

PATTY MURRAY'S WASHINGTON VIEW

U.S. Senator Patty Murray's Weekly Report to the People of Washington – March 12, 2004

Fighting to Fully Fund the No Child Left Behind Act

This week I called on my colleagues in the Senate to fulfill the federal commitment to students, teachers and schools in Washington state and across the country. I introduced an amendment to the fiscal year 2005 budget to fully fund the No Child Left Behind Act. Unfortunately, the amendment, which provides \$8.6 billion to help schools meet the federal mandate that was passed two years ago, failed on a 46-52 vote.

My legislation would have allowed Washington state to allow our state to reach 28,000 more low-income children and provide after-school support for another 20,000 students throughout Washington.

The President signed NCLB in 2001 based on two commitments: schools would be held accountable for their progress, and the federal government would provide schools with the resources needed to meet those new requirements. But over two years later, the federal government continues to choose a misguided tax policy over helping struggling schools to meet accountability standards. States like Washington cannot and should not have to foot the bill for these federal standards.

This is an unacceptable situation. I intend to continue fighting to see that we keep our promises to Washington's students.
<http://murray.senate.gov/news.cfm?id=218902>

Extended Trade Adjustment Assistance for Boeing Employees

I'm proud that as the highest-ranking Democrat on the Senate Employment, Safety and Training Subcommittee, I was able to secure eligibility for Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) to all laid-off Boeing Commercial Airplane Group workers and to employees laid-off at the Triumph Group in Spokane.

This means that these workers can now get:

- Federal income support, (weekly cash payments available for 52 weeks after a worker's state unemployment compensation is exhausted);
- Training assistance (up to 104 weeks of approved training in occupational skills, basic or remedial education, or literacy training);
- A job search allowance (reimbursements for approved expenses if workers are successful in obtaining employment outside the normal commuting area).

I'm also excited to have worked with the Machinists Union, the Washington State Labor Council and the Department of Labor to ensure approval of the Machinists' petition and provide this important relief to hardworking families that have lost their jobs due to forces beyond their control.

<http://murray.senate.gov/news.cfm?id=219096>

Transportation Means Jobs

I know that in Washington, transportation is about more than merely getting from one place to another. Transportation

means jobs. That's why this week I made a strong case for additional funding for transportation projects here in Washington. In a hearing of the Transportation Subcommittee, I questioned Transportation Secretary Norman Y. Mineta about the Administration's plans to effectively freeze transportation spending at last year's levels. This would reduce investments in critical infrastructure, which is bad for our state.

The proposed budget would:

- Dramatically cut efforts to modernize our aging air traffic control system, which passengers rely on for safe air travel;
- Force Amtrak into bankruptcy, threatening passenger service in Washington and across the country;
- Force significant cuts to the Essential Air Service (EAS) Program which ensures affordable air service for rural communities. These cuts would force Ephrata and Moses Lake to come up with a 25 percent match, or \$336,139 in order to remain part of the EAS.

I also encourage the President to sign the Surface Transport Reauthorization (SAFE-TEA) that the Senate passed last month. This bill funds improvements to our roads, highways, and ferries for the next six years. But the President wants to reduce the levels set by the Senate by \$45 billion over six years. The reduction will result in:

- A failure to create 38,000 jobs in Washington state, and 2.1 million jobs nationally;
- A cut of \$807 million in revenue for Washington state alone;
- An increase in the number of transportation jobs outsourced overseas.

<http://murray.senate.gov/news.cfm?id=218860>

<http://murray.senate.gov/news.cfm?id=218897>

Vancouver Site Announced for Bay Bridge Construction Project

Yesterday I announced that Bay Bridge Fabricators, a southwest Washington consortium of four companies formed to construct steel components for the Bay Bridge, has selected a site at the Port of Vancouver to produce steel components for the San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge East Span project. The Port of Vancouver site was selected over other potential sites in Oregon and Clark County.

The project is potentially a powerful economic engine in Washington. If the consortium is successful, the steel deck work could create:

- More than 300 jobs for at least five years,
- More than \$75 million in wages and benefits to the region,
- Demand for 3.5 million man-hours to complete the 32,000-ton steel deck work project.

I want to congratulate the people of Vancouver on capturing this significant opportunity. The family-wage jobs are a much needed addition to the local economy and the project will contribute in a very important way to an essential part of our nation's transportation infrastructure.

<http://murray.senate.gov/news.cfm?id=219023>

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I've posted some videos of this week's speeches and remarks relating to these issues at <http://murray.senate.gov/video/>.

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