



October 29, 2007

Preparing for the 2008 Legislative Session

Hello friends and neighbors,

In just a few short months the 2008 Legislative Session will begin, and I've been working hard all year long to prepare for it. As you're probably aware, **I'm continuing to work on developing prison reform, but I'm also addressing issues such as eminent domain and strengthening the Becca laws I developed 13 years ago.** I'll go into more detail about some of these issues later in this update.

I also wanted you to know that you will see some changes as we get closer to session. **Much of the material on my Legislative web site (www.senatorepublicans.wa.gov/carrell) will disappear after June 30th.** This is because of state policies regarding election year activities. Also, I will only be able to send out two mailings beginning December 1 of this year. You should expect the first mailing, a "government guide" with lots of helpful information and phone numbers, around February. I recommend you keep it near your phone or with your phone book. The second mailing will be my end-of-session newsletter, and you can expect that around May. Lastly, due to the election year restrictions, I won't be able to send you these e-mail updates from my Legislative e-mail address after November 30th of this year. However, when there are hot issues being debated in the Legislature, I feel it is my duty to keep you informed of what's going on and how it will affect you. **That's why I'd like to continue sending you updates from my personal e-mail address (mcarrell@hotmail.com) during session, which runs from January 14th to March 13th.** **If you are interested in continuing to receive these updates, please send an e-mail to mcarrell@hotmail.com and I'll add you to my distribution list.**

These restrictions apply to all state legislators, both senators and representatives. In fact, because representatives are up for election every two years (as opposed to every four years for senators), they are prevented from communicating with their constituents about half the time they are in office. Personally, I think it's unfortunate that these rules are so strict, but the state is very careful to not use public resources for campaign purposes. So after November 30th I will be sending out these updates from my home e-mail address.

Thanks again for your understanding, and I'm looking forward to keeping you up-to-date throughout the session.

Issues on which I'm working

Even though being a state senator is a part-time job, I've been very busy spending a majority of my time this summer and fall working on legislative issues. These kinds of interim activities usually fly under the radar, so I wanted you to be aware of what I'm working on.

I've been serving on many different task forces and work groups, including the Attorney General's Eminent Domain Task Force, the Child Support Work Group, the Legislative Task Force on Community Custody and Community Supervision, the Joint Legislative Task Force on Offenders Programs, the Joint Committee on Military and Veteran Affairs, and the Washington State Becca Task Force.

You're probably already aware of the time and effort I'm investing to keep you safer by developing ways to prevent offenders from committing new crimes once they are released from prison. I'm happy to report that the new law is working, and I'm most proud of the section requiring offenders to be returned to their county of origin. That means that when an offender is released, instead of being dumped into Pierce County, he or she will be sent back to the county where they committed their first felony. At a recent conference I attended at the Doubletree Hotel in Seatac, a representative of the Department of Corrections made a simple point that stuck with me. **Since every county in Washington sends felony offenders to prison, every county is part of the problem, and so every county needs to be part of the solution.** That means that counties need to step up to the plate, do the right thing and start developing an infrastructure in their communities to support felons returning from prison rather than the past practice of dumping them into counties like Pierce simply because it's convenient.

I'm also spending time on further regulation of bail enforcement agents (bounty hunters). I attended a meeting with the Department of Licensing (the agency responsible for regulating bail enforcement agents) in Olympia several weeks ago. **I'm working with the DOL to create a bill for the 2008 session to tighten regulations.** There are a number of areas of concern that everyone agrees need to be adjusted regarding bounty hunters in our state. One is the tune-up of education and training requirements. My 2004 bill requiring training for bail enforcement agents is no longer as effective with new people coming into the business. As a result, we are going to add significantly more training for new agents. There are about 120 licensed bail enforcement agents in Washington, but only 20 are working full time to track down bail jumpers. I am also working on making modifications to the identification bail enforcement agents have to carry when apprehending a suspect. **All of these changes to the bail bond**

enforcement industry must be carefully balanced with liability issues to ensure bail enforcement agents are allowed to do their jobs, while simultaneously keeping the public safe.

In Closing

Now that the 2008 legislative session is approaching, what additional issues do you think should be addressed? I always appreciate your input, and it is my job to serve your needs, so please don't hesitate to contact me via my office or at home. It is a privilege to represent you in the Washington State Senate, and if you know of anyone who would also like to receive these e-mail updates, please feel free to have them get in touch with my office, either by phone or e-mail, to be added to the list. **Remember...if you would like to continue receiving these updates, please send me an e-mail at mcarrell@hotmail.com.**

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Sincerely,



Mike Carrell
28th District State Senator