

# Senator TIM SHELDON

## 35th Legislative District



### SESSION SCORECARD: A busy session produces mixed results

Our 2018 legislative session ended March 8 with mixed results. We passed important legislation for our rural communities, but we left much undone. Just as worrisome, the final budget agreement repeats many of the mistakes that got our state into financial trouble during the last recession. Here's my scorecard for the 2018 session:

#### Big wins for the year...

- ✔ **We approved \$4.6 billion in new public works projects** including important items for the 35th District, like repairs to Shelton sewers, an innovative "tiny house" development for homeless veterans, improvements to Camp Schechter in Tumwater and a new teen center for Belfair.
- ✔ **We protected rural property values** by passing legislation preserving the right of rural homeowners to drill new wells for household use. Unfortunately, the final compromise imposes restrictions on new wells, while leaving existing wells untouched – inconsistencies that could create frustration in the future.
- ✔ **We blocked a proposed income tax on capital gains** that likely would lead to a general income tax.
- ✔ **We defeated proposals to restrict the initiative process**, preserving the people's right to pass direct legislation via the ballot.
- ✔ **Yet we approved measures to improve school security** and address the root causes of violent behavior, increasing funding for mental health programs and creating a task force to study ways to reduce school violence.

#### ...And a few big disappointments

- ✘ **The Legislature failed to provide full property tax relief.** Though a booming state economy will generate \$2.3 billion in unanticipated tax revenue, the Legislature failed to address this year's temporary \$1 billion "spike" in property taxes. The final agreement provides only \$400 million in relief next year, too little and too late.
- ✘ **The final budget deal abandoned fiscal discipline**, spending virtually all money available and failing to set aside an adequate reserve for emergencies.
- ✘ **The Legislature dodged a constitutional requirement** for a \$700 million deposit to the state Rainy Day Fund, by using an accounting maneuver to avoid a two-thirds vote of the House and Senate, as required by the constitution.
- ✘ **The Legislature failed to provide relief for manufacturers** from high state business and occupations taxes.
- ✘ **The Legislature failed to pass a rural broadband bill** to ensure smaller communities share in the rollout of new technologies. I will continue to work on this proposal in future sessions.

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**I'm Tim Sheldon**, your state senator from the 35th Legislative District. I represent the southwest Sound, south Kitsap Peninsula and Hood Canal region, but most importantly, I represent you. **The session is over, but I work for you year-round.** Please call my office or email me with your thoughts, questions and concerns, or if you need help dealing with a state agency.

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