

SENATOR MANKA DHINGRA

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45th Legislative District

SEN. MANKA DHINGRA'S

First Legislative Session



984
Phone calls



2,467
Emails



165
Meetings



48
Committee Hearings

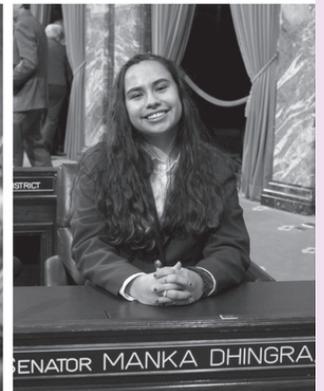
2018 SESSION REVIEW

45TH LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT

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PAGES

Thank you to all seven students who spent a week participating in the Senate Page Program in Olympia from the 45th Legislative District. The Page Program is an excellent opportunity for high school students to learn about the legislative process and participate in the democratic process during session. Each year, students from every district have an opportunity to apply and participate. Please contact my office for more information or an application for next year.





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2018 SESSION REVIEW

45TH LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT

SPRING 2018

Dear Neighbor,

Thank you for the privilege of serving as your state senator for the 45th Legislative District. After completing a historically productive session, I am proud to provide you an overview of what we accomplished this year. The Legislature passed a combined 308 bills this year, 98% of which passed with bipartisan support. These are not just messaging bills, but meaningful policies that impact our communities at home and around the state, including a capital budget and a supplemental operating budget that finally fulfills the state's obligation to fully fund K-12 public schools. **In the same budget, we passed a property tax cut to provide relief for homeowners, and put money in our rainy day fund for the future. We accomplished many essential policy goals for the people of Washington in the short session, finishing on time for the first time since 2014.**

This session was about effective governing and coming together to accomplish historic victories. We passed a first in the nation net neutrality bill to ensure that Washingtonians have unrestricted internet access. We passed legislation to protect women against pay discrimination. We also passed a large Access to Democracy package to make registering and voting easier than ever before. These are just a few ways Washington continues to lead the nation.

Thank you to all of you who worked with my office this year to shape legislation and participate in the work we do in Olympia. I am always excited to hear from you about how we can partner to address the needs of the 45th Legislative District.

Please reach out to me using the contact information in this newsletter if you have comments, questions, or suggestions. I look forward to hearing from you!

Manka Dhingra

2018 SESSION REVIEW 45TH LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT

BUDGET

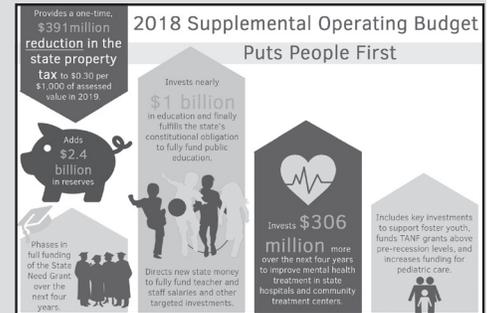
Operating Budget

Every other year the Legislature writes a two-year operating budget that funds state services and priorities and invests in programs. During off years, legislators work on a supplemental budget to re-assess current funding levels and make adjustments.

Due to higher-than-expected revenue growth we cut property taxes across the state by almost \$400 million. Additionally, we added \$2.4 billion to our rainy-day fund.

This year's supplemental budget also makes historic investments in Washingtonians and reflects our state's core values:

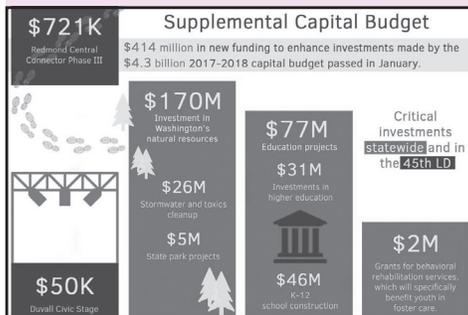
- \$1 billion in education funding and finally fulfills our state's constitutional obligation to fully fund public schools
- A one-time \$391 million reduction in the state property tax to provide relief for homeowners
- \$306 million in new funding over the next four years to im-



prove mental health treatment in state hospitals and community treatment centers

- \$2.4 billion invested into the state reserves to use in the future

Capital Budget



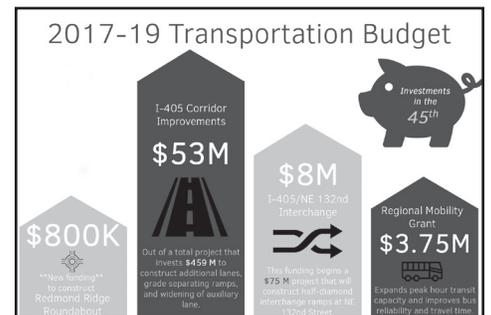
The capital budget accounts for construction and infrastructure projects statewide. This year, we passed the long-delayed capital budget from last year, just 10 days into session releasing \$4 billion in projects, including \$1 billion in school construction. In March, we also passed the 2018 supplemental capital budget:

