



## State Representative Dan Griffey

### 35th Legislative District Position 1

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# 2018 LEGISLATIVE REVIEW

## State Representative Dan Griffey



Dear Friends,

On March 8, lawmakers returned home to their districts to reconnect with their communities following the adjournment of the 2018 legislative session. The Legislature won't reconvene again until January, but please know my job as your state representative continues year-round. I look forward to the conversations I will have with many of you over the next few months as I work to form new policy ideas that will benefit our citizens, students, counties and cities, businesses and nonprofits, law enforcement and other first responders, and many more.

This year had its share of firsts. It was the first time since 2014 the Legislature adjourned on time. It was also the first session since 2013 the Legislature has been under Democratic control. By working across the aisle and putting the citizens of our great state first, we were able to accomplish a lot for our communities.

In this newsletter, I'll provide you with an overview of the past two legislative sessions, sharing some of the hits and misses as well as details about some of the legislation I pursued.

I hope you'll find the information useful, and I encourage you to reach out to me with your questions and feedback. In order to be the most effective advocate for you in Olympia, I need to hear from you.

In your service,

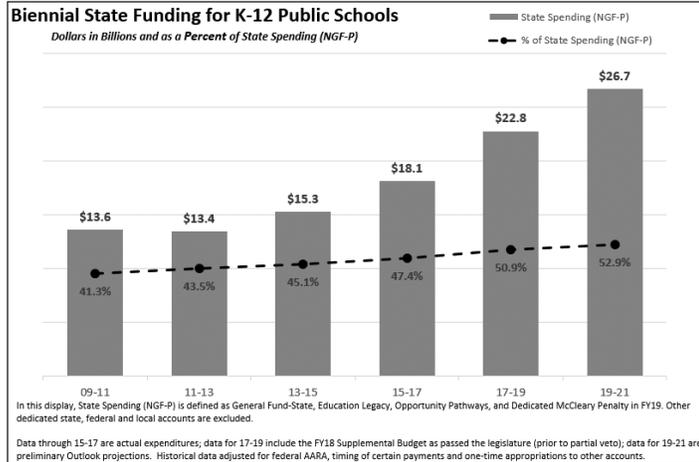
A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dan Griffey". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Dan Griffey  
State Representative

# 2018 LEGISLATIVE REVIEW

## Hits and misses of the state budget

*In the past two years, lawmakers have made important investments in K-12 and higher education, mental health, foster care, affordable housing, and much more.*



### Hits

**K-12 education (McCleary):** Perhaps the greatest accomplishment has been our historic investments in K-12 education, which now makes up more than 50 percent of the state budget. In fact, K-12 education spending has increased more than 80 percent since the 2012 state Supreme Court McCleary decision.

With an education-funding plan (House Bill 2242) approved by the Legislature last year, and an additional \$776 million provided in the 2018 supplemental budget to fund salaries in the 2018-19 school year, we may finally be able to put the McCleary case behind us and look ahead to other critical, life-changing reforms in our schools.

**Sexual assault kit backlog:** Last year, the state invested \$4.4 million to help ease the backlog of untested sexual assault kits. The funding helps the Washington State Patrol create a tracking system for survivors to check the status of their kits, allows the State Lab to hire more staff to process kits, and provides more training opportunities for nurses to administer the kits. The 2018 supplemental budget provides an additional \$1.5 million to further help reduce the backlog. Right now, it's estimated there are more than 10,000 untested kits in Washington.

**No new taxes:** Efforts from the governor and Democrats to push through a carbon tax and a capital gains income tax fell short the past two years. I believe we can fund our priorities without placing a greater tax burden on our families.

### Misses

**Major spending increases:** This budget makes irresponsible spending decisions, totaling a nearly 16 percent increase in spending since the previous budget was enacted. That amounts to a more than 30 percent increase in spending over four years. That's simply unsustainable and is growing at a rate much faster than our families' budgets.

