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Mike Padden • Bob McCaslin • Rob Chase

2022 LEGISLATIVE REVIEW

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2022 Legislative Review

Dear Friends,

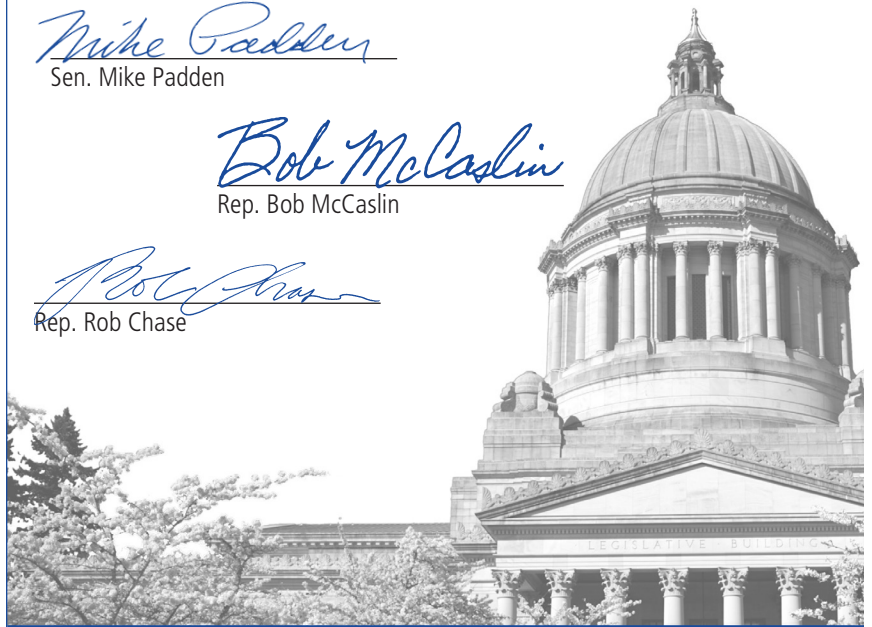
The mostly remote 2022 legislative session has ended. During a time of the highest inflation in decades, members of the majority party in Olympia voted to increase the cost of living and refused to give taxpayers any relief despite a \$15 billion surplus. During a housing crisis, they voted to increase the cost of building a home. During a public-safety crisis and a time of increased crime, they voted to decrease criminal sentences and attacked the Second Amendment and law-abiding gun owners.

We fought for safer communities, to protect your hard-earned dollars, to protect parental rights and involvement, and to protect the Second Amendment. Please read on for more details.


Sen. Mike Padden


Rep. Bob McCaslin


Rep. Rob Chase



WHAT'S INSIDE:

- Taxpayers need relief.
- Chipping away at Second Amendment Rights.
- Addressing the governor's abuse of emergency power.
- Capital Budget.
- Democrats failing to move 'Safe Washington' plan forward.
- Legislature falls short on restoring law-enforcement tools.
- Family Policy News.



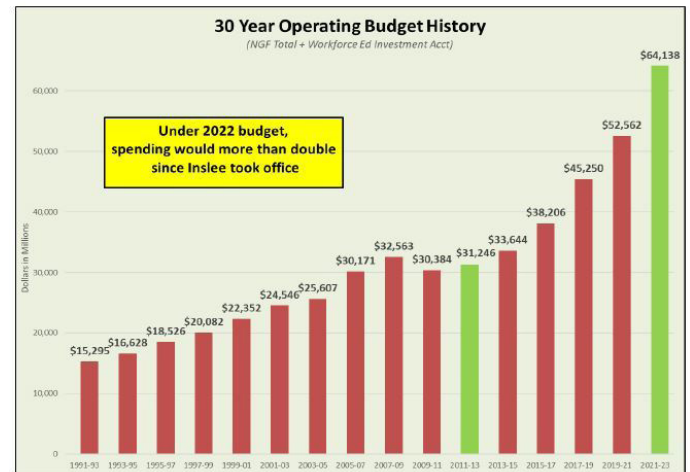
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\$15 BILLION SURPLUS? TAXPAYERS DESERVED SOME RELIEF

With the state expecting a record \$15 billion surplus over the next four years, now was certainly the time to give some back to the people in the form of tax relief. We offered legislation to reduce the property tax, state sales tax, and business-and-occupation taxes on small businesses. None was accepted. Instead, the majority party spent almost all of the surplus on new policy spending, which will have future carry-forward costs.

