

Senator Gray-Jackson's Notes
Midtown Community Council
April 10, 2024

This Session

The following is a list of my current legislative priorities for this session.

Public Schools: Mental Health Education (SB 24) - Amends existing health education curriculum to include mental health in K-12 health classrooms to adequately educate students on vital information pertaining to mental health symptoms, resources, and treatment. The Bill passed the Senate floor on Wednesday, March 6th in a vote of 15 to 4 and it was referred to the House Health & Social Services, Education and Finance committee for hearings then it will go to the floor for a vote.

Asian American/Pacific Islander Program (SB 131) – Amends Section 14.30 to require teaching students in Kindergarten through 12th grade about the contributions of Asian American and Pacific Islander communities to the economic, cultural, social, and political development of the United States. Several other states across the country have passed similar bills which allow students to feel empowered and to understand their ethnic identities as well as their personal civic duty. This bill moved out of the Senate State Affairs Committee on March 13th and is now waiting to be heard in the Senate Finance Committee for the first time.

Stay at Work/Return to Work (SB 206) –This bill adds a Return-to-Work Coordinator to State Statutes to assist with planning for individuals who experience on the job injuries resulting in compensable time loss injuries. The program will help supervisors manage employee injury, illness and disability and ensure that employees can return to the workplace as quickly and safely as possible. This bill was heard and held in the Senate Finance committee on March 20th.

CPR Curriculum (SB 221) - Seeks to enhance the quality of health education within our state's public school system. SB 221 focuses on equipping our students with the knowledge and skills necessary to increase the number of CPR-trained bystanders. This bill was heard and held in the Senate Education Committee on March 13th.

Education

During a joint session, I voted to override the Governor's veto on the education bill, SB 140. Although 65% of the legislature voted to override the Governor with a vote of 39 to 20, we were still one vote short of the 40 votes required. SB 140 was a truly bipartisan compromise between the House and Senate, and I was disappointed