

# PATTY MURRAY'S WASHINGTON VIEW

U.S. Senator Patty Murray's Weekly Report to the People of Washington – December 9, 2005

## Creating Opportunity for Our Vets

**TACOMA: Veterans' Small Business Roundtable** – This week, I held a roundtable discussion in Tacoma to hear from service-disabled veterans who own small businesses about challenges they face in procuring government contracts. In 2004, President Bush, in an Executive Order, mandated 3% of government contracts set aside for businesses owned by disabled vets. No major federal agency has met this mandate.

Also joining me at the roundtable were representatives of the U.S. Small Business Administration, the Department of Veterans' Affairs, and the U.S. General Services Administration, all of which are key partners in the effort to increase small business ownership among veterans.

Get my vet update: <http://murray.senate.gov/vetupdates>

## Supporting WA's Ports

**PORT OF VANCOUVER** – On Monday, I announced \$2.3 million I secured for the Port of Vancouver's Freight Access project, which will help the Port handle an expected surge in cargo, will reduce traffic congestion in downtown Vancouver and neighboring communities, and will support new jobs and economic development at the Port.

**PORT OF OLYMPIA** – On Tuesday, I joined Port leaders to celebrate a \$2 million federal investment to support the Port of Olympia's Intermodal Rail Expansion Project. This project will enable the Port to expand its cargo capacity, and will contribute to economic growth in the region.

## Key Investments in Clark County

**CAMAS: Meeting With Community Leaders** – On Monday, I held a roundtable discussion with Camas and Washougal leaders to discuss future priorities for the region. Currently, the area is experiencing rapid growth. It's important that we make the investments in transportation, infrastructure - particularly improving access to SR 14 – and technology that will allow continued growth while maintaining residents' quality of life.

## Rx Help for Our Most Vulnerable

**SHELTON: Medicare Prescription Drug Roundtable** – On Tuesday, I held a roundtable discussion in Shelton on the new Medicare drug plan. Many seniors are confused by, and worried about, this new law. At the discussion, I hosted a panel that included seniors, mental health professionals, a physician, and representatives from Public Health and Washington's Statewide Health Insurance Benefits Advisors (SHIBA).

The new drug law could impose higher fees and less coverage on Washington's 118,000 most vulnerable residents, including more than 880 people in Mason County. I voted against the bill in 2003, and have introduced legislation to protect Washington state's most vulnerable patients.

Learn more: <http://murray.senate.gov/rx>

## Strong Support for PNNL

**RICHLAND: Keeping Jobs & Expanding Research At PNNL** On Wednesday, I met with researchers and lab leaders to discuss \$18 million I secured to build a new research campus at the Pacific Northwest National Laboratory. The Hanford clean-up will dismantle the 300 Area, which jeopardizes the jobs of about 1,000 people - unless new space is built. The funding I secured will help build a new Research Campus of the Future, which will ensure these workers stay in Richland. I also secured another \$18 million for various lab research projects, including breast cancer, port security, and nuclear waste cleanup.

## Better Access to Affordable Housing

**VANCOUVER: VHA Affordable Housing Tour** – On Monday, I received a briefing and tour to see how the Vancouver Housing Authority is administering a variety of federal housing programs. In Vancouver, more than 5,000 households are waiting an average of 3-5 years for subsidized housing, so I know it's critical that we increase access to housing.

**TACOMA: Salishan Affordable Housing Tour** – On Thursday, I toured the recently completed Phase I of the Salishan public housing development, the Tacoma Housing Authority's largest public housing development. It's currently undergoing a large-scale revitalization, for which I've secured \$35 million to date.

## Investing in Worker Training

**SEATTLE: Visit To Apprenticeship Classes** – On Friday, I joined labor leaders to tour the recently remodeled apprenticeship center for South Seattle Community College. As a senior member of the Labor Appropriations Subcommittee, I secured \$100,000 last year to help expand training opportunities at the center, which is the largest apprenticeship training provider in our state.

## Hanford Update

**Hanford Cleanup Press Conference** – On Wednesday, I spoke to reporters about federal efforts to clean up the Hanford Nuclear Facility. While the Bush Administration has said it's committed to the project, the White House recently singled out Hanford's Waste Treatment Plant for a \$100 million cut in the President's Hurricane Katrina 2006 Supplemental funding bill. The Bush Administration also listed the Waste Treatment Plant among "lower-priority federal programs." I know this is a critical public health issue, and that's why I'm working to get the federal government to honor its commitment to clean up the facility.

**Hanford Reach Visitor's Center Update** – Also on Wednesday, I received an update on progress being made to preserve the Hanford Reach's ecology, protect its salmon stocks, and preserve the region's rich history. I've worked on protection of the Hanford Reach since I was elected to the U.S. Senate, playing an instrumental role in the designation of the National Monument. I've also been a strong supporter of the construction of a Hanford Reach Visitor's Center. I've secured \$3 million over the last two years, which brings the total federal commitment to the project to \$5.78 million.

## Stronger Communities in Kitsap Co.

**BREMERTON – Tour/Update on Critical** - On Thursday, I announced that I've secured \$500,000 for Kitsap Community Resources. KCR is a local nonprofit that assists low-income families with poverty, hunger, and homelessness. During a tour of KCR's facilities, I also met with families that are being helped by KCR's work. The funding I secured will support KCR's work by consolidating its programs in a new, 20,000-square-foot building. It will also contribute to the ongoing revitalization of Bremerton.

**POULSBO: Funding for Kitsap Company** - Also on Thursday, I announced I've secured \$4 million in the 2006 Department of Defense Appropriations bill to allow a local company, Paladin Data Systems, to develop the next phase of a system – which I helped create in 2002 - that detects symptoms of a bioterror attack.

The funding will also allow Paladin to begin work with Madigan Army Medical Center to track and monitor symptoms of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder soldiers returning from the battlefield. This new funding means jobs and economic development for Kitsap County, improved safety and security for Washington residents, and improved mental health care treatment for our men and women in uniform.

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