State spending in the 2021-23 biennium will now be \$12.5 billion higher than in 2019-21, an increase of 24%. This is unsustainable. A unique opportunity was missed to give hard-working taxpayers relief, as they struggle with higher costs for gas, food and other basics. Budget writers also left too little in reserves for the inevitable economic downturn. For these reasons, we voted no on this year's supplemental operating budget.



CAPITAL BUDGET – THE STATE’S CONSTRUCTION BUDGET

The 2022 supplemental capital budget, approved unanimously, includes: \$397,000 for a renovation of the lodge at Mount Spokane; \$100,000 for the multiyear effort to reduce milfoil and improve water quality in Newman Lake; and \$200,000 for continued improvements at Felts Field airport, a popular venue for local events and celebrations including veterans and active-duty military.

This year's funding for the 4th District is on top of the \$16.8 million for community projects and other infrastructure needs we secured in last year's capital budget. These are your tax dollars coming back to the district.



MAJORITY KEEPS CONTROVERSIAL TAX AND INSURANCE PLAN ALIVE

In 2019, against the wishes of Washington voters, the majority party approved the unpopular payroll tax and long-term care program now known as WA Cares. We believe it should be repealed because the program is inequitable to employers and employees and on track to be insolvent. The majority party voted only to delay the tax collection until 2023. We see no fix for this and will continue opposing this badly designed government program.

‘MOVE AHEAD WASHINGTON’ TRANSPORTATION PACKAGE LEAVES MANY BEHIND

We supported the 2022 supplemental transportation budget as it addresses the day-to-day operations of our state transportation agencies, such as the Department of Transportation (WSDOT) and Washington State Patrol, and continues funding for previously approved projects.

However, we could not support the Democrats' massive, partisan \$16.8 billion, 16-year transportation funding/spending package, which they call "Move Ahead Washington." Traditionally, new transportation packages are crafted by both parties. Not this time. However, partisanship is just one of many flaws with this plan.

- It increases fees by as much as \$2.3 billion on basics including license plates and driver's licenses.
- It uses money from the state's cap-and-trade scheme.
- It allocates only \$3 billion for maintenance and preservation, when WSDOT says catching up on maintenance and preservation will cost \$10 billion over 10 years.
- The plan is heavy on transit, bicycle paths and ferries as most of the money is directed toward cities in the Puget Sound area, while leaving the rest of the state behind.
- Only electric vehicles may be purchased, sold, or registered in Washington after vehicle model year 2030.

Finally, it sweeps \$57 million a year from the Public Works Assistance Account. Our local governments rely on this account for local infrastructure projects, such as water and sewer for local governments. This is the wrong approach.

A MORE SENSIBLE, VIABLE ALTERNATIVE

Republicans introduced a transportation plan before the session started. It is an outside-the-box approach that would modernize transportation funding by redirecting tax revenue from vehicle sales toward transportation projects, and avoid new taxes and fees. It would also do more to preserve and maintain existing infrastructure, and address the backlog of projects. Unfortunately, the majority insisted on taking more from drivers and vehicle owners.

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MAJORITY DEMOCRATS FAIL TO MOVE 'SAFE WASHINGTON' PLAN

During the 2021 legislative session, the majority dropped the ball on public safety. It removed critical tools from police, reduced punishment for criminals, missed opportunities to protect the public from repeat DUI offenders, and flat-out surrendered on the war on drugs.

The impacts of those decisions on the lives of Washingtonians were devastating and immediate. Violent gang- and drug-related crimes are on the rise, as property crimes are impacting families and businesses alike. Instead of criminals being handcuffed, it is members of law enforcement who are hindered from doing their jobs. Even after receiving pushback from the public, the majority was back at it again this year, introducing new measures to reduce the punishment for drive-by shootings and impaired drivers.

To address these critical issues, we unveiled a package of common-sense solutions to the public-safety crisis that is ravaging communities and destroying lives across the state.

Unfortunately, the majority dropped the ball again this session, failing to act on many key components of the Safe Washington plan.

Out of the 47 bills in our package, only three became law:

- [Senate Bill 5245](#) – Expanding the program to notify victims when offenders are released;
- [Senate Bill 5612](#) – Ensuring domestic-violence victims are able to make a statement during the sentencing of their attackers; and
- [House Bill 1571](#) – Providing protections and services for indigenous people who are missing, murdered or victims of human trafficking.



