

Senator Patty Murray: Working for Washington State

In a year when the nation faced the War on Terrorism, growing unemployment, and a stagnant economy, Murray grappled with the challenges of our nation while working effectively for Washington state.

Because of her work, the nation's pipelines will be inspected regularly, there are new Coast Guard assets throughout the Puget Sound, there is more staff at the Northern Border, there is new funding for port security, and federal transportation dollars are improving highways, bridges, ferries, and roads throughout our state.

Even as Murray assumed an important new role in the Senate Democratic leadership, she focused on helping working families in Washington state by negotiating a 100-plane Boeing contract with the Air Force, helping keep 400 manufacturing jobs in Spokane, securing hundreds of millions in federal dollars for Washington state health care and education, and gaining Senate approval of a new wilderness recreation area, located within 90 miles of 2.5 million people.

Her state offices continue to provide excellent constituent service and have assisted countless individuals, groups, companies and communities in their dealings with federal, state and local agencies.

This document provides a summary of some of Senator Murray's work this year on behalf of Washington state. The Murray website, <http://murray.senate.gov>, can provide a summary of 2001 accomplishments, as well as more in-depth information about her efforts. We are currently redesigning the website which will be launched at the end of January.

Thank you for taking the time to read about Sen. Murray's work.

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Agricultural Research

Senator Murray serves as a member of the Senate Agriculture Appropriations Subcommittee. In 2002, worked to restore the Administration's proposed cuts to regional research projects that are critical to Washington state farmers.

She also worked to increase funding for initiatives to protect our wine and tree fruit industries from disease, expand shellfish research, meet the emerging needs of organic farmers, and enhance wheat quality.

AIDS Funding - Fighting Global AIDS

Senator Murray cosponsored an amendment to the fiscal year (FY) 2002 Supplemental Appropriations bill to provide \$500 million for multilateral and bilateral assistance to fight global AIDS. The Amendment sought to provide key support for organizations such as USAID, the Global Fund, and the CDC – organizations that have successfully made an impact in HIV/AIDS research, prevention, and treatment. Unfortunately only \$200 million in HIV/AIDS relief was provided for in the final Senate version of the FY 2002 Supplemental Appropriations bill.

AMTRAK

In March, Sen. Murray held a hearing to examine Amtrak's precarious financial situation. The nation's passenger rail service faced a funding shortage created by the Administration's refusal to request adequate funding.

In June, Amtrak's financial problems became so acute, that its new CEO, David Gunn, announced that Amtrak was weeks away from bankruptcy and he would shut down passenger rail service. Such an unprecedented shutdown would have caused disruptions throughout Washington state and the country, and would have endangered the operation of the Sounder Commuter Rail system.

Despite the Administration's objections, Murray worked to help provide the funding needed to avert an Amtrak shutdown.

In the debate over Amtrak funding, Murray has been an advocate for Washington state's passengers, arguing that West Coast routes must not be scrapped to save East Coast routes.

Apple Grower Assistance

Senator Murray secured \$94 million in the new 2002 Farm Bill for direct payments to U.S. apple growers. The aid responded to several years of low prices and depressed markets, which have caused severe disruption to many rural communities and the central Washington economy. Senator Murray also played a leadership role in securing previous aid packages of \$100 million and \$75 million for apple growers.

Asbestos

Though a known carcinogen, asbestos is still not banned in the United States and continues to be put into a number of consumer products on purpose. EPA tried to ban asbestos in 1989 but the regulations were overturned in court in 1991. Even while thousands die annually from exposure, it is still deliberately put into consumer products.

Sen. Murray wrote and introduced legislation (S. 2641) to ban asbestos, force the EPA to identify publicly all products still containing asbestos, conduct a public education campaign, and increase research into mesothelioma, a deadly cancer caused by asbestos.

She held a news conference with a Washington state mesothelioma survivor and with two family members of mesothelioma victims, the son of Admiral Elmo Zumwalt and the wife of a U.S. Congressman Bruce Vento (D-Minn.). Sens. Paul Wellstone and Mark Dayton also attended as original co-sponsors of the bill.

Sen. Murray testified about her bill, S. 2641, at a hearing of the Superfund Subcommittee of the Environment and Public Works Committee in 2002. That built upon Murray's previous work where she chaired a hearing on asbestos and workplace safety in the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions committee in July 2001.

Bioterrorism Preparedness

Senator Murray worked with Senators Kennedy (D-Mass.) and Frist (R-Tenn.) in drafting the Public Health Security and Bioterrorism Preparedness and Response Act of 2002, which was signed into law on May 23, 2002. This bill authorizes the National Pharmaceutical Stockpile and will provide \$1.6 billion to states, including \$520 million to enhance hospital preparedness in 2003. It will create an interdepartmental task force, official Federal web site, and will accelerate research, development and FDA approval of bioterrorism countermeasures.

In 2001, Murray helped secure the funding that helped Washington state become one of the first ten states in the nation to receive federal funds. For FY2001, Washington state received \$1.3 million from the Department of Health and Human Services.