**Minimal property tax relief:** With recent forecasts placing our revenue collections at \$2.3 billion over the four years since the underlying budget was enacted, we should have easily been able to provide meaningful property tax relief this year. Instead, the spending plan approved by lawmakers in March only provides \$390 million in property tax reductions for 2019. For a \$300,000 home, you'd only be getting about \$90 back and since the reduction won't kick in until 2019, there's very little chance you'll see any meaningful reduction in your taxes next year if at all. The Legislature will write another budget before any reductions take effect, and this small relief is exactly the kind of low-hanging fruit lawmakers could take back for other budgetary matters.

Republicans offered proposals that would have provided relief this year. It's a shame the majority party didn't allow those proposals to advance.

**Diverts money away from state's rainy-day fund:** This year, the majority party used a budget gimmick that diverted \$700 million away from our state's constitutionally protected rainy day fund. This violates the public's trust and could leave us vulnerable come the next economic downturn.

**No B&O tax cut for manufacturers:** Originally, the 2017-19 budget provided for a new tax preference to help stimulate job growth in manufacturing. Part of the overall budget agreement, Senate Bill 5977 would have reduced the B&O tax on manufacturers to match the rate paid by The Boeing Company and other aerospace firms.

Since 2000, employment in manufacturing has been on the decline while other sectors have seen a steady increase. In fact, roughly 51,600 manufacturing jobs have been lost in nearly two decades. These are good-paying jobs. According to the National Association of Manufacturers, those employed in Washington's manufacturing sector earn an average annual salary of nearly \$87,000.

Given the strong bipartisan nature of the agreement — the bill passed 83-10 in the House and 33-16 in the Senate — I hoped, like many of my colleagues, this important, job-stimulating measure would be included in the final budget signed into law. Instead, the governor partially vetoed the bill, pulling the plug on the economic opportunities that could have come as a result of this legislation.

## Capital budget funds local projects

Lawmakers approved the 2017-19 capital budget and the 2018 supplemental capital budget this year. Together, they put more than \$30 million behind important projects to communities throughout the 35th District. The funding will go toward:

- replacing the structures and fencing in the Scatter Creek Wildlife Area that were destroyed in a fire last August,
- designing and reconfiguring the Schafer State Park campground,
- renovating the North Mason Teen Center,
- updating existing facilities at the Port of Allyn marina,
- revitalizing the William G. Reed Library,
- building tiny homes for homeless veterans in Mason County,
- providing sewer repairs in Shelton,
- creating a wastewater connection from Puget Sound Industrial Area (South Kitsap Industrial Area) to the Belfair Wastewater Reclamation Facility,
- providing a new building for the Holly Ridge Center in Bremerton,
- improving Camp Schechter in Tumwater, and
- improving shelter resident rooms, replacing technology, and providing security upgrades at the Turning Pointe domestic violence shelter in Shelton.

# Representative Dan Griffey • 35th District

## Keeping marijuana, other harmful substances away from children and pets

In 2015, the Washington Poison Center received 272 calls related to marijuana exposure and poisonings. Of those exposures, 46 percent involved persons 19 years and younger. Last year, the Mason County Public Health Department came to me with an idea to expand the availability of lockable drug boxes when an individual purchases marijuana products and paraphernalia at retail stores.

House Bill 1250, which was signed into law in 2017, authorizes marijuana retail outlets to provide lockable drug boxes they receive as donations at no charge to customers and patients. The bill also allows stores to provide literature pertaining to the lockable boxes.

We want to give parents and guardians access to storage options so they can keep their families safe.

## Fighting for sexual assault survivors

Most bills that make it through the Legislature undergo a rigorous vetting process, giving the public ample opportunity to make their voices heard on legislation and giving lawmakers time to thoroughly consider new policies or changes to existing law. During short sessions like this year's, it can be difficult to get comprehensive pieces of legislation out of the Legislature and onto the governor's desk, especially when normal timelines for 105-day sessions are compressed into 60 days.