ADDRESSING THE GOVERNOR'S ABUSE OF EMERGENCY POWER

Like you, we are frustrated by the perpetual state of emergency that entered a third year while we were in session. The majority party refused to pass sensible legislation we cosponsored to reform the 1969 emergency-powers law. It's wrong that the governor also refuses to publicly announce a timeframe for him to end what has essentially been one-person rule.



LEGISLATURE FALLS SHORT ON RESTORING LAW-ENFORCEMENT TOOLS

The passage of [Engrossed Substitute House Bill 2037](#) clarifies when and how much physical force may be used by peace officers – partially addressing the problems created by the majority in 2021.

This law changes the use-of-force standard to the more balanced approach advocated by law enforcement, taking into consideration all facts known to an officer leading up to and at the time of the use of force, and also the actions of the person police are trying to stop. The fact that the majority would have failed to pass this bill without Republican votes is a concern.

We are even more disappointed that the majority ran out the clock on [ESB 5919](#), blocking a final vote even though the bill had bipartisan support in both chambers. This means peace officers will continue to face serious restrictions on when they may engage in a vehicular pursuit, even when there is reasonable suspicion a person has violated the law and the officer follows appropriate safety standards.





FAMILY POLICY NEWS

Assisted-suicide expansion bill stopped again

Here's some good news. [House Bill 1141](#), the assisted-suicide bill which failed to receive a floor vote in the Senate last year, didn't even make it out of the Senate Health and Long-Term Care Committee this year. The bill would have allowed nurse practitioners or physician assistants to help people commit suicide even though neither are officially licensed doctors. It would also have allowed lethal drugs to be shipped via mail or courier. Finally, the bill would have cut the waiting period when requesting lethal drugs to just 72 hours or less, instead of the current 15 days.

New law expands abortions, reduces care for women and eliminates medical accountability

On March 17, surrounded by abortionists, Governor Inslee signed a bill to expand access to abortion in Washington. The law created by [House Bill 1851](#) allows nurse practitioners and physician assistants to perform abortions, without a doctor present – which could also prove dangerous to the mother in the case of a serious complication. The abortionist would have complete immunity from criminal prosecution even if criminal negligence caused serious injuries or even death.

This comes after Idaho and Missouri legislators recently passed bills to protect life by limiting abortions, based on Texas law that prohibits abortions after six weeks of pregnancy. The U.S. Supreme Court is expected to revisit the *Roe v. Wade* pro-abortion decision this summer.

Majority approves assault on parental rights

Democrats voted to approve legislation that would allow a child of ANY age to provide consent for medical procedures and care without seeking the consent or even informing the child's parents or legal guardians.

The majority portrays this law as being about unaccompanied homeless children – but under [Senate Bill 5883](#), there is no requirement that a health-care provider seek documentation that a patient is an unaccompanied homeless minor at all. This law puts parents on the sideline and is so extreme that it apparently has no minimum age limit.



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Though the session is over, Team Padden will continue to serve you back in our district office. From left to right: Legislative Assistant Jacob Clark, Session Aide Marvel Travis and Senator Padden.

SEN. MIKE PADDEN

Partisan session leads to several missed opportunities

Even in some of the most contentious years, lawmakers will still come together to advance common-sense bipartisan legislation to help the people of Washington. Not this year. This session, the majority pushed through its agenda and not only iced out the public but refused to move several important bills that I offered this year.

Senate Bill 5710 was aimed at reducing contamination in the state toxicology laboratory. This bill would have required testing for contamination at the lab, and that the lab submit an annual report on its findings to the Washington State Forensic Investigations Council, the Senate Law and Justice Committee and the House Public Safety Committee. It passed the Senate 47-0, only to die in the House.

Senate Bill 5332 would clarify equipment requirements for wheeled all-terrain vehicles. The bill would have added a definition of required equipment to the law that covers ORV and WATVs. It got a late start last session and didn't have time for a final House vote. This year it passed the Senate 49-0, only to die in the House again.

Senate Bill 5781, a measure to deal with organized retail theft – a crime you may have seen featured in recent news reports – is one of the bills included in our Republican “Safe Washington” package. It passed the Senate 46-3, but was ignored in the House.

Senate Bill 5054 is a bill dealing with impaired drivers, which would have the “lookback” period in determining if an offense qualifies under the state’s felony-DUI law. Even though the bill was combined with an alternative-treatment option recommended by Democrat Sen. John Lovick and passed the Senate 48-0, it died in the House.