Following 9/11 and the anthrax attacks, Senator Murray secured \$18.1 million through the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and \$2.5 million from the Health Resources and Services Administration for hospital preparedness.

Boeing Spokane Plant

In late 2001, word leaked out that Boeing planned to close its Spokane manufacturing plant, which would have idled 400 workers and weaken the region's economy. Rather than accept the job loss, Sen. Murray organized the first meeting with Alan Mulally and other Boeing executives, union leaders, Spokane officials (including the Mayor and other city and county officials) and business leaders in November, 2001. The meeting enabled all sides to hear one another, as they explored all options to keep the plant open.

On November 25, 2002, Boeing announced it would sell the plant to an aviation parts company, thereby saving 400 good jobs.

Senator Murray was in close contact and consultation with Boeing and the Spokane workforce throughout this process, and she addressed a “Save Boeing Spokane” rally in January 2002.

Boeing Taiwan Sale

When the government of Taiwan was preparing to make a significant purchase of Airbus jets for its national airline, Murray petitioned the President of Taiwan to urge a significant Boeing purchase. Sixteen Senators signed a Murray letter to the Taiwanese President. As a result, Taiwan will purchase ten additional Boeing planes, helping Boeing workers in the Puget Sound.

Boeing Tanker Deal

Last year, Murray was instrumental in developing a deal to enable the Air Force to acquire 100 Boeing 767s to replace its aging air tanker fleet. Despite the efforts of a few in Washington, D.C. to scuttle the deal, the Air Force and Boeing continue their negotiations for the project.

Campaign Finance Reform

Murray supported the McCain-Feingold campaign finance reform legislation, which passed the Senate on March 20, 2002 and passed the full Congress on March 27, 2002. She has been a long-time supporter of reform, serving on the Leadership Task Force on Campaign Reform in 1997 and proposing an amendment for full disclosure in 1998.

Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment

Senator Murray helped to pass a bill out of the Senate’s Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee to strengthen protections and services for abused children and for children at risk of being abused. The Senate bill would reauthorize the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA) and increase CAPTA’s total funding authorization level to \$210 million in FY2003 (up from \$166 million for FY1997).

Child Care

To make quality child care more accessible, Sen. Murray helped write and pass the ACCESS Act. It provides funding to states to support care for infants, toddlers, and children with special needs. It also boosts funding for the Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) by another \$1 billion to nearly \$5 billion in 2003.

Senator Murray also cosponsored a bill to increase mandatory childcare subsidy funds by \$11.25 billion over the next five years. Currently, federal subsidies reach only one in seven eligible children. Budget shortfalls in Washington state have resulted in cuts in eligibility for as many as 13,000 low-income families seeking quality childcare. The state has also been forced to increase family co-payments and eliminate funding for many quality programs.

The funding increase supported by Senator Murray would subsidize childcare for an additional one million children nationally, while also improving the quality of child care. Because of differences between the Senate and House versions of CCDBG, the bill was not completed this year, and will be taken up in the 108th Congress.

Choice - Access to Reproductive Health Services for Women Serving Overseas

For six years, Senator Murray and Sen. Olympia Snowe (R-Maine) have sponsored a bipartisan amendment to the Department of Defense Authorization bill to lift the ban on privately funded abortions at overseas military facilities. Murray believes that women who fight for our freedom abroad should have the same constitutional rights as women at home.

In 2002, Senator Murray was successful in passing this amendment in the Senate with a bipartisan majority. Unfortunately, this effort has been consistently defeated by anti-choice forces in Congress and the amendment was eliminated in the final version of the Defense bill.

Coast Guard

As Chair of the Transportation Appropriations Subcommittee, Murray wrote the bill that increased the Coast Guard's budget by ten percent in 2001 and brought important new assets to Western Washington this year.

In 2002, Murray chaired three hearings to examine:

- Readiness: How the Coast Guard will maintain its core missions while meeting the new homeland security challenges (February)
- Cargo Security (March)
- Port Security, a field hearing held in Seattle (July)

Murray secured 5 new Coast Guard boats for Washington stations, which will be delivered over the next few years. Those boats include, an 87' cutter in Port Angeles, an 87' cutter for Bellingham, and 3 response boats for the Coast Guard's District 13 headquarters in Seattle.

She succeeded in getting a new Maritime Safety and Security Team stationed in Seattle, as one of only four in the country. This Coast Guard "Swat Team" provides a high-powered rapid response capability in the Puget Sound.

After 9/11, the Coast Guard was called upon to patrol and protect our state's military installations. That took assets away from traditional Coast Guard missions, like drug interdiction, fisheries management and environmental protection. Murray successfully petitioned the Navy to locate additional naval patrol vessels in the Puget Sound to ensure that Washington's maritime community was not shortchanged.

Murray also secured \$1.6 million in the Senate transportation-spending bill for oil spill prevention efforts, which could include funding the Neah Bay tug. This funding is part of the FY2003 Transportation spending bill, which will be finalized after Congress returns in January.

Murray secured \$16 million to help rebuild the Coast Guard's Seattle waterfront facility, also in the FY2003 Transportation bill.

