

2019 Federal Agenda

Washington State is the best place in the country to work, live, and raise a family.

King County's economy – fueled by innovation, a skilled workforce, and a healthy environment – creates jobs and helps drive economic growth throughout Washington State. Businesses in the Puget Sound region influence the global economy, provide jobs for our residents, and keep local communities thriving.

Ensuring King County remains a place where all residents have the opportunity to achieve their maximum potential is a responsibility we share with our state and federal partners, and it's our promise to serve all those who call this region home. The Washington State Congressional delegation members are vital partners in our continued prosperity.

The King County Executive and Council have constructed an agenda that includes continuing investment in infrastructure, maintaining support for critical health and human service programs, tackling the opioid crisis, addressing homelessness and affordable housing challenges [that are facing too many Washington families](#), and working to protect the environment. King County has been, and will continue to be, a strong partner and a good investment for the federal government.

A Strong Investment

Investments in King County lead to positive stewardship and outcomes. We effectively leverage federal resources to drive economic growth and serve working families and vulnerable populations. We seek continued partnership and investment with King County and the 2.1 million residents who are proud to call this place home. Thanks to our federal partnership, King County:

- Achieved a 50% reduction in the overall uninsured rate, and 98% of King County children have health insurance.
- Became one of the first counties in the United States to reach the ambitious “90-90-90” goal where the County has identified 90% of people with HIV/AIDS, 90% are compliant with treatment, and 90% have successfully achieved viral suppression.
- [In 2018, King County](#) Metro was named the best large transit agency in North America [in 2018](#) by the American Public Transit Association, safely and efficiently carrying over 122 million riders.
- Dramatically reduced teen pregnancy rates, which are now two and a half times lower than the national average.

Infrastructure for a Strong Economy and Workforce

From airplanes and lumber to apples and wheat, millions of dollars' worth of goods grown, processed, or manufactured throughout Washington State move through King County on a daily basis. The entire state relies on infrastructure that effectively moves people and products via roads, [bridges](#), rails, trails, and waterways. We encourage Congress to:

- Develop an infrastructure package that includes dedicated funding to:
 - Bring county bridges into compliance with new federal standards.

- Maintain, replace, and repair aging roads and culverts.
- Deliver transit projects that commuters rely on to reach job centers.
- ~~Improve mobility options for all by supporting~~ Support innovative ~~eed~~ projects and programs ~~that that create healthy and active transportation options. address congestion and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.~~
- ~~Support electrification~~ Electrify of the transportation system, including buses and supporting infrastructure.
- ~~Maximize Build Discretionary Grants, Capital Investment Grants, and TIFIA grant programs, providing opportunities for local transportation projects, including RapidRide bus rapid transit expansion, the Eastside Rail Corridor, and the Federal Way Triangle, which connect job centers and neighborhoods throughout King County.~~ Maximize transportation funding opportunities through BUILD Discretionary Grants, Capital Investment Grants, and the TIFIA loan program; and encourage timely distribution of funds awarded under the programs. These federal grant and loan programs are a critical source of funding for local and regional projects throughout the Puget Sound area, including RapidRide bus rapid transit and Sound Transit light rail expansion, the Eastside Rail Corridor, and the Federal Way Triangle.
- Increase funding to improve failing Army Corps of Engineers infrastructure, including the 100 year old Ballard Locks, and the Howard Hanson and Buckley Diversion Dams.
- Invest in flood protection, multi-benefit floodplain management, and modernize National Flood Insurance Program to reduce risks to industry, manufacturing, farmlands, small businesses and working families.
- Support emergency preparedness, response, and recovery planning and investments to strengthen resilience.
- Support Southern Resident Orca recovery through investments in Puget Sound ecosystem restoration and salmon population enhancement efforts.
- ~~Protect and restore~~ the unique resources and health of the Puget Sound region by investing in green stormwater infrastructure, wastewater treatment, Duwamish River Superfund clean-up; salmon and Orca recovery; addressing sea level rise; and protecting ~~on~~ of healthy forests and shorelines, ~~green stormwater infrastructure, wastewater treatment, and Duwamish River Superfund clean-up.~~
- Support policies and programs to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and improve fuel economy and Energy Star Appliance standards that conserve energy and fuel, save money, and build our clean energy economy.
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Investing in Healthy Communities

King County must continue to work with our local and national partners to protect and expand access to health care and address the challenges of a regional homelessness crisis and nationwide opioid epidemic. Our approach must include strategies that resolve root causes of these issues. We seek federal partnership to:

- Ensure access to quality, affordable health care for all King County residents ~~Maintain the integrity of the Affordable Care Act, improve affordability by reducing~~ reduce out of pocket health care costs, ~~and expand access to care to all King County residents, and increase Medicare reimbursement rates.~~

- Extend funding for community health centers, and bolster access to behavioral health and substance use disorder treatment.
- Build on progress made towards addressing the opioid crisis by implementing and fully funding the [Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act](#), and ~~SUPPORT~~ for Patients and Communities Act.
- Address health disparities, prevent disease outbreaks and ensure overall population health through full funding of the Prevention and Public Health Fund ~~and new investments to~~ [and continue working to](#) end HIV.
- ~~Help families, youth, and veterans avoid homelessness by providing resources for~~ [Provide rental assistance](#), permanent supportive housing, rapid rehousing, and reemployment services to ~~help communities address homelessness.~~
- [Increase federal programs that help build or preserve affordable housing, including](#) ~~Provide resources to families, youths, and veterans to address homelessness by fully funding~~ CDBG, Homeless Assistance ~~Accounts~~[Grants](#), Low Income Housing Tax Credits, and HOME ~~grant~~ [Program programs](#)[grants](#).

Resolving Challenges through Partnership

A number of prominent issues of concern to our shared constituents can only be solved at the federal level. We stand ready to support you and urge Congress to:

- Address immigration reform in a comprehensive manner that protects the legal status of DACA recipients, ensures that all residents feel secure to call on our public safety officers for help, and keeps King County a welcoming place for all.
- Take action to ~~avert de-escalate a~~ [the](#) trade war. As one of the most trade dependent states in the nation, the imposition of tariffs on Washington exports ~~will have~~[has](#) a significant impact on our economy.
- Enact effective, common sense gun safety and violence prevention measures.
- Ensure a full and accurate census, and maintain the privacy and confidentiality of census responses. It is critical that census questions are designed to solicit high response rates from all people of any citizenship status living within King County, consistent with recent census questionnaires, to ensure equal congressional representation and distribution of federal funding.
- Develop and implement initiatives that improve gender equality; prevent sexual assault and harassment; reduce juvenile detention and disproportionality in the criminal justice system; combat human trafficking; and guarantee equal protection for all people including those in the LGBTQ community.