



*Senator Eide's Week in Review*

*January 30 – February 3*

### **In the Spotlight: Marriage Equality**

This week the Senate voted to pass SB 6239, the marriage equality bill. I joined 27 other Senators from both parties in voting to pass this historic bill. I have always stood against discrimination, and I know this legislation will bring us closer to equality for all of Washington's families. For decades our country has struggled with discrimination in many forms. I am proud that, in the past, our state has joined together to support equality for women, racial minorities, people with disabilities, and religions.

I understand that there are many who have concerns about this issue. There are also many who stand in strong support of this legislation. Some think this bill will infringe on religious rights. It will not. The legislation includes an important exemption for religious organizations and clergy to continue to exercise religious freedom. No private institution will be required to marry a couple it does not want to marry.

Since I was elected to the legislature I have supported civil unions and domestic partnerships. As legislators, we must be vigilant about protecting all of our citizens against discrimination.

The bill will now move on to the House of Representatives.

### **Record tax break for Washington businesses**

Washington employers will collect a record \$56 million in 2011 federal tax credits because they hired certain hard-to-place job seekers, thanks to the Work Opportunity Tax Credit. What's more, even bigger tax breaks are available beginning in 2012 to encourage businesses to hire more veterans.

Businesses that hire military veterans, the disabled, ex-inmates, food-stamp recipients and others can receive up to \$2,400 in tax savings. If they

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hire welfare recipients, they can receive up to \$9,000 in tax credits.

Employers who want to participate should contact the Employment Security Department.

You can [read more about the program here](#).

### Discover Pass



trails and trailheads.

Last session the Legislature approved the [Discover Pass](#), an annual or day-use permit to allow access to Washington's state-managed recreation lands – including state parks like Dash Point, water-access points, heritage sites, wildlife and natural areas,

Last week, the Senate voted to make the Discover Pass transferable between two vehicles in response to concerns raised by the public. This is a small change, but an important one. Different activities require different modes of transportation. It's my hope that this improvement will make visiting state parks easier for citizens.



### Early Learning and K-12 Education

This week I co-sponsored SB 6562, a bill that requires the Superintendent of Public Instruction to develop and implement a program to put automatic external defibrillators (AEDs) in each high school in the state.

Our community has already taken steps to place these devices in schools. Several years ago [the Heart of Federal Way Schools](#) raised enough money to purchase AEDs for all Federal Way public schools. Having these devices in place saved a life last December at a Federal Way high school.

I have always supported legislation that increases public safety and I believe that SB 6562 will make our schools and communities safer and more responsive in emergency situations.

## Work Study

This week the Senate Higher Education and Workforce Development committee heard a bill that would fund the continuation of Washington's Work Study program. The State Work Study program was created by the Legislature in 1974 to help students in need earn money and gain job experience. Last year, the program served 7,800 Washington residents.

My main priority this session is maintaining and creating jobs. Programs like State Work Study are an important resource for Washington residents looking to continue their education or train in new careers. There are no easy solutions to the current budget deficit. We are working hard this session to find solutions to the budget that are fair, sustainable and reflective of the needs of the people of our community and Washington State. Legislators are currently working with businesspeople to try to find a source of revenue that will both be fair and maintain the program.

**If you are ever in Olympia and are from the 30th District, please visit my office: Legislative Building 305. I would love to see you!**

### This week's visitors:

- Ryan Herrera, Scott Ervine, Chris Merritt, Matt Riesenbus, Steve Perry, Orson Gurney, Chris Johnson, Daniel Flood, and Dave Little; Washington State Council of Fire Fighters
- Amy Johnson and Kathryn Everett; Planned Parenthood
- Brian Wilson; Federal Way Police Chief
- Joe McDermott; King County Council
- Federal Way High School Students



*Senator Tracey Eide meets with students from Federal Way High School at the State Capitol.*

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- Tom Pierson; President & CEO Tacoma-Pierce County Chamber
- Cermat Rickey; National MS Society Day of Activism

-Lisa Waisath; Aging Services of Washington  
-Betty Huff and Joann Piquette; Arts Day  
-Jacqueline Lannoye, Richard Ransdell, Tamara Stanhope, Adrianna Wilshire, Michelle Foley, Jessica Eisenberg, and Vina Gorospe; Physical Therapy Legislative Impact Day  
-Sue Shields, Jessica Fortescue, and Cindi Holmstrom; Puget Sound Skills Center  
-Teresa Lemmons; Executive Director of Washington State Microenterprise Association

As always, it is an honor to serve you.

Best,

Tracey Eide

Please do not use the Reply button on the mail messages. To contact Senator Eide directly, send e-mail to [tracey.eide@leg.wa.gov](mailto:tracey.eide@leg.wa.gov)

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