When word leaked out in October that the Coast Guard was preparing an invasive new inspection program for Puget Sound ferry passengers, Murray intervened with the head of the Coast Guard, Adm. Tom Collins, who committed to her that no new inspection plan would be put in place without local involvement.

[See also: Operation Safe Commerce, Oil Spill Prevention, Port Security]

Coeur d'Alene Basin - Record of Decision

Murray kept pressure on the EPA to issue the ROD for the Coeur d'Alene Basin, which had been delayed for years. Murray had a lengthy conversation with Administrator Whitman and followed up with a letter to urge the EPA to issue the ROD. The ROD was issued in September and is a necessary precursor for cleanup to begin. The long-overdue effort will reduce the influx of water pollution from Idaho into Washington state via the Spokane River.

Community Development - Housing Projects

Senator Murray secured funding for a variety of community development & affordable housing in the Senate's VA, HUD, and Independent Agencies Appropriations bill, including the following:

- Port of Chelan to complete the Community Technology Center in Wenatchee, \$250,000
- Elks Club of Pierce and Thurston Counties for its Toys for Disabled Youth Project, \$100,000
- City of Forks for its telecommunications initiative, \$100,000
- Friends of Youth for renovation of the Griffin Home in Renton, \$250,000
- Horizons, Inc. in Sunnyside to provide one-stop technology-based educational training centers to serve communities from Wenatchee to the Tri-Cities, \$250,000
- Kent Youth and Family Services for two new community centers, \$250,000
- Lummi Indian Nation for planning and development of Semiahmoo Memorial and Coast Salish Heritage Park, \$100,000
- Rural and Farmworker Housing Trust, \$200,000
- Squaxin Island Tribe in Shelton for the Squaxin Island Museum, Library, and Research Center, \$200,000
- Transitions in Spokane to purchase a new building for the Women's Drop In Center, which serves homeless women, \$250,000

- Washington State Office of Community Development to establish the Northwest Center for Livable Communities, \$250,000
- Washington State Rural Development Council for rural community assessments, \$100,000
- Wenatchee Valley College Foundation for development of the Institute for Rural Innovation and Stewardship at Wenatchee Valley College, \$200,000
- YWCA of Seattle, Washington for Opportunity Place, \$500,000

Community Forestry Act - Evergreen Forest Trust

Senator Murray wrote the Community Forestry and Agriculture Conservation Act to help reduce sprawl. It will enable communities to issue bonds to purchase tracts of land. The land would then be managed sustainably to pay off the bonds.

Murray convinced her colleagues on the Senate Finance Committee to accept her amendment, but no appropriate tax bills moved during the remainder of the Congress. Murray will resume this effort next year.

Senator Murray's work was especially timely because of the efforts of the Evergreen Forest Trust to purchase more than 100,000 acres of private King County forestland from Weyerhaeuser.

COPS

Murray secured a \$1 million earmark for the Seattle Police Department's efforts to equip police cars with digital video surveillance cameras in a Senate FY2003 appropriations bill. She also secured \$500,000 to replace Cowlitz County's Emergency Response Radio system and added \$500,000 to help Whatcom County upgrade law enforcement data processing. This bill will be finished after Congress reconvenes in January 2003.

Corporate Reform Bill

Murray supported the new corporate reform law, which established a new accounting oversight board, requires CEOs and CFOs to certify their financial reports, and increases resources for the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC).

Defense

Murray secured over \$200 million in funds for Washington state defense projects in 2002, including funding for helicopter upgrades, battlefield dressings, and handheld computer technology manufactured by Washington state companies.

She also helped secure \$275 million in construction funding for Washington military installations, including \$50 million for barracks renovations at Fort Lewis, \$16 million for a small arms training center at Bangor, and \$24.67 million for Antiterrorism/Force Protection Improvements at Puget Sound Naval Shipyard.

Murray was also instrumental in securing nearly \$9 million for the Spokane Combined Readiness Center.

Drought and Natural Disaster Assistance

Senator Murray voted twice to provide drought and natural disaster assistance to help Washington farmers and ranchers who have been hit hard by the elements for the last two years.

During the Farm Bill debate in February, Senator Murray supported an amendment to provide \$2.4 billion in emergency disaster relief for losses in 2001. Unfortunately, the amendment was removed during a conference with the House.

In September, during debate on the FY2003 Interior Appropriations bill, Murray supported an amendment to provide nearly \$6 billion in emergency disaster relief for losses in 2001 and 2002. This bill will be finalized after the Congress reconvenes in January, 2003.

Education Funding

Senator Murray's position on the powerful Senate Appropriations Committee enables her to be an important advocate for investments in education.

Despite Administration efforts to cut education funding, the 2003 Labor, HHS, and Education spending bill Murray helped write not only restored many initiatives important to Washington state, but also increased funds for Pell Grants, Head Start, and Teacher Quality/Class Size Reduction programs.

Rural education, community technology centers, and early learning programs are vital to making sure that no child in Washington is left behind. Senator Murray fought to restore the President's cuts to these programs while providing necessary funds to help states meet the new mandates of the "Leave No Child Behind Act."

