

SENATOR JUDY WARNICK



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- Agriculture, Water, Natural Resources & Parks (*Ranking Member*)
- Behavioral Health Subcommittee to Health & Long Term Care
- Housing & Local Government
- Ways & Means

Greetings Friends and Neighbors,

The Legislature initially spent much of the 2022 session working to fix serious mistakes made last year, such as bungled public safety legislation, the wildly unpopular long-term care income tax, and trying to reform the governor's emergency powers.

I was supportive of these efforts, but I think the proposals inevitably adopted by the majority party didn't go far enough to address the underlying issues. I would characterize this session as one of missed opportunities. Don't get me wrong, we were able to do some good, but fell short of expectations to deliver robust results like we could have.

The state saw unprecedented revenue growth in this supplemental budget, despite economic challenges for main street. I, along with my colleagues in the Senate Republican Caucus, advocated for generous tax relief for working families with the \$15 billion surplus.

However, the trend over the past few years continued with growth in state spending on new programs and costly regulations that will not help families struggling with record inflation and soaring gas prices. During the session, I heard from constituents about the serious problems they face with the rising cost of living. I pushed back on policies that I believed would make our state less affordable.

Now that we've adjourned, I'm back in district and look forward to opportunities to connect with you. I value your insights and will continue to fight for resources our communities need and policies that make our district a great place to call home.

It's an honor to serve as your state senator.

Sincerely,

Senator Judy Warnick
13th Legislative District



WORKING FOR OUR DISTRICT

This past year, our state was under a drought declaration, but getting the joint legislative committee overseeing drought issues to meet was a challenge. While we see a fair share of partisan dustups, ensuring water access and preparing for drought should not be one of them. I sponsored **Senate Bill 5746**, a bipartisan proposal that will expand accountability, increase funding and allow the chair of the committee to call a meeting when the state is under a drought advisory.

Our state and district are a treasure trove of outdoor recreational opportunities. Maintaining these lands does come at a cost and unfortunately that burden has shifted more and more onto citizens in the form of user fees rather than directly from the state's budget. With the unexpected revenue this year, I worked to open more public lands for free. **Senate Bill 5504**, which was signed into law, directs the agencies managing these areas to increase the number of free days at state parks.

Exploring and living near our state's natural resources can be challenging. That's made more difficult by increasing interactions between humans and wildlife. Some of these issues have become fraught with conflict, particularly livestock predation by wolves and how the state Department of Fish and Wildlife responds. It oversees preserving and protecting this delicate balance and needs to be free of interference to do the work. I sponsored **Senate Bill 5972**, which extends protections for these prevention efforts that were set to expire and could expose people to undue risk.

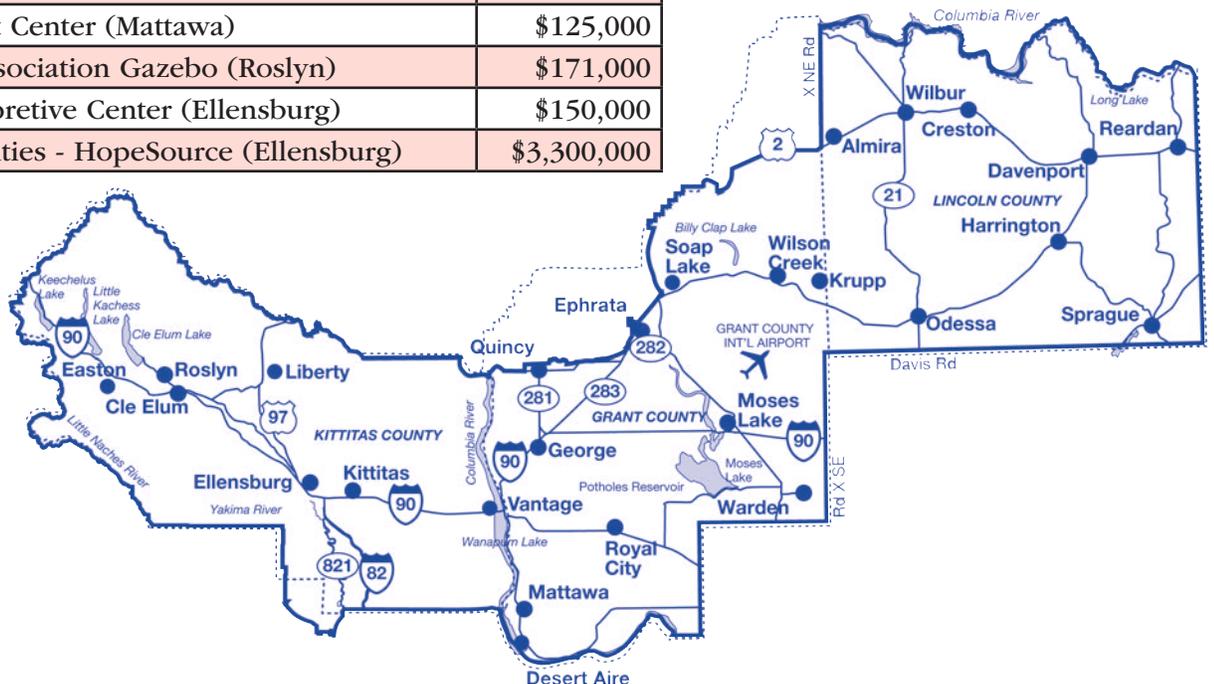
In addition to our natural resource-based economy, the 13th District has become a hub for the tech economy. That is why I work hard in Olympia to keep our communities competitive and bring family-wage jobs. I'm proud that **Senate Bill 5849** was signed into law and gives some tax relief to companies that invest here.

