

Karen Keiser



How to contact me

I appreciate your letters, calls and e-mails on legislative issues. Please let me know if I can help you with matters before state agencies, too.

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- Commerce, Labor & Sports
(Ranking Member)
- Health Care
- Ways & Means

One Vote Counts! Our new majority produces results

Dear friends and neighbors,

I have a lot to report to you! *With Democrats in control in 2018, the Legislature completed its work on time while passing more pieces of major legislation than in any session in modern memory.*

We identified several key priorities as part of a session-long focus on bills that put people first, completing the people's work on time with a balanced budget. We accomplished our goals.

We delivered a bipartisan balanced budget that invests in education, mental health, and jobs.

2018 Supplemental Budget Proposal

TAX RELIEF

Cuts property taxes by \$400 million, offering relief to Washingtonians.



EDUCATION

Invests in our schools and teachers, solving the last piece of McCleary.



JOBS

\$4.3 billion for jobs and projects since Democrats gained control.



MENTAL HEALTH

\$294 million to fulfill our state's moral and legal responsibilities.

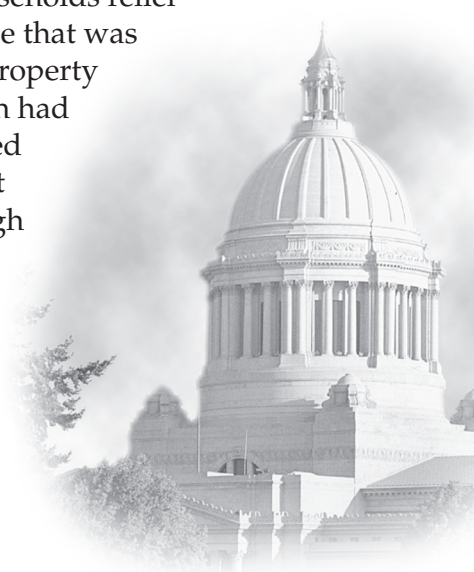


SENATE DEMOCRATS

We solved the final piece of funding to satisfy the Supreme Court's McCleary ruling on education funding, making a total investment of about \$8 billion

dollars in our public schools to fully fund basic education. We still have to do better with special education but after nearly a decade of trying, the "McCleary Decision" is finally addressed.

We passed a property tax cut to give households relief from the Republican Property Tax increase that was part of the McCleary funding last year. Property taxes in our area spiked much higher than had been predicted, and property owners faced real hardship. Sadly, this property tax cut won't be implemented until 2019, although we tried to enact it to apply to this year's tax bill, country assessors said it was too late. But next year property owners will see a reduction in both their state property tax and their local school levy property taxes.



Giving Women a Fair Shot



Governor Inslee signs Substitute Senate Bill No. 5996, March 21, 2018, relating to encouraging disclosure and discussion of sexual harassment and sexual assault in the workplace. Primary Sponsor: Karen Keiser

I am so pleased to report that the women of Washington were ****The Stars**** of the 2018 session.

We made great progress, passing a dozen new measures, including passing the first Equal Pay Act (HB 1506) since 1943 into law.

Here are more highlights of new laws that will help women in our state.

- Creating Safe Workplaces by developing model sexual harassment policies for all public and private employers. (SB 6471)
- Passing the first in the nation limitation on non-disclosure agreements that provide for an exemption from NDA's for sexual harassment and sexual assault, and also eliminating sex harassment or assault from limits in individual employment contracts. (SB 5996, SB 6068, SB 6313)
- Reproductive Parity Act, requiring equal access to all reproductive healthcare choices for women who have insurance that cover maternity care. (SB 6219)
- Requiring breast density screenings and three-dimensional mammograms when needed. (SB 5084)(SB 5912)
- Excluding medical records regarding sexual harassment or assault from legal discovery or evidence. (SB 6027)
- Adding domestic violence harassment to the list of offenses for which a person can lose their gun rights. (SB 6298)
- Protecting survivors of domestic violence from employment discrimination. (HB 2661)
- Passing the Equal Pay Act to take steps to close the gender wage gap. (HB 1506)

