



# Olympia Report

**Jim Honeyford**

*Serving all of Klickitat and Skamania counties, South Yakima county and southeast Clark county*



**State Senator • 15th District**

APRIL 17, 2009

Well, we're down to the wire now. The state Legislature has just finished up the 14th week of its 15-week session in Olympia. Both the Senate and House budget chairs have now released their proposed spending plans for the next two years. They will be working over the next few days to iron out differences and come up with a final budget for the full Legislature to consider – I hope – before adjournment on Sunday, April 26. In the meantime, bills necessary to implement the budget, including another multi-state lottery game and repealing the sales tax exemption on the purchase of hybrid vehicles, will be moved through the process.

## Democrats sponsor bill to create a state income tax

Two days after the Senate Democrats introduced a budget that slashes funding for schools and colleges, five Democrat senators introduced a state income tax bill to provide funding for education. The measure, [Senate Bill 6147](#), starts Washington down the slippery slope of becoming an income tax state – first the high-wage earners, then everybody that still has a job. This is exactly what happened in 1913 when the federal government created the income tax. The first income tax started at 1 percent and it applied only to the wealthiest people. That didn't last, and it wouldn't last in Washington either. In fact, there are already hints by some in the leadership of the majority party that the state ought to tax income starting at \$250,000 or even \$100,000. If you are not included under these "millionaire tax" proposals, don't worry. Wait long enough, and you will be!

## Olympia Tea Party sends message: "Stop spending our money!"

On April 15, tax day, citizens across Washington and across the nation joined to protest out-of-control government spending and push back against new and higher taxes to pay for it all. A citizen rally was held in Olympia that day on the



Capitol steps that drew more than 5000 people, making it one of the largest gatherings at the Capitol on record. Other "tea parties" were also held in locations statewide.

To acknowledge this, I made a point of personal privilege from the Senate Chamber, where I called on my colleagues to attend the rally and hear the voices of average taxpayers.

This is particularly important given the fact that our state budget has ballooned by more than 33 percent over the past four years. One proposal would include a 0.3 percent increase in the sales tax. The majority party is even talking about new taxes – including a state income tax – to take more out of your wallet. My message is different. I believe that "Yes, we can!" balance the budget without raising taxes.

I also introduced a measure, Senate Joint Memorial 8016, calling on President Obama and Congress to reject our nation's not-so-slow creep towards socialism, which has been epitomized by the big government bailouts and has spurred the national tea party movement.

## Senate passes bill to restrict employer rights in industrial insurance appeals

[Substitute Senate Bill 1402](#) would prohibit employers from contacting an injured worker's doctor without prior written authorization once an appeal

*(continued on next page)*

## Senate Republican Assistant Floor Leader

### Committee assignments:

- Environment, Water & Energy, Ranking Member
- Labor, Commerce & Consumer Protection
- Ways & Means

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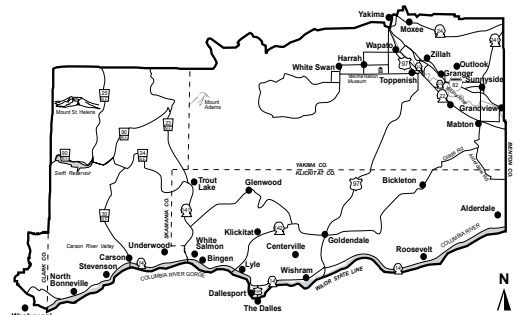
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**15th District**



has been filed. This measure would set different rules for the worker's attorney than for an employer's attorney. The result could be more litigation, a more adversarial public insurance system and the more difficult and costly resolution of claims. Several amendments offered by Senate Republicans to level the playing field were defeated mostly along party lines.

### Washington attorney general provides "recession survival guide" online

The worst economic downturn in generations has created a perfect storm of financial shocks: evaporating investments, foreclosures and job losses. To add insult to injury, a new generation of thieves increasingly target the dwindling bank balances of struggling Washington residents. To provide you with information about legitimate resources to survive the recession and avoid such schemes,

the Washington attorney general's office created a new Web page at: [www.atg.wa.gov/economy.aspx](http://www.atg.wa.gov/economy.aspx).

### 2009 Community Resource Guide Available Online

In order to save money in this tight budget year, I have decided not to mail the updated 2009 resource guide as in the past. Instead, you can now find it on my website.

### Sign up for Sen. Honeyford's E-Newsletter

This will be the last issue of the Olympia Report for this legislative session. I look forward to briefing you about the final status of major legislation in my End of Session Review, a newsletter I put out with my fellow 15th District legislators. You should be receiving it in the next few weeks.



Due to election-year ethics rules, I will not be able to mail out the Olympia Report next session. If you would still like to receive my updates electronically, please feel free to add your name to my mailing list by sending me an email to [Honeyford.Jim@leg.wa.gov](mailto:Honeyford.Jim@leg.wa.gov). Please put "UPDATE ME!" in the subject line.

Follow Sen. Honeyford on



<http://twitter.com/jimhoneyford>

Twitter is a free service that lets you keep in touch with people through the exchange of quick, frequent answers to one simple question: What are you doing? You can receive updates via mobile texting, instant message, or the web.

Please use this space for any comments, suggestions or problems you would like me to know about. Or call the toll-free legislative hotline at 1-800-562-6000.

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