Among other priorities, Senator Murray worked to increase funding to help low-income students go to college, strengthened the Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities program, secured education dollars for homeless students, and reduced classroom overcrowding with money to hire and train more teachers.

The Senate will resume work on the FY2003 Labor, HHS and Education spending bill in January, under new Republican control.

Election Reform

In response to the Florida election debacle in 2000, Congress developed and passed election reform legislation to improve election practices throughout the country. Murray made sure that Washington state's convenient vote-by-mail system was protected.

Emergency Contraception

Murray introduced a bill that would reduce the number of abortions in America by educating women about the availability of emergency contraception.

Farm Bill

Senator Murray was a strong supporter of the Farm Bill and worked to include priorities for farmers, rural Washington communities, the poor, and the environment in the legislation.

Murray worked to make sure the farm bill restores a safety net for Washington wheat and barley growers, while creating a new safety net for our pea and lentil growers. It also provides \$94 million in direct aid to apple growers and increases funding for agricultural trade promotion programs that help Washington farmers sell their apples, wheat, peas, lentils, pears and wine overseas.

The bill restores food stamps for legal immigrants who have been in the United States for five years. It increases funding for voluntary conservation programs to reduce sprawl and protect family farms and increases funding to help protect salmon and improve water quality.

Murray also won Senate approval for her bill to provide rural communities with telecommunications planning grants, but the amendment did not survive the House-Senate conference.

Farmworker Housing

Senator Murray secured \$200,000 in an FY2003 Senate appropriations bill to kick-start the Rural and Farmworker Housing Trust (RAFHT) in Washington state. Through Murray's leadership, representatives from the Hispanic, housing, farmer and foundation communities are coming together to address the farmworker housing crisis. The new organization is creating a board of directors and is work to generate additional funding to build farmworker housing in communities around Washington state.

Financial Aid for Students

When the Bush Administration proposed raising interest rates on student loans in order to pay for a shortfall in the Pell Grant program, Senator Murray was a leader in defeating this "tax on middle class families."

As a member of the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee, Senator Murray questioned Bush Administration officials on their proposal. Their plan would prevent students from consolidating loans at lower, fixed interest rates -- a move that could cost graduates an additional \$10,000 over the life of their loans.

Senator Murray also spoke at a press conference to highlight the impact of the Bush proposal where she made it clear that any attempt to deny the \$250 Pell Grant increase secured by Democrats in the FY2002 appropriations bill, or to pass the cost of the shortfall to students already burdened with significant loans would be unacceptable.

Because of Murray's and others' efforts, the Administration retreated from this proposal and the shortfall for Pell Grants was made up for in the Supplemental Appropriations bill in August.

Food Stamp Restoration for Legal Immigrants

During Senate debate on the Farm Bill, Senator Murray supported the effort to restore food stamps to legal immigrants who have been in the United States for five years. After 1996, when Congress changed the law to make legal immigrants ineligible for food stamps, Washington state stepped up to provide those benefits itself. But with the state in a fiscal crisis, the renewed support from the federal government will be critical.

Hanford

Murray's seat on the powerful Appropriations Committee enables her to be a key advocate for Hanford cleanup funding. For each of the last two years, Murray has successfully fought of the Bush Administration's tactics to cut Hanford cleanup funding.

In 2001, as Co-Chair of the Senate Nuclear Waste Cleanup Caucus, Murray fought to add an additional \$1 billion to the nuclear cleanup program nationwide.

In 2002, the Administration proposed a scheme that held up a portion of Hanford's cleanup funds, to be released to Hanford at the Administration's whims. The Senate rejected this proposal while the House embraced it. This issue will be resolved when the FY2003 Energy & Water appropriations bill is finished after Congress reconvenes in January.

HAMMER

Murray worked with Tom Ridge and the Office of Homeland Security (OHS) to make the HAMMER facility one of the nation's training centers for first responders. At Murray's behest, the director of training for the OHS flew to the Tri Cities in August to review the facility.

She also secured funding through the appropriations process for the HAMMER facility, as she has done for many years.

Health Care for the Uninsured and Underinsured

Senator Murray was an original cosponsor of the Health Care Safety Net Amendments of 2002 and worked with Senator Kennedy (D-Mass.) in drafting this legislation, which was signed into law in October of 2002. This bill will reauthorize and strengthen the health center program and the National Health Service Corps.

It also establishes the Healthy Communities Access Program (CAP), which coordinates services for the uninsured and underinsured. With a 30-year track record of providing quality service to our nation's most vulnerable population, health centers are a key answer to the problem of rising numbers of uninsured Americans.

Senator Murray secured the following CAP grants:

- Choice Regional Health Network, Olympia: \$850,524 (March 2001)
- Heath Improvement Partnership of Spokane County, Spokane: \$916,641 (March 2001)
- Community Choice Healthcare Network, Wenatchee: \$889,439 (March 2001)

Japanese-American Memorial

Murray worked until the final hours of the 107th Congress to help successfully pass the Japanese-American Memorial Study Act. The legislation authorizes the Interior Department to explore the possible designation of Bainbridge Island's Eagledale Ferry Dock as a national memorial to honor over two hundred Bainbridge Island residents who were sent from the Ferry Dock to American internment camps during World War II.