HELP FOR ALMIRA AND MORE COMMUNITY INVESTMENTS

The state's capital budget exists to fund large infrastructure projects that may be difficult for local jurisdictions to pay for. I'm glad that my seatmates and I were able to secure robust funding a variety projects around the 13th District. For example, we secured \$13 million for the school in Almira that unfortunately burned down. Below is a list of other projects funded in the recently approved budget.

2022 LOCAL AND COMMUNITY PROJECTS

Civil Air Patrol Hanger (Ephrata)	\$1,200,000
Confluence Health Treatment Center (Moses Lake)	\$1,236,000
First Street Downtown Revitalization (Cle Elum)	\$465,000
Port of Mattawa Event Center (Mattawa)	\$125,000
Roslyn Downtown Association Gazebo (Roslyn)	\$171,000
Yakima Canyon Interpretive Center (Ellensburg)	\$150,000
Homeless Youth Facilities - HopeSource (Ellensburg)	\$3,300,000

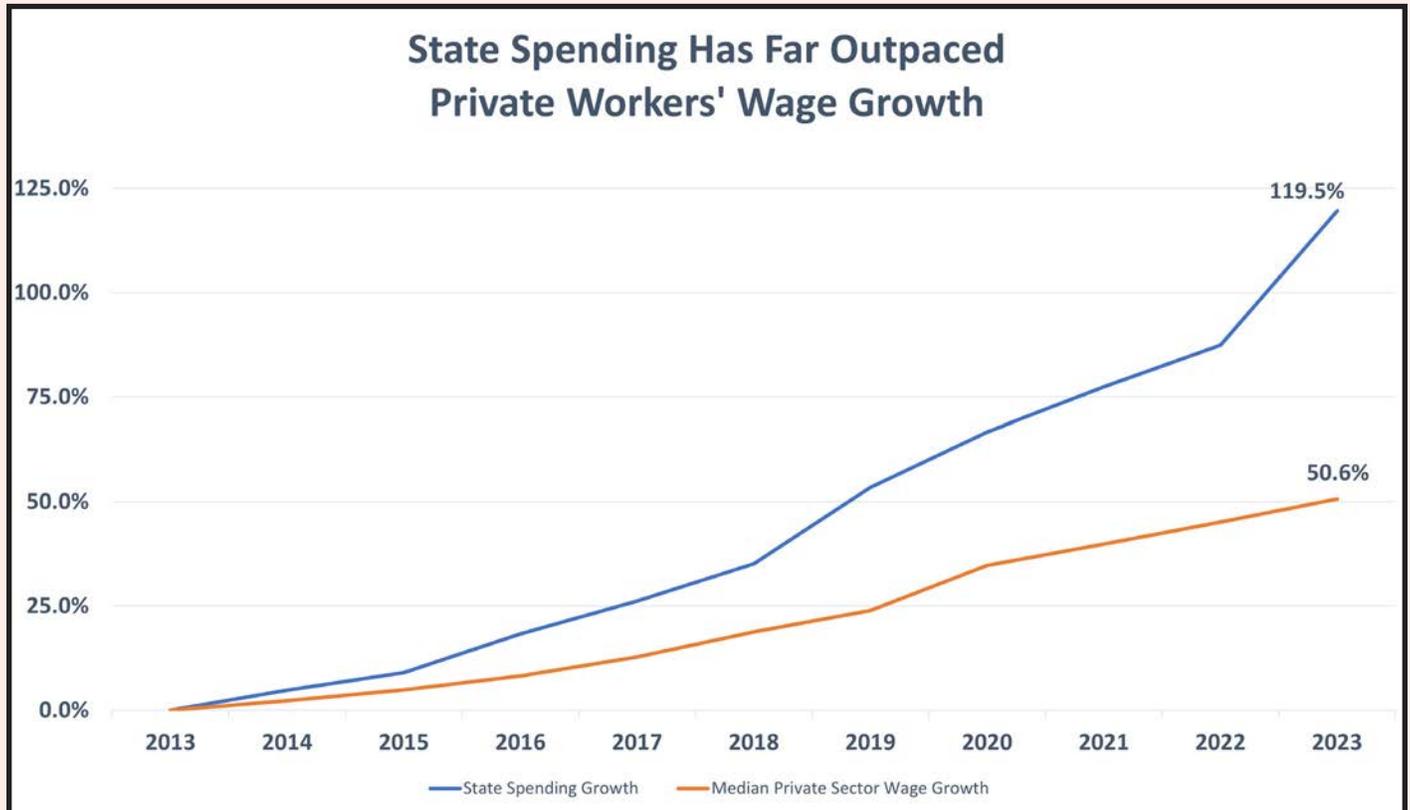


LEFT BEHIND WASHINGTON



This year, the Legislature undertook an effort to improve our state's ailing transportation system. The plan, called "Move Ahead WA," was a partisan proposal that spent considerable resources primarily funded with higher transportation-related fees. Instead of moving our state ahead, it feels more like many were left behind.

While our infrastructure needs are interconnected, what finally was passed by the Legislature doesn't recognize that fact and the investments reflect the one-sided approach. The Senate Republicans introduced our own proposal that used the large state surplus while avoiding tax or fee hikes. It would have fundamentally changed how we pay for transportation projects and made needed smart investments statewide while respecting taxpayers.



As I mentioned in my introduction, the state had an unprecedented surplus, just over \$15 billion. The growth in the budget is incredible and has significantly outpaced the growth in family wages. Ask yourself, has your income more than doubled in the past four years? In this operating budget alone, the state created more than 1,000 new programs. While the budget didn't spend the entire surplus, the shame is that tax relief wasn't even an afterthought.

I co-sponsored a proposal that would have given back nearly \$10 billion to Washington residents, all while maintaining and investing in critical state services for those most in need.



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PUBLIC SAFETY

One of the most urgent areas that the Legislature needed to address concerned public safety. Last year, the majority rushed through headline-grabbing bills that sought to reform police use of force. The legislation, however, created a great deal of uncertainty for law enforcement and in effect tied their hands from dealing with violent crime across the state.

It looked as if the needed reforms were going to fail this year, but thanks to efforts by my Senate Republican colleagues, we were able to push House Bill 2037, which clarified the standards for use of force by police, across the finish line. I'm hopeful that the solution that was recently signed into law will provide needed clarification for our police to help keep our communities safe.



EMERGENCY POWERS REFORM

Our state has been under emergency rule for over two years now. This appears to be one of the most charged and nonpartisan issues that constituents talk to me about. I supported efforts for the Legislature to reinstate our democratic norms of the separation of powers. The Senate proposal that was introduced but died in the House would not have done much to give oversight back to the Legislature, but it was better than nothing.

Almost every state, even those with Democratic governors, has returned power to the people because they realize that the emergency presented by COVID is over and now states must manage the impacts like any other public-health challenge. Washington unfortunately remains an outlier for the time being.

