



2008 Legislative Ratings

Richard Derham, Chairman

Legislative Action Principles

The Washington Conservative Union rates Washington State legislators on the basis of how their legislative votes conform to the following principles:

1. Promoting Strong Families

The family is the basic unit of society. Policies that respect stronger families benefit us all.

2. Promoting Responsible, Taxpayer-Friendly Fiscal Policies

Taxes to support necessary functions of government should be based on sound economic principles; taxpayer dollars should be spent prudently to promote the core functions of government.

3. Maintaining a Responsible Criminal Justice System

The first duty of government is to provide for the security of its citizens and their property in a manner that is consistent with personal liberty.

4. Fostering a sound educational system for Washington's youth.

Today's students must have the opportunity to attain the skills and knowledge that will equip them to lead lives of productive citizenship; competition, parental choice and school accountability all aid in achieving this goal.

5. Assuring Limited Government/deregulation/privatization

Every increase in the size of government must be tested against this question: does the expected benefit justify the economic cost and the resulting reduction in human freedom ?

6. Recognizing Constitutional Protections

The state and federal constitutions are the foundation for our liberty and our system of government and they should be the standards by which every legislative bill and government action is first judged.

Senate Vote Descriptions (2008)

Promotes Strong Families

1. HB 3104. Oppose expanding special recognition to “domestic partners.” HB 3104 adds substantial additional privileges to domestic partners. Passed the Senate 29-20 and became law. A “no” vote is a pro-family vote

Promotes Responsible, Taxpayer-Friendly Fiscal Policies

2. HB 2416. Limit Property Taxes. HB 2416 reinstates the 1% cap on property tax increases approved by the voters in Initiative 747 but struck down by the Supreme Court. Passed the Senate 39-9 and became law. A “yes” vote restrains tax increases.
3. SB 6809. Oppose new state welfare program. SB 6809 will send a 5% “rebate” to citizens who claim the Earned Income Tax Credit beginning in 2010 and increasing to a 10% rebate. Passed the Senate 29-17 and became law. A “no” vote rejects a new income-redistribution program.
4. HB 1773. Oppose permanent toll roads. Makes it state policy for permanent tolling of roads beyond amount required for construction. Passed the Senate 29-19 and became law. A “no” vote would keep tolls limited to road construction.
5. HB 2687. Oppose excessive spending. Despite forecasts of looming deficits, HB 2687 increases spending by \$306 million in the current year, with further increases next year. Passed the Senate 31-18 and became law. A “no” vote opposes excessive spending.

Maintains a Responsible Criminal Justice System

No Rated Votes.

Fosters a sound educational system for Washington’s youth.

No Rated Votes

Assures Limited Government/deregulation/privatization

6. HB 2815. Oppose economically destructive regulations. HB 2815 mandates 50% reduction in greenhouse gasses below 1990 levels and 50% reduction in vehicle miles driven by 2050. Passed the Senate 29-19 and became law. A “no” vote supports sustaining a sound economy.
7. SB 6580. Oppose expansion of Growth Management Act. SB 6580 requires that land use plans facilitate mitigation of climate change such as by minimizing vehicle use. Passed the Senate 30-18 and became law. A “no” vote supports private property rights.

8. SB 5261. Oppose Expanding Regulatory Power. SB 5261 repeals a reform enacted in 2000 and gives the Insurance Commissioner power to regulate insurance premiums. Passed the Senate 31-18 and became law. A “no” vote recognizes that the free market makes the best economic decisions.
9. SB 6385. Oppose Excessive Interference in Contracts. SB 6385 would establish an automatic warranty of due care in the construction of houses without allowing the parties to negotiate different terms. Passed the Senate 27-20 but died in the House. A “no” vote preserves freedom of contracting.
10. HB 2438. Support recreational liberties. By allowing the use of hunting dogs, HB 2438 uses normal recreational hunting to control growing populations of cougars that endanger public safety in rural areas. Passed the Senate 31-18 and became law. A “yes” vote places common-sense resource management above urban-centered priority for “animal rights.”

Recognizes Constitutional Protections

11. SB 5278. Oppose Taxpayer-funded election campaigns. SB 5278 eliminates the voter-approved prohibition on use of public funds for local campaigns. Passed the Senate 29-20 and became law. A “no” vote keeps the government out of supporting candidates for political office.
12. SB 5628. Support Constitution’s Election System. SB 5628 would override the Constitution’s system for electing a President by requiring that electors must vote for the winner of the national popular vote. Passed Senate 30-18 but died in the House. A “no” vote retains the Electoral College.
13. HB 2476. Oppose Giving Tribal Police State Authority. HB 2476 confers on law enforcement officers of Indian tribes the same arrest powers of state, county and city police officers, on or off tribal lands, though they are not accountable to the electorate, thus extending the reach of tribal organizations over non-tribal citizens. Passed the Senate 34-15 and became law. A “no” vote is a vote in favor of protecting constitutional liberties.
14. SB 5318. Oppose Increased Property Regulation. SB 5318 would join Washington into the “Yukon to Yellowstone ecoregion” international system for protecting species and habitat. Passed Senate 30-19 but died in the House. A “no” vote prevents erosion of property rights.