Medical Research

As a member of the Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education Appropriations Subcommittee, Senator Murray fought to continue her five-year goal of doubling the budget for the National Institutes of Health (NIH). Murray helped increase NIH funding by over \$3.2 billion in FY2002. For FY2003, she requested an additional increase of over \$3.7 billion, which would bring the total funding for NIH to \$27 billion.

The FY2003 Appropriations bills are expected to be approved after Congress reconvenes in January 2003.

Medicaid – Federal Match

Senator Murray pushed through an amendment to the Greater Access to Affordable Pharmaceuticals Act, which passed the Senate in July 2002, to increase the Federal Medicaid Match and provide an additional \$200 million for Washington state through Medicaid and Social Security Block Grant increases. This additional funding would allow Washington state to provide adequate coverage for low-income children and families.

Unfortunately, this legislation was not considered in the House of Representatives. Murray will continue her work next year.

Medicaid - Upper Payment Limit

Federal Medicaid dollars help Washington's safety net hospitals serve low-income families. Due to accounting changes at the federal level, some states, including Washington, will have their Medicaid dollars cut. To minimize the impact on hospitals and their patients, the federal government developed a five-year transition period to give states time to readjust their budgets. Unfortunately, the Bush Administration decided to abandon this five-year transition period, and moved to immediately reduce Medicaid payments to Washington state. Because of our state's overall budget crisis and Medicaid shortfall, this could have been disastrous.

Through a 2002 appropriations bill, Murray assisted Washington state in obtaining a reasonable transition period to adjust to reduction in federal Medicaid funding.

MediFair

Washington state receives far less than the national average in annual Medicare reimbursements. Increasingly, doctors are unable to see new Medicare patients or are departing the state altogether, leaving many seniors struggling to find health care. Murray wrote and introduced the MediFair Act, S.2568, to raise reimbursement rates for Washington and other states, which are reimbursed below the national average.

In May, Murray was joined at a Seattle news conference by nearly half of the state's Congressional delegation as well as the Presidents of the Washington State Medical Association, the Washington State Nurses Association, the Washington State Medical Association.

And in June she spoke on the floor of the Senate and worked in a conference committee to strip a provision that would have unfairly benefited a few cities on the East Coast while ignoring the national problem.

Murray also met with Senate Majority Leader Tom Daschle to have Medicare equity included in any Medicare provider package. As a result of her work, S. 3018, the bipartisan Medicare Provider package took the first steps towards addressing the equity problem. Unfortunately, the Republican leadership twice blocked debate on the bill, and the issue will have to be resolved in 2003.

Native American Caucus

In July, Sen. Murray joined six colleagues to form the Senate Native American Caucus to work in a bipartisan fashion to improve efforts on behalf of Native Americans and to help move tribal issues through the many Senate Committees which have jurisdiction. The caucus is led by Sen. Inouye (D-Hawaii) and includes Sens. Dorgan (D-N.D.), Johnson (D-S.D.), Stevens (R-Alaska.), Campbell (R-Colo.), Domenici (R-N.M.) and McCain (R-Ariz.)

NEXUS System

Murray has been a longtime supporter of the Nexus border system, which enables low-risk travelers to cross the U.S.-Canadian border more expeditiously. She requested Congressional support for the system in early 2002 and asked for the support of the Customs Service during a Senate hearing. The Nexus system started in Blaine in June 2002.

Northern Border

For years, Murray has worked to increase resources at the Northern Border. In the wake of September 11th, other members of Congress saw the wisdom of Murray's repeated calls.

In 2001, Murray secured funding to triple the number of agents at the Northern Border and secured a record increase in Northern Border funding in the Homeland Security package. The law provided \$55.8 million for 500 additional INS inspectors and \$23.9 million to transfer 100 existing border patrol agents and to hire 100 new border patrol agent along the Northern Border.

Murray also attached language to the appropriations bill to require at least 25 percent of all new INS Border Patrol staff to be assigned to the Northern Border and worked to add \$28 million to hire and train Customs agents for the Northern Border.

This year, Murray supported the Border Security Act, which increased border security and improved visa information for visitors to the U.S.

She secured appropriations funding to add an additional 850 personnel to the Northern Border as part of a 2003 appropriations bill.

Murray worked to reimburse local law enforcement efforts to incarcerate and prosecute cases originating on the Northern Border. This problem is especially acute in Whatcom County.

Murray pressed the Administration to deploy the National Guard to the border in the immediate wake of September 11th and had numerous conversations with Administration officials to try to expedite the process.

Northwest Straits

Murray secured \$1.25 million for Northwest Straits funding in two Senate appropriations bills. This represents a 31 percent increase over last year's level to better protect marine environments in the North Puget Sound. She is currently working to maintain these increases as Congress completes the FY2003 appropriations bills.

