

PATTY MURRAY'S WASHINGTON VIEW

U.S. Senator Patty Murray's Weekly Report to the People of Washington – July 22, 2005

We Must Care for Our Veterans

EMERGENCY SPENDING FOR VETS' HEALTHCARE

Three weeks ago, after months of denials, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) finally conceded that they are billions of dollars short of funding for both this year and next year. Since then, I've been working to provide funding so VA is able to meet our veterans' healthcare needs. I passed an amendment to provide \$1.5 billion in emergency funding to the agency for this fiscal year, which runs until September 30, 2005.

And, this week, I supported \$36.6 billion in spending for the VA for fiscal year 2006, which begins in less than three months. \$1.977 billion of that funding is designated as emergency spending and will go towards meeting VA's critical fiscal year 2006 shortfall.

This funding represents a significant increase over both last year's spending and the President's request, and I'm glad my colleagues have joined me in taking the next step forward to fill the VA's shortfall. I look forward to working in negotiations with the House of Representatives to maintain Senate funding levels so we can keep our promise to care for our veterans when they return home from their missions.

See video of my speech on vets' health care funding:

<http://murray.senate.gov/video/050628-vets.ram>

Sign up to get periodic updates on my work for veterans:

<http://murray.senate.gov/vetupdates>

Supporting Military Construction

On Tuesday, I announced over \$319 million in construction projects for Washington state military installations in the 2006 Military Construction and VA Appropriations bill. As a member of this subcommittee, I secured the funding to modernize and upgrade the facilities in which our men and women in uniform and their families live, work and train. The funding will be distributed as follows:

- Air Force – Fairchild AFB - over \$8 million;
- Army – Fort Lewis - over \$150 million;
- Navy – Sub Base Bangor - over \$108 million; and
- Navy – Naval Station Everett - over \$50 million.

Get full details at:

<http://murray.senate.gov/news.cfm?id=240899>

Securing WA Transportation

On Monday, I announced \$2.7 million in U.S. Department of Homeland Security Transit System grants for Washington state. These grants, which I advocated for as a member of the Senate Appropriations Homeland Security Subcommittee, will help protect regional transit systems and the state's many commuters. Funding will go to:

- Central Puget Sound Regional Transit Authority, King County Department of Transportation, and City of Seattle Monorail -\$1,100,000 for Rail Transit Systems;
- King County Department of Transportation - \$900,000 for Intra-City Bus Systems; and
- Washington State Ferries - \$704,213 for Ferry Systems.

Get the full details on these projects:

<http://murray.senate.gov/news.cfm?id=240886>

Funding Transportation & Economic Development

This week, as the highest-ranking Democrat on the Senate Transportation, Treasury, and Housing and Urban Development (TTHUD) Appropriations subcommittee, I secured funding for a number of high-priority transportation and economic development projects throughout our state. The funding is part of the TTHUD Appropriations bill for 2006. Funding includes:

- King County Metro Bus Radio Replacement Program - \$4 million;
- Washington State Farmworker Housing Trust - \$1.5 million;
- Puget Sound Economic Development and Renewal Projects - \$4 million;
- Spokane International Airport - \$3 million;
- Olympic Peninsula Transportation Priorities - \$2.6 million;
- Skagit County Bus Service - \$850,000;
- Vancouver Transportation Priorities - \$2.5 million;
- Tri-Cities, Ben Franklin Transit - \$1 million; and
- Spokane Economic Development and Renewal Projects – over \$825,000.

Get full details on any of these projects, and more:

<http://murray.senate.gov/news>

Victory for Our Wine Industry

This week, I also stood up for Washington's wine industry as I succeeded in fighting the inclusion of unfair user fees in an appropriations bill. The fees were proposed by the Bush administration under the Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau (TTB), and would be a particular burden for small wineries. Winning the fight against the Administration's unfair fees is great news for Washington state wine.

Get more on my work for Washington's wine industry:

<http://murray.senate.gov/wine>

Sign up to get periodic updates on my work for WA wine:

<http://murray.senate.gov/wine/wineupdates.cfm>

Defending American Aerospace Jobs

On Wednesday, the World Trade Organization took up the United States' case against the European Union and its unfair subsidies to Airbus. Wednesday's action by the WTO is another big step in the ongoing effort to hold Airbus and its job-killing, trade-distorting subsidy practices accountable. Due to Europe's insincere attempts to resolve these issues, the US will now aggressively combat launch aid subsidies before the WTO.

For the past year, I've been fighting to maintain American leadership in the aerospace industry and keep American aerospace jobs here at home. I have a three-pronged strategy when it comes to fighting Airbus's unfair competition. I'm working to:

- Stop the subsidies that European governments give Airbus;
- Debunk Airbus's false claims that it creates American jobs and that it is an American company; and
- Show that Airbus does not care about American workers or American security.

This WTO trade case is the next step in my efforts, and I'm glad that we're moving forward in the fight to protect American leadership – and American jobs – in aerospace.

Sign up to get my aerospace update:

<http://murray.senate.gov/aeroupdates/index.cfm>

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