located in failing schools, and students eligible for special education would qualify for even greater support.
- Recording school district board meetings | [HB 1210](#) | Require all school district board meetings to be audio recorded, with recordings kept for at least one year, and made available to the public.

Facts

- The 105-day, 2023 legislative session runs January 9 to April 23.
- House: 56 Democrats, 40 Republicans | Senate: 29 Democrats, 20 Republicans.
- 2023-25 budget cycle: July 1, 2023, to June 30, 2025.

Operating budget

- Funds: K-12 education, higher education, corrections, human services and other government operations.

- Funded by: State taxes (sales tax, property tax and B&O tax), federal funds, tuition and other sources.

Capital budget

- Funds: K-12 school construction, higher education facilities, mental and behavioral health, Public Works Assistance Account, housing and community projects.
- Funded by: General obligation bonds, dedicated cash accounts, federal funds and financing contracts.

Transportation budget

- Funds: Capital projects, operating programs and debt service.
- Funded by: Fuel taxes, license fees, tolls, bonds and federal funding.