Nurses

Senator Murray was an original cosponsor of the Nurse Reinvestment Act to retain skilled nurses and encourage more Americans to enter the nursing industry. This bill passed both the House and Senate and was signed into law in August of 2002. The bill will establish a National Nurse Corps Scholarship program to provide scholarships to individuals seeking nursing education in exchange for service in critical nursing shortage areas. It will also award grants to nursing schools and health care facilities to recruit new nurses, and encourage more nurses to care for the elderly.

In order to ensure that this legislation is properly funded, Senator Murray signed a letter to the Chairman and ranking Republican of the Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education Appropriations Committee, requesting that the Committee ensure that adequate funds are provided for FY2003 for the initiatives authorized by the Nurse Reinvestment Act.

Senator Murray also worked to increase funding in an appropriations bill for programs to develop the nursing workforce through advanced education nursing, basic nurse education and practice, and nursing workforce diversity. As a result, FY2002 funding levels for Title VII of the Health Professions Act were increased by almost \$75 million. Title VIII, the Nurse Education Act, was increased by nearly \$10 million.

Operation Safe Commerce

Six million cargo containers enter the United States every year. 1.8 million of them come through the Ports of Seattle and Tacoma. We don't know enough about what's inside those containers. An incident at one of our ports would have a terrible impact on public safety, commerce and our economy.

This year, Murray started a pilot program called Operation Safe Commerce, which allows U.S. customs officials to inspect cargo overseas and then monitor the containers across the ocean, through U.S. ports and on to their final destinations. In the ongoing effort to "find a needle in a haystack," Operation Safe Commerce will help shrink the size of the haystack and will provide about \$9 million to the Ports of Seattle and Tacoma in 2003.

Oil Spill Prevention

In recent years, a tug has been stationed at the entrance to the Strait of Juan de Fuca at Neah Bay to help prevent an oil spill in the waterway. Annual funding for the tug has been an ongoing challenge and has come from both state and federal sources over the years.

In the 2003 Transportation Appropriation bill, Murray provided \$1.6 million for the Coast Guard Captain of the Port of Seattle to use for oil spill prevention efforts in the Strait. Currently, the Coast Guard is in the process of determining how best to achieve that important goal, which could include using the funds for a year-round, dedicated tug.

Pipeline Safety

On November 14, Congress passed the Murray-McCain pipeline safety bill, which will finally require all of the nation's pipelines to be inspected regularly. President Bush signed the bill on December 17, 2002. Murray brought the issue to the U.S. Senate after the Bellingham tragedy and educated her colleagues on the importance of pipeline safety.

In 2000, Murray introduced the Senate's first pipeline safety bill and secured Senate passage in 2001 and 2002.

In appropriations bills in recent years, Murray has also worked to increase funding for the Office of Pipeline Safety, to put more inspectors on duty, and to provide grants to states to improve state oversight.

Port Security

Murray worked successfully to secure \$93 million in port security grants to enable the nation's ports to conduct security assessments and enhancements. The Ports of Seattle, Tacoma and Everett got \$4.8 million in those grants.

Murray worked to double the number of new Marine Safety and Security Teams (Coast Guard "Swat Teams") to four and brought the first team in the nation to Seattle.

She created "Operation Safe Commerce," a \$28 million pilot project to help track cargo coming into American ports. Together, the Ports of Seattle and Tacoma make up the third largest shipping container load center in the nation and one of three national pilot sites to implement "Operation Safe Commerce."

Prescription Drugs

Murray was a strong supporter of legislation to provide an affordable prescription drug benefit to America's seniors and disabled under Medicare. Although a majority in the Senate supported this benefit, others supported an insurance industry-backed plan that could have left millions of seniors without coverage. Murray will continue to fight for a real prescription drug benefit in the 108th Congress.

Rural Telecom

For almost five years, Sen. Murray has worked to bring high-speed Internet access to rural parts of our state, which are not served by commercial providers. She has organized a statewide Telecommunications Working Group that meets regularly and has held Telecom conferences throughout the state.

Murray introduced an amendment to the Farm bill to provide planning grants to rural communities to help them bring high-speed access to their areas. The Senate passed her amendment, but it was dropped in conference with the House.

Ryan White CARE Act

The Ryan White CARE Act programs give financial assistance to individuals living with HIV/AIDS. These programs help cover some of the expenses for prescription drugs, housing, intervention, education, and dental services.

As a member of the powerful Senate Appropriations committee, Senator Murray worked during the 107th Congress to help HIV/AIDS patients.

For FY2002, Ryan White CARE Act programs received over \$1.9 billion in funding, an increase of more than \$103 million from FY 2001. That includes a \$50 million increase for the AIDS Drug Assistance Program (ADAP) in FY2002.

On February 19, 2002, Murray announced that the King County Public Health Department received \$5.9 million in Ryan White CARE Act funding.

Spokane Combined Readiness Center

In the wake of September 11th, Sen. Murray led efforts to assist and improve local response efforts to a potential incident. Murray secured \$11.6 million to help build the Spokane Combined Readiness Center, a regional command center that will train and coordinate efforts of police, fighters, EMTs and others in the event of a natural disaster or other emergency.

