

# PATTY MURRAY'S WASHINGTON VIEW

U.S. Senator Patty Murray's Weekly Report to the People of Washington – March 5, 2004

## Keeping American Jobs Here at Home

On Wednesday, an amendment that I introduced with Senator Orrin Hatch (R-Utah) to help keep good paying American jobs from moving overseas passed the Senate with no opposition. My amendment extends the Research and Development Tax Credit by 18 months. Without my amendment, this critical business incentive to keep jobs here at home would have expired at the end of June.

In Washington state, we have all felt the impact of a struggling economy and jobs moving overseas. But, we can put people back to work, and my tax credit is a great start. The credit gives companies an incentive to conduct their R&D in the United States at a time when foreign trading partners offer strong incentives to encourage companies to move their R&D work outside of the U.S.

### About the Research and Development Tax Credit:

- The credit is only available for R&D performed in the United States.
- The credit is targeted almost exclusively at wages and salaries paid to employees engaged in direct U.S.-based R&D. This promotes the creation of new, high-skilled jobs in the United States.
- The credit will make American companies more innovative and competitive in the global marketplace.

My tax credit extension will help our technology sector, our manufacturing sector, and our workers. Now we need the House of Representatives to follow suit.

After the vote, business leaders from Microsoft, Boeing and TechNet applauded my amendment as a step forward for jobs here in Washington.

**Details:** <http://murray.senate.gov/news.cfm?id=218669>

## Nomination of Ricardo Martinez

I am pleased to announce that on Thursday the Senate Judiciary Committee endorsed the nomination of Ricardo Martinez as a U.S. District Court Judge for Western Washington. Judge Martinez is currently a Magistrate Judge in Seattle.

Last year I worked with Senator Cantwell and President Bush to select Judge Martinez for nomination. In January, I had the pleasure of introducing him before the Senate Judiciary Committee. I am looking forward to his nomination being brought before the full Senate soon for a final vote.

## \$5.8 Million for Ryan White AIDS Grants

I am proud to announce that the King County HIV/AIDS Bureau will receive nearly \$6 million in Ryan White Care Act funds to help provide critical health care services including medication, treatment and support services to HIV and AIDS patients lacking health insurance or financial resources.

In 2000, I helped reauthorize the Ryan White CARE (Comprehensive AIDS Resources and Emergency) Act which

provides community-based treatment, medicine and support services for men, women and children living with HIV or AIDS. I will continue to work to provide the funds and services necessary to improve and extend the lives of people living with HIV and AIDS.

## Giving Local Communities a Say about Veterans' Health Care

On Tuesday, I received authorization from the Chairman of the Senate Veterans Affairs Committee to hold a field hearing in Washington state to explore the impact of the CARES process on veterans in our state.

Last month, the CARES Commission sent a recommendation to VA Secretary Anthony Principi calling for the expansion of the Vancouver facility and the closing of the VA facility in Walla Walla.

Since the beginning of the CARES process, I have worked with local veterans and health care leaders to protect health care access for Washington's 670,000 veterans.

I am pleased that the CARES Commission's recommendation in Vancouver will enhance services for our veterans in southwest Washington, but closing the Walla Walla facility puts easily accessible care out of the reach of our region's veterans and increases the load on overburdened facilities in Spokane and across the state.

The CARES field hearing, which I will chair in Washington state later this spring, will give our veterans and local communities across our state a voice in this ongoing process and provide a necessary follow-up to last September's CARES Commission hearings. Specifically, this hearing will investigate the Administration's handling of the CARES process and the Commission's recommendations for the VA facilities in Tacoma, Vancouver and Walla Walla.

My hearing will also highlight the consequences of the recommendation to close the Walla Walla VA hospital. Leaving our veterans without real alternatives to the comprehensive care they receive at Walla Walla is the wrong thing to do. I intend to give our veterans and our local community the opportunity to weigh in on this process.

## Asbestos Is Hurting WA State

On Thursday the Environmental Working Group released a new report detailing the dangers of asbestos exposure in Washington state and in communities across the country. The report revealed that that King County has the fourth highest number of asbestos-related deaths in the nation and that three other Washington state counties – Kitsap, Pierce and Snohomish all rank in the top 100 for deaths caused by asbestos exposure. It is unconscionable that so many innocent victims in our state have died because they were exposed to a product they were told was safe. But it is even more disturbing that our government continues to allow asbestos to be imported into this country and used in everyday products. Until we ban asbestos, innocent lives will be at risk. The time has come for Congress to pass my Ban Asbestos in America Act and outlaw this killer once and for all.

**Read the Report:** <http://ewg.org/reports/asbestos/>  
**Get Asbestos Updates:**  
[http://murray.senate.gov/asbestos/as\\_getupdates.cfm](http://murray.senate.gov/asbestos/as_getupdates.cfm)

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