Progress for Working Families

As the new Chair of the Senate Labor and Commerce Committee, I was thrilled to be able to manage a long list of bills that had been worked on for years, but never passed while the Republicans had control. I worked with both labor and the business community to try and find agreements on many issues. Here is a short list of some of our achievements:

- Expanding apprenticeship utilization. We are exploring new ways for young people to "earn while they learn," in apprenticeship throughout our state. (SB 5576, SB 6126)
- Child care is a huge financial challenge for many families, and we are creating a collaborative to encourage business and child care advocates to find solutions. (HB 2367)
- Creating safer workplaces so occupational injuries and disease is reduced. We passed worker's comp coverage for PTSD for our law enforcement and firefighters who endure dangerous and horrible situations in their work. (SB 6214) We also passed sure and certain relief for workers at Hanford who are exposed to toxic and radioactive waste on the job. (HB 1723). We aligned Social Security and disability benefits to help injured workers. (HB 1336)
- Protecting the rights of working people to join a union from part time civil service employees to language interpreters and professional port employees. (SB 6230, SB 6245, HB 2669)
- Giving a fair chance to job applicants to get past the application step by removing the box on the application asking if the applicant has ever been arrested or convicted of a crime. (HB 1298)
- Allowing community and technical college faculty to bargain with local colleges about local funds. (HB 1235)

And We Weren't Done Yet...



- We expanded voter Access to Democracy on several fronts. We passed The DISCLOSE Act to expose secret "Dark" money in elections. We also adopted same-day voter registration, automatic voter registration, and voter pre-registration; and The Washington Voting Rights Act to provide representation by district to voters.
- We protected college students from fraudulent and predatory practices by lenders that saddle students with spiraling debt by passing The Student Loan Bill of Rights.
- We banned conversion therapy, the discredited practice of applying physical and mental discomfort to try to force LGBTQ minors to "lose the gay."
- We made sure kids will be able to concentrate on their classes instead of grumbling stomachs each morning by passing The Breakfast after the Bell program that is proven to raise academic success.
- We passed Net Neutrality to protect Washington households from receiving slowed or reduced internet service.
- We banned Net Pens to raise Atlantic salmon in Puget Sound. The practice endangered our native salmon when catastrophic failure of the pens resulted in tens of thousands of "foreign" salmon into our environment.

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Sen. Karen Keiser 2018 LEGISLATIVE REPORT

WASHINGTON STATE SENATOR • 33rd LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT
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Sen. Karen Keiser 2018 LEGISLATIVE REPORT



Major bills passed

ACCESS TO DEMOCRACY! 1 X X X

Voting Rights Act • Same-Day Registration
Automatic Registration • Pre-registration
DISCLOSE Act

- Fully funding State Need Grant
- New Student Loan Bill of Rights
- Greater financial aid access for DREAMers
- Equal pay for equal work
- New sexual harassment protections
- Ban on conversion therapy
- Reproductive Parity Act
- Combat Trump's attack on the ACA
- Ban the Box
- Protecting people from a religious registry
- Prohibiting housing discrimination

Net Neutrality Breakfast after the bell

- Reducing opioid abuse and addiction
- Bump stock ban - Suicide prevention
- Keeping guns away from domestic harassers
- I-940: Improving community/police relations
- Phasing out net pen fish farms
- Funding to protect orca whales
- Funding for oil spill prevention and response

BUDGET

- Property tax cut - \$400M
- Fulfilled McCleary obligation - \$1B
- \$306M for mental health support
- Capital budget: Projects + jobs - \$4.3B
- On time • Balanced - \$2.4B in reserves

This was the most productive 60-day session I've ever experienced. But we didn't get everything done. I was very disappointed that the last-minute agreement on reducing car tabs came a day too late to be passed this year. We also got stalled out on gun safety measures. We were able to ban bump stocks and make a few modest steps forward, but our proposed legislation limit sales of semi-automatic rifles such as AR-15s, was killed this year. I am greatly encouraged by the wonderful young people who have marched and rallied to show their support for stronger gun safety measures this year, and their voice is needed more than ever now.

I hope this end-of-session report will give you a picture of what I've been working on this year. It is such a privilege and honor to represent you in Olympia, I thank you for your support and interest in your state government.