Senate Bill 5839 focused on protecting first responders and would have created the crime of interfering with a firefighter or emergency medical services provider. The bill passed the Senate 48-1 yet also died in the House.

The pattern is clear. These bills I introduced were clearly bipartisan and have statewide benefit, yet they were all rejected by a House majority pushing a Seattle-centric agenda.

REP. BOB MCCASLIN

House Bill 2001, which passed almost unanimously, is my bill to address some of the complications of the Growth Management Act (GMA), something my father, the late Sen. Bob McCaslin, foresaw decades ago. I want to give local jurisdictions more flexibility when addressing homelessness and housing affordability. Jurisdictions that fully plan under the GMA are allowed to enact affordable-housing incentive programs to provide for the development of low-income housing units. My bill would allow tiny-home communities to be part of those incentive programs.

My original intent was to allow for these tiny-home communities outside the urban-growth boundaries of the GMA. This is what we need to do to keep housing affordable and to address the homelessness problems in our state. Unfortunately, that specific portion of my bill was stripped out by an amendment.

However, this new law is still another tool in the toolbox for local jurisdictions to have the flexibility they need to address their own housing and homelessness problems.

[It's time for me to leave the Legislature...](#)

It has been the honor of a lifetime serving you in the state House of Representatives these past eight years. I thank you for placing your trust in me – it is not something I ever took lightly or for granted! However, I believe my time in the state House has come to an end. I will not be seeking re-election to the Legislature this year.

It was humbling to follow in my father’s footsteps. The late Sen. Bob McCaslin was a champion of private-property rights, individual liberty, and fiscal conservative values. I hope I was able to partially fill his large shoes. Thank you for allowing me to serve you.

REP. ROB CHASE

Virtual session lacked collaboration and bipartisanship

The virtual or remote setting has been detrimental to the legislative process. There has been a lack of communication and some of the high-profile issues have been very partisan. It also makes it difficult to pass legislation when you are in the minority. Below are some of the bills I have sponsored or co-sponsored. While they didn't make it through the legislative process, they are issues I will continue to work on.

House Bill 1371 – Eliminating state property taxes. This legislation would have used a phased approach to eliminate state property taxes over a four-to-five-year period. We had an opportunity to provide meaningful property-tax relief, but the majority ignored our efforts.

House Bill 1567 – Improving emergency preparedness. It is important to make sure our state is ready for extensive, catastrophic emergencies. Under this bill, the state Military Department would conduct a study to determine the quantity of commodities needed to supply citizens with necessary emergency supplies – such as food, medicine, and personal protective equipment – for at least a year.

House Bill 1923 – Protecting the parent-child relationship. This legislation would ensure there is sufficient evidence of abuse to remove a child from his/her home rather than reasonable belief abuse may be occurring. Also, it shortens the time a child can be held to 24 hours, from 72, unless a court has ordered continued shelter care.

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NEW LAWS CHIP AWAY AT SECOND AMENDMENT RIGHTS

As strong supporters of the Second Amendment and the related rights in our own state constitution (Article I, Section 24), we opposed the majority's creation of laws that absolutely will affect your ability to defend yourself, your loved ones, and your property, and will do nothing about the increase in violent crime:

Senate Bill 5078 bans the sale, transfer, and import of firearm magazines holding more than 10 rounds. Supporters misleadingly claim these are "high-capacity magazines." Most gun owners know this really bans standard magazines, as the most popular firearms usually come equipped to hold over 10 rounds. This new law takes effect July 1.

House Bill 1705 bans hobbyists and gun enthusiasts from assembling firearms using various parts. It's a misguided attempt to go after so-called "ghost" guns that can't be traced because they don't have serial numbers on certain pieces. The new law, which also takes effect July 1, ignores how the majority of guns found at crime scenes are untraceable because their serial numbers have been filed or acid-etched off.

House Bill 1630 bans firearms at schools, local-government meetings and election-related facilities. Open carry and concealed carry of a firearm or other weapon at school-board meetings on school-district property are now gross misdemeanors, punishable by up to one year in jail, a fine of up to \$5,000, or both. Violators also would have their concealed-carry license revoked for three years. This new law takes effect June 9.

The majority party pushed these types of bills while also introducing legislation to reduce sentences for violent criminals, and allow their early release, and even reduce the penalties for drive-by-shootings.



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