DISHONORABLE MENTION to Senator Oemig for wasting taxpayer money and diverting the attention of the legislature away from the state’s issues by introducing SJM 8016 to impeach President Bush and Vice-President Cheney.

House of Representatives Vote Descriptions (2008)

Promotes Strong Families

1. HB 3104. Oppose expanding special recognition to “domestic partners.” HB 3104 adds substantial additional privileges to domestic partners. Passed the House 62-32 and became law. A “no” vote is a pro-family vote.
2. HB 3145. Oppose Unionization of Foster Parents. As initially passed by the House, HB 3145 would have created collective bargaining for foster parents. Passed the House 72-22. Before the bill became law, a Senate amendment eliminated forced unionization. A “no” vote preserves foster parent relationships based on love.

Promotes Responsible, Taxpayer Friendly Fiscal Policies

3. HB 2416. Limit Property Taxes. HB 2416 reinstates the 1% cap on property tax increases approved by the voters in Initiative 747 but struck down by the Supreme Court. Passed the House 86-8 and became law. A “yes” vote restrains tax increases.
4. SB 6809. Oppose new state welfare program. SB 6809 will send a 5% “rebate” to citizens who claim the Earned Income Tax Credit beginning in 2010 and increasing to a 10% rebate. Passed the House 57-37 and became law. A “no” vote rejects a new income-redistribution program.
5. HB 1773. Oppose permanent toll roads. Makes it state policy for permanent tolling of roads beyond amount required for construction. Passed the House 60-33 and became law. A “no” vote would keep tolls limited to road construction.
6. HB 2687. Oppose excessive spending. Despite forecasts of looming deficits, HB 2687 increases spending by \$306 million in the current year, with further increases next year. Passed the House 64-32 and became law. A “no” vote opposes excessive spending.

Maintains a Responsible Criminal Justice System

No Rated Votes.

Fosters a sound educational system for Washington’s youth.

No Rated Votes.

Assures Limited Government/deregulation/privatization

7. HB 2815. Oppose economically destructive regulations. HB 2815 mandates 50% reduction in greenhouse gasses below 1990 levels and 50% reduction in vehicle miles driven by 2050. Passed the House 64-31 and became law. A “no” vote supports sustaining a sound economy.

8. SB 6580. Oppose expansion of Growth Management Act. SB 6580 requires that land use plans facilitate mitigation of climate change such as by minimizing vehicle use. Passed the House 58-35 and became law. A vote “no” supports private property rights.
9. SB 5261. Oppose Expanding Regulatory Power. SB 5261 repeals a reform enacted in 2000 and gives the Insurance Commissioner power to regulate insurance premiums. Passed the House 68-26 and became law. A “no” vote recognizes that the free market makes the best economic decisions.
10. HB 2449. Oppose State Mandated Unions of Private Workers. HB 2449 imposes unionization on all private health care providers if even a single state-funded child is served by their facility regardless of desire of employees. Passed House 70-24; but died in the Senate. A “no” vote supports the freedom of the workplace.
11. HB 2438. Support recreational liberties. By allowing the use of hunting dogs, HB 2438 uses normal recreational hunting to control growing populations of cougars that endanger public safety in rural areas. Passed the House 66-29, and became law. A “yes” vote places common-sense resource management above urban-centered priority for “animal rights.”

Recognizes Constitutional Protections

12. SB 5278. Oppose Taxpayer-funded election campaigns. SB 5278 eliminates the voter-approved prohibition of use of public funds for local campaigns. Passed the House 51-43 and became law. A “no” vote keeps the government out of supporting candidates for political office.
13. HB 2476. Oppose Giving Tribal Police State Authority. HB 2476 confers on law enforcement officers of Indian tribes the same arrest powers of state, county and city police officers, on or off tribal lands, though they are not accountable to the electorate, thus extending the reach of tribal organizations over non-tribal citizens. Passed the House 62-32 and became law. A “no” vote is a vote in favor of protecting constitutional liberties.

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Washington Conservative Union

The Washington Conservative Union was formed in 1978 to promote the philosophy of principled conservatism in Washington State. We fully adopt the Statement of Principles of our affiliate, the American Conservative Union, which makes clear our support for free markets, limited government and confidence in traditional moral values.

As a multi-issue umbrella organization, we seek to support and work with the many effective specialized organizations active in Washington State supporting similar goals and to coordinate with the American Conservative Union on projects national in scope.

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