- \$170 million in Washington's natural resources
- \$77 million in education projects
- \$2 million in grants for rehabilitation services to help youth in foster care
- \$721,000 to complete phase 3 of the Redmond Central Connector trail
- \$50,000 to build a civic stage in Duvall

Transportation Budget

The transportation budget funds projects to build and restore roads, bridges and rail as well as new forms of public transport. In 2015, the Legislature passed the largest and greenest transportation package in state history. As a member of the Senate Transportation Committee, I am proud to report that the 2018 supplemental transportation budget fulfills those investments and adds a few more:

- \$53 million in I-405 corridor improvements, which builds on a larger \$459 million project to construct additional lanes, grade separating ramps, and widening of an auxiliary lane
- \$8 million as an initial investment to a \$75 million dollar project to construct half-diamond interchange ramps at NE 132nd street
- \$3.75 million in a regional mobility grant to expand peak-hour transit capacity and improve bus reliability and travel time
- \$800,000 in new funding to construct the Redmond Ridge Roundabout



EDUCATION

A school is not a commodity; it is a community. It is a place where our children, the future leaders of tomorrow, learn and grow. That is why it is critical that we continue to prioritize education funding, lower class sizes and add resources for our educators. A fully funded public education system is the foundation of our democracy; and we cannot afford to have any cracks in our foundation. Let's work to ensure that each child has an individualized plan for success.



MY LEGISLATION

In my first session, nine of the bills I introduced were approved by the Legislature and signed into law by Gov. Jay Inslee.

Senate Bill 6298, preventing those convicted of domestic violence harassment from possessing firearms: More than half of all women murdered with guns in the United States are killed by intimate partners or family. The law protects victims of domestic violence and ensures they do not become casualties. Domestic violence calls are some of the most dangerous for our law enforcement officers to respond to and this bill closes a loophole to hold perpetrators accountable for their actions. This bill was signed into law on March 22, 2018.

Senate Bill 6051, empowering the Medicaid Fraud Control Unit: This law empowers the state's Medicaid Fraud Control Unit to investigate and prosecute criminal and civil cases and protect our most vulnerable citizens: low-income individuals and those living in residential facilities. It will enable the Unit to fulfill its federally mandated mission to fight waste and theft within the 13.7 billion dollar Medicaid program, enable it to prevent fraud without burdening local law enforcement, and save the state money. This bill was signed into law on March 22, 2018.

Senate Bill 6188, protecting peace officers: This law will ensure greater transparency and accountability in our legal system. It prevents those on a "Brady List" from being terminated by their employer simply for their presence on the list. This bill was signed into law on March 23, 2018.

SB 6124, allowing video court hearings: This law provides an option for video testimony in a

civil commitment hearing for those struggling with mental illness. It is good for patient care, allows greater family involvement and will **save the state money**. It was signed into law on March 28, 2018.

SB 6334, designed to make child support enforcement programs work better and ensure that every child in Washington has health care coverage. At a time when health care and children's health insurance often hang in the balance in our federal government, this bill is another layer of security for Washington families. It was signed into law on March 21, 2018.

House Bill 2597/Senate Bill 6314, providing property tax relief for seniors and persons with disabilities: Recent property tax changes dramatically increase obligations in high cost-of-living areas, like our district. This law provides property tax relief to those who can least afford a property tax increase—senior citizens, persons with disabilities, and veterans by giving counties the ability to exempt seniors from their local property taxes, in the same way that the state currently gives exemptions from state property taxes.

House Bill 2271/ Senate Bill 6217, provides clarification regarding what is needed at a release hearing when addressing sexually violent predators. We have to ensure we are being deliberate when balancing civil liberties and public safety. It was signed into law on March 21, 2018.



House Bill 1524/Senate Bill 6025, Therapeutic Courts: This law will help increase the success in therapeutic courts. In my past position as chair of the Therapeutic Alternative Unit, I often saw individuals who tried to complete their programs while facing unnecessary barriers. This simply expands the definition of treatment so that individuals can have the resources they need in order to be successful. This bill was signed into law on March 22, 2018.

House Bill 2667/Senate Bill 6502, Changing HEN and ABD eligibility requirements: In my past position as chair of the Therapeutic Alternative Unit, I often encountered problematic issues when people needed to transition between the Housing and Essential Needs (HEN) program and its sister program, the Aged, Blind, and Disabled program (ABD). Current rules pose unnecessary barriers to accessing and maintaining stable housing for people receiving assistance through these programs. Individuals must lose their HEN housing when they become eligible for ABD, which makes no sense. We should not require people to become homeless in order to access the appropriate services for their need level. This bill was signed into law on March 13, 2018.