The House failed to fully fund the project, and thus only \$8.8 million was finally approved – a significant sum, but less than what Murray had initially secured.

Spokane Valley - Rathdrum Prairie Aquifer Study

Murray secured \$500,000 in the Senate FY2003 Interior Appropriations bill to help fund a long-overdue study of the Spokane Valley / Rathdrum Prairie Aquifer.

Energy companies wanted to build three power plants in Idaho over the Spokane Aquifer. The plants would require 20 million gallons of water a day from the Aquifer, which is the sole source of drinking water for the region.

There is widespread recognition in the community that before more major decisions are made about how to allocate water from the Aquifer, a much more comprehensive study is needed.

Unfortunately, her House colleagues failed to provide any funding in their Interior bill, and it is unclear whether the new majority will continue to support Murray's work on this environmental and economic development initiative.

Telehealth

Telehealth uses technology to improve access to health care for residents in rural and isolated communities. It allows medical images and data from rural areas to be shared over the Internet with specialists in large cities. It shows tremendous potential for improving the delivery of quality health care to rural underserved areas.

For FY2002, Senator Murray preserved funding for these important programs and helped secure an increase of over \$3 million. In addition, Senator Murray worked to include reauthorization of the Telehealth program in the Health Care Safety Net Amendments, which became law in October of 2002.

Senator Murray has helped secure funding for a telemedicine project at Children's Hospital in Seattle in cooperation with the University of Washington. For FY2001 and FY2002, she secured more than \$860,000 toward a \$3 million, three-year project. This project was designed to provide our entire region with access to the pediatric specialty care and research at Children's in Seattle.

In addition, Senator Murray helped Inland Northwest Health receive a competitive telemedicine program grant. For FY2001 and 2002 Inland received nearly \$550,000 to expand their rural telemedicine programs.

For FY2003, the Senate Agriculture spending bill provides \$54 million for the USDA Distance Learning and Telemedicine Program, a \$23 million increase from the Administration's request.

Transportation

As Chair of the powerful Senate Transportation Appropriations Subcommittee, Murray has worked hard to direct hundreds of millions of dollars in federal funding to help solve Washington's transportation problems.

The FY2003 bill that Murray wrote included:

- \$2.5 million to rebuild the Monroe Street bridge in Spokane
- \$3.5 million for grade separations in Yakima
- \$3.5 million to fix the I-205 interchange the Columbia River and NE 83rd Street in Vancouver
- \$2 million to construct new docks at the Sidney Landing Terminal in Bremerton
- \$2.5 million for engineering and redesign work for the Alaskan Way Viaduct
- \$3.5 million for a Community Transit park & ride station in Snohomish County
- \$2.5 million to expand Highway 12 in Walla Walla to a four-lane highway
- \$5.4 million for BIA Route 13 / Route 1 Makah Indian Tribe to pave the 4.3 mile road to Cape Flattery
- A full list of projects can be found in the July 2002 press office section of Murray's website <http://murray.senate.gov>

Murray Chaired a number of transportation hearings to examine:

- Highway safety
- Cargo security
- Port security (held in Seattle)
- Aviation safety

[See also, Amtrak, Coast Guard, Port Security]

Unemployment Assistance

The closure of several Washington aluminum plants threw thousands of steelworkers out of work. Kaiser workers petitioned the Labor Department to receive federal income support, training assistance, and a job search allowance through the Trade Adjustment Assistance program. When it appeared that the Administration would not approve the application, Murray personally intervened with the Labor Department, which then approved the assistance.

Sen. Murray cosponsored legislation (S. 2892) to extend unemployment benefits by 13 weeks for those who have exhausted their benefits, and she cosponsored a separate bill

(S.3009) which would have added 20 weeks of additional benefits for residents of states with high unemployment, including Washington.

After the Senate passed the 13-week extension and the House had passed a modest extension of only 5 weeks, Murray joined members of the Washington delegation in a letter to Speaker Dennis Hastert and Rep. Richard Gephardt on November 20 asking the House to compromise to a 13-week extension before December 28. The House did not.

She joined other Senators in a letter to the President on December 18, asking him to specify his call to extend UI benefits, which he made in a radio address on December 14.

Sen. Murray will continue to work to encourage her colleagues on the other side of the aisle to do the right thing for unemployed workers and pass an extension of benefits.

Vancouver Barracks

Using her position on the powerful Senate Appropriations Committee, Murray added an amendment to the Defense funding measure to provide \$6.1 million to the Vancouver Barracks restoration efforts. Since no money was provided in the House Defense Appropriations bill, the funding was reduced in conference to final \$3.7 million level.

Sen. Murray added \$400,000 to the National Parks Service in the Interior Appropriations bill for operations at the Vancouver NPS site.

Murray also supported Sen. Cantwell's successful effort to authorize \$15 million to preserve the Vancouver National Historic Reserve.

Veterans Health Center

For the 22,000 veterans living in North Central Washington, receiving even basic health care and routine doctor visits can be an all-day ordeal. They must travel 120 miles to Spokane or over the mountains to Seattle or Tacoma to see a VA doctor.

