

PATTY MURRAY'S WASHINGTON VIEW

U.S. Senator Patty Murray's Weekly Report to the People of Washington – April 15, 2008

Wild Sky Wilderness Bill Passes Senate

An Important Barrier to Preserving Wilderness in Our State has Now Been Cleared

Last Thursday, I helped lead a bill to passage in the Senate that will designate 106,577 acres of national forest in east Snohomish County as wilderness. This designation will preserve the pristine nature of the land, protect wildlife, promote clean water, enhance and protect recreational opportunities for the region, and contribute to the local economy. - [More](#) | [Video](#)

["Another Step Closer"](#) – Seattle Times

.....

Housing: Funding Counseling Services that Have Proven they Keep Families in their Homes

Last Thursday, I successfully worked with several colleagues in the Senate to provide an additional \$80 million in mortgage counseling funds into a housing bill approved by the Senate. Housing counseling has proven to be one of the most successful and cost-effective ways of avoiding foreclosure, with a 96% foreclosure avoidance success rate. The additional funds will ensure that more struggling homeowners can access the critical services housing counselors provide. - [More](#)

.....

Flooding: Questioning the Bush Administration on their Decision Not to Request Funding for Centralia Flood Control Project

Last week, I got the opportunity to question a top Bush Administration Army Corps of Engineers official about why funding for a critical flood control project was left out of the Administration's budget. The need for the project, which will build a network of levees, was sadly reinforced by last December's flooding that badly damaged many parts of our state. I will be working to include the necessary funding for this project in the final federal budget for next year.

[More](#) | [Audio: Q & A from the Hearing](#)

["Murray rips administration for no funds for Chehalis flood project"](#) – The Olympian

.....

Hanford: Fighting For A Budget that Meets our Commitment to the Cleanup

Last Wednesday, I asked Department of Energy officials to explain the budget that the Bush administration has put forward that underfunds the critical nuclear cleanup efforts at Hanford Nuclear Reservation. I am very disappointed that the DoE has proposed cutting cleanup at Hanford by \$36.5 million. - [Video](#)

["Sen. Murray rebukes DOE over Hanford budget"](#) – Tri-City Herald

.....

Tax Collection: Calling for an End to Wasteful Outsourcing of IRS Duties

Last week, I joined with Senator Byron Dorgan to call on the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) to end a program to outsource federal tax debt collection to private firms which lost \$50 million in its first year and is expected to lose more in the future. I believe the program is a wasteful use of taxpayer dollars and I am very concerned that private debt collection workers have violated federal debt collection laws and disclosed confidential taxpayer information.

[More](#)

.....

Cystic Fibrosis: Raising Awareness

Last week, I introduced a Senate resolution to help raise the awareness and understanding of Cystic Fibrosis. The resolution supports designating the month of May as National Cystic Fibrosis Awareness month.

[More](#)