



Denny Heck
Lieutenant Governor



Statement by Lt. Gov. Denny Heck on the Upcoming Adjournment of the 2022 Regular Session

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Lt. Governor Denny Heck released a statement marking the upcoming adjournment of the 2022 Regular Session of the 67th Legislature:

“Today we end 60 days of dedicated work on behalf of the people of Washington. While we all hoped the 2022 session would mark a return to normal, life had other plans. The session began with another tragic wave of the pandemic, including some of the highest hospitalization rates our state has seen over the last two years. The session ends with a senseless, unprovoked war against the people of Ukraine, upending the lives of millions and shaking the international order at its core.

In spite of these events, there are advances from the past 60 days worth celebrating. History was made when Sarah Bannister was elected Secretary of the Senate, making her the first woman to serve as the Senate’s top administrative officer. The Senate made their wisest decision of the session by choosing Sarah for this role, and I am lucky to call her both a colleague and a friend.

Secretary Bannister, Deputy Secretary Colleen Rust, and the entire rostrum staff worked with incredible thought and care to ensure safety was of the utmost importance to the Senate. Their work rarely makes headlines but the Senate could not function without their service.

I am delighted Suchi Sharma joined our chamber as one of the two Senate Counsels who keep the Senate’s parliamentary procedure on track. I am deeply grateful to her and Jeannie Gorrell for their advice, service, and wisdom. They are the anchors who keep the Senate moored to the principles of impartiality, fairness, and decency.

The 2022 session also saw Senator Jamie Pedersen move into a new role as Majority Floor Leader. Sen. Pedersen’s acumen, organization, and leadership kept the Senate focused and productive. I am grateful for his thoughtfulness and honesty, and for his sponsorship of SR 8662, recognizing and supporting Ukrainian Americans. I will always remember his moving remarks during consideration of the resolution.

Legislation

I commend Senator Lias and Representative Fey for producing a long-awaited and much-needed transportation package. Move Ahead Washington is a timely and significant step

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towards an inevitable future when our state can no longer rely on the motor vehicle fuel tax to fund our transportation needs. Consumer preferences are shifting to electric vehicles and greater use of multi-modal transportation options.

My candor compels me to admit I am deeply disappointed the Legislature did not make more significant progress on one of the most urgent and widespread issues facing Washingtonians: the rapidly rising cost of housing and the lack of housing supply. Washington has the fewest number of housing units per household of any state in the country. This is an embarrassment and an enormous restraint on equitable economic growth in our state. Frustratingly, there is widespread, bipartisan agreement on the nature of this problem and the most effective step the state could take: legalizing middle housing options statewide. While legislative politics prevented the necessary compromises from taking shape this session, our housing crisis will only worsen until we join our West Coast neighbors in passing laws to allow the building of more housing of all types that are affordable to all residents.

Work of the Lt. Governor's Office

In 2021 the Legislature generously appropriated funds to the Office of Lieutenant Governor for the administration of a comprehensive business competitiveness and SWOT analysis of Washington's economy. This endeavor hasn't been undertaken in nearly a decade, and last month our office released the final product: [Redefining Economic Success in Washington: 3 Keys to Quality Growth](#).

I want to thank the members of the Legislative Committee on Economic Development & International Relations for their contributions to the report, as well as Senator Mullet and Representative Ryu for allowing our office to present the findings before their committees. The report presents original insights about Washington's economy for legislators to incorporate into their work.

In addition to the report, our office worked to pass three pieces of request legislation: HB 1798, concerning powers of LCEDIR; SB 5750, designating the Washington State Leadership Board a trustee of the state of Washington; and SB 5756, establishing the semiquincentennial (USA 250) committee. All three passed the Legislature with bipartisan support, and I want to thank the sponsors for their support.

Lastly, one of the duties of the Lieutenant Governor is to serve as our state's liaison to the Washington State Consular Corp. In the days after Russia's invasion of Ukraine, the Senate passed SR 8662, recognizing and supporting Ukrainian Americans and the people of Ukraine during their time of need. We welcomed Valeriy Goloborodko, Honorary Consul of Ukraine in Seattle to the Senate chamber, and prior to the recognition on the floor, the Honorary Consul and I discussed immediate and tangible ways Washingtonians can help Ukrainian Americans in their urgent time of need.

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With one of the largest populations of Ukrainian Americans and Ukrainian immigrants among the 50 states, now is the time for the people of Washington to lend their support to the people of Ukraine. This week our office launched ltgov.wa.gov/ukraine as an easy, simply website for any Washingtonian who wants to help Ukraine in their fight for peace and freedom.

I look forward to traveling throughout Washington during the interim, highlighting the findings of our office's business competitiveness study and listening to the voices of Washingtonians continuing to recover from the impacts of the pandemic. I am also looking forward to a sense of normalcy finally returning to the Legislature in the 2023 session. Lastly, and as always, GO ZAGS.

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