Murray wrote and got the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee to approve a pilot project to provide weekly medical services to veterans in North Central and Northwest Washington.

Murray's amendment to the "Veterans' Long-Term Care and Mental Health Enhancement Act" would provide basic medical services to veterans in the state's most under-served areas, including Whatcom, Chelan, Douglas, Okanogan and Kittitas counties. Murray succeeded in passing her amendment through the Senate.

The House did not support this effort for Washington veterans, and Murray will have to reintroduce the bill next year.

The Omnibus Veterans Bill, S. 2043, was stalled at the end of the 107th Congress, and Murray will reintroduce the bill next year.

Welfare Reform

When Congress undertook reauthorization of the Temporary Assistance to Needy Families bill (TANF) this year, Senator Murray worked to make this an opportunity to improve the quality of life for low-income families and help them pull themselves out of poverty. Senator Patty Murray joined her Democratic colleagues in sending a letter to Senator Max Baucus (D-MT), Chair of the Senate Finance Committee, to establish principles for real welfare reform that will move parents into the workforce and will move families off of welfare and out of poverty.

Senator Murray feels that with Washington's high unemployment rate, our state's families are struggling, and more than ever, we need a social safety net that will be a springboard to a better life. In their letter to Chairman Baucus, Senator Murray and her colleagues laid out their priorities for a strong welfare reform bill including:

- Improving the quality and accessibility of childcare with better wages for childcare workers and more off-hours care;
- Increasing access to education and training to prepare people for good jobs in fields like health care and technology;
- Strengthening protections for victims of domestic violence;
- And restoring benefits to legal immigrants.

Building on this commitment to Washington's low-income families, in August Senator Murray introduced legislation to strengthen America's families by enhancing protections for victims of domestic violence, making some welfare rules more flexible, helping teen parents and their children succeed, increasing funds for counseling, and supporting care givers for disabled children. Senator Murray's bill would also create a Secure and Healthy Families fund. The fund would support state and local efforts to provide family counseling, income enhancement and teen pregnancy prevention, rather than using welfare dollars for marriage promotion as the President has proposed. Senator Murray's bill is designed to strengthen the safety net our most vulnerable families depend on and is a critical step in our work to leave no child behind.

Murray held roundtable meeting with welfare recipients and child-care providers in Yakima and Vancouver to hear their concerns about welfare reform.

In 2003, Congress is expected to reauthorize welfare reform legislation, and Murray will continue to advocate for disadvantaged families in Washington state.

Wenatchee Valley Medical Center (WVMC)

Based on information from the 2000 census, the Bureau of Census no longer defines the Wenatchee area as "non-urbanized." Due to these findings, the WVMC has been in jeopardy of losing its Rural Health Clinic status and all funding associated with that definition.

However, the Division of Shortage Designation reevaluated the Wenatchee community and found that the area continues to have a shortage of health professionals. The clinic has historically reinvested WVMC funding in the regional health care system.

In order to save this critical funding, Senator Murray worked with Thomas Scully, the Administrator for the Medicare and Medicaid programs. As a result of Senator Murray's work, the WVMC's status is currently pending in an appeals process that may result in the WVMC retaining its status and much needed funding.

Wild Sky

One of the most important legislative efforts of the 107th Congress was Sen. Murray's "Wild Sky" wilderness legislation, which passed the Senate but failed in the House, despite Rep. Rick Larsen's considerable efforts.

The legislation would protect 106,000 acres of forest, including scarce lowland old-growth forest in Snohomish County.

Murray worked with local communities, public utilities, Longview Fibre, snowmobilers, environmentalists and others to craft the legislation. The thorough planning that went into this area prompted Sen. Larry Craig (R-Idaho) to remark at a hearing, "You did it the way it ought to be done. It was an inclusive process."

Murray will continue to work with her colleagues to pass the bill in the next Congress.

Wheat - Bill Emerson Humanitarian Trust

Senator Murray fought to change the Bush Administration's harmful process for selling wheat from the Bill Emerson Humanitarian Trust. In July and again in September, the Bush Administration sold government stores of wheat to finance famine relief to southern Africa. While Senator Murray supported the Administration's end goal, the new process hurt Washington state wheat growers and elevator companies.

On July 11 and again on August 29, Senator Murray wrote to Ann Veneman, Secretary of Agriculture, to urge USDA to make changes to its process to help rural businesses and farmers in Washington state.

Wine

Murray secured funding to help ensure Washington's growing wine industry has enough high-quality, disease-free plants and cuttings to meet the demand of existing and new vineyards by creating a "mother-block" of healthy wine grape rootstock.

She helped secure \$400,000 for the Northwest Center for Small Fruits Research for viticulture research, half of which will go directly for research at the center. The other half will be awarded competitively for collaborative research between WSU, Oregon State University and the University of Idaho.

In August, Murray toured 6 vineyards in Central Washington to learn more about the process and challenges of winemaking. She believes that Washington's wine industry

could be an important engine for economic development and tourism in Central Washington, and she will continue to support this growing industry.