



**April 16, 2007**

### **Last week of session...**

Friends, today is the beginning of the last week of the 2007 Legislative Session. I'm excited to have seen some of my good bills pass, and happy to be able to provide you with these updates on some of the things I've been able to do for you here in Olympia. **It truly is an honor to represent you in the Senate,** and I look forward to seeing some of you personally back home once session ends.

In this edition of my e-mail update, I'll be filling you in on the current status of my prison and supervision reform bill. The bad news is my original bill is dead, but I'm pleased to say that the good news is it has been resurrected and the new bill will be better for all of us in Pierce County.

Thank you for taking the time to read this, and as always, if you have any questions, comments or concerns, please e-mail me at [Carrell.Mike@leg.wa.gov](mailto:Carrell.Mike@leg.wa.gov), or if you're in Olympia, drop by my office to say hi.

### **SB 5070, prison and supervision reform bill now SB 6172**

That's right, my original **Senate Bill 5070** was killed by the House. The new bill, **Senate Bill 6172**, retains all of the provisions that I was hoping to get passed from the original bill. SB 6172 has things that I couldn't get through in SB 5070, not the least of which is something called "fair share." That's a provision that would require offenders to be released into the community where they committed their original felony crime, instead of being dumped in disproportionate numbers into Pierce County.

**Under the fair share provision, released felons would go back to the county where they committed their first felony,** when the prison system first began tracking them. There are only a few exceptions to fair share. The felon would not be released back into his or her community if:

1. it would be a severe detriment to the offender's victim, such as in a case involving sexual crimes;
2. there are direct criminal associations in the community, such as fellow gang members; and/or

3. the offender has strong family ties in another county in Washington.

Nearly everything else in my original prison and supervision reform bill still exists in the new bill, including the individual reentry plans that are developed specifically for each offender when they enter prison and the creation of community transition coordination networks to work in tandem with the Department of Corrections and local authorities to assist offenders with their reentry.

This is a big step forward for prison and supervision reform in Washington, and I'm very excited about the new fair share aspect. I'm looking forward to seeing fewer offenders released into our Pierce County neighborhoods and I'm proud to sponsor Senate Bill 6172, which will keep our citizens safer and reduce the drain on local governments and taxpayers.

### **Saving jobs**

Sometimes in the Legislature we have to deal with proposals that look good on the surface, but really they do a lot of bad stuff to good people. One example of that is **House Bill 1993**, which will designate two types of counselors in the state of Washington. The term "counselors" includes mental health counselors, marriage and family therapists, behavioral counselors, etc.

The reason this bill was proposed is because there were some counselors licensed for their profession, and others who were registered counselors. Apparently, someone who was a registered counselor had been engaging in illegal behavior and as a result, this bill sought to do away with some 8,000 registered counselors across the state. There was also no direction given in the bill about what to do with the thousands of patients being treated by these counselors. That is a very reactionary way to do business in the legislature, and it is not good policy to let one bad apple spoil the whole bunch.

Last summer there was a legislative task force to examine the issue, and the task force did not include any registered counselors. In fact, they had no idea a task force had been charged with determining the fate of their profession. **Most registered counselors are very reputable and highly skilled, and I fought to prevent them from losing their jobs.** I'm pleased to report that HB 1993 did not come up for a floor vote before the cutoff date, and those 8,000 registered counselors can breathe a little easier knowing that their jobs are secure.

### **Cleaning up our lakes**

Another victory for people in Pierce County is in the state capital budget. I was able to secure funding to help try to clean up one of the lakes in our community.

As our Washington lakes age, toxic algae blooms continue to be an issue of concern. While not all lakes turn toxic, many of them have the ability to do so and it can happen in a heartbeat. **So Don Russell, a constituent of mine, suggested that Lake Waughop in Lakewood would be an ideal test lake to use calcium hydroxide as a means to control algae.**

To date, the Department of Ecology has spent a significant amount of money on educating the public about toxic algae. We now must work together to develop cost effective and environmentally friendly treatment options designed to prevent and suppress hazardous algae blooms. Calcium hydroxide costs half as much as other methods that have been tested.

All the information collected regarding the pilot project will be reported to DOE for assistance in dealing with algae control in other lakes throughout Washington. **I'm glad to see that Lakewood will play a pivotal role in how other beautiful Washington lakes are kept clean and healthy.**

### In Closing

**Thanks again for taking the time to read my e-mail update.** I invite you to please call, write or e-mail me with any other comments, questions or concerns you might have. You can reach me using the information below.

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Sincerely,



Mike Carrell  
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