Sadly, that's the fate my legislation that would have eliminated the statute of limitations on rape, child molestation, and other heinous sex crimes met this year. House Bill 1155 passed out of the House with overwhelming bipartisan support, it was approved by the Senate Rules Committee, and was set to be voted on by the full Senate chamber. But on the final cutoff day in which House bills had to pass the Senate, the clock struck 5 p.m. and my bill fell short of the deadline.

My bill was not the only legislation aimed at helping sexual assault survivors that failed to advance this session. Rep. Michelle Caldier's House Bill 2585, which would have ensured rape victims get timely notice of the availability of rape kit exams at hospitals, also died in the Senate that same day. I cannot fathom why, in an institution that touts its commitment to the most vulnerable among us, the Senate majority would fail to act on critical legislation for survivors.

While I understand the shorter session can make it more difficult to get bills approved, there's no excuse for the Senate not taking action on these two bills this year. This session was far from the first time lawmakers had a chance to review House Bill 1155, and it won't be the last. I am committed to getting this bill signed into law, and will introduce it again in 2019. Until survivors get the justice they deserve, and until perpetrators spend every day in fear their monstrous crimes might catch up to them, I will not let this bill rest.

## Reducing recidivism by expanding access to inmate work programs

Inmate work programs can lead to great outcomes for individuals during the time of their incarceration and upon reentry into the community. The Correctional Industries (CI) division of the Department of Corrections provides inmate work programs throughout Washington's facilities, allowing inmates to gain work experience and earn comparable wages to what would be paid

in the community. Last year, I sponsored a bill that enables CI to provide Class I industries work programs by aligning Washington statute with federal regulations.

Class I allows CI to contract with private companies to operate their businesses inside Washington's correctional facilities. The last time Class 1 industries operated in Washington was in 2004, before the state Supreme Court ruled Class I partnerships unconstitutional in *Washington Water Jet Workers Association v. Yarborough*.

Correctional industries are evidence-based and provide inmates the tools they need to become productive members of society, reducing the likelihood of them reoffending and further burdening or harming our communities. The vocational training and soft skills correctional industries provide inmates makes a world of difference in the types of community members they become upon release.

My bill passed with near-unanimous support in both chambers, and the governor signed it into law last year.



## Helping Belfair Faith in Action HUB Center qualify for a property tax exemption

Belfair Faith in Action has raised money for the past several years to build a HUB center that hosts various activities for seniors. Prior

to construction, they were told they would receive a property tax exemption so long as the center kept to the organization's mission. The facility they built, which also hosts a local farmers market, was denied an exemption because according to state law, the facility held too many "retail activities."

I thought denying their property tax exemption based on a small technicality was wrong, so I sponsored a bill in 2017 to allow nonprofit senior centers like Belfair Faith in Action to qualify for property tax exemptions.

But what this bill really boils down to is ensuring seniors have access to health and wellness activities, and that senior centers have the ability to provide services that will keep seniors in their preferred communities and improve their quality of life. Nonprofit organizations that make positive impacts in our communities should be able to enjoy the same benefits government-operated senior centers do, and House Bill 1256 helps them do just that.

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## Representing you in Olympia

In advance of the 2017 legislative session, I was appointed to serve as the ranking Republican on the House Local Government Committee. That means I'm responsible for working with the committee's chair on forming agendas, and advising my fellow House Republican legislators on issues and legislation before the committee. While the issues we cover may not always be featured in newspaper headlines, many of the bills we consider in Local Government have a great impact on the daily operations and functions of our communities. It's an honor to serve in this leadership role.

I also serve on the House Early Learning and Human Services Committee and the House Public Safety Committee.

These assignments don't mean I'm restricted in terms of the policies I pursue. If there's ever an issue you'd like me to look into, please reach out to me. You can contact me by calling (360) 786-7966 or sending an email to [Dan.Griffey@leg.wa.gov](mailto:Dan.Griffey@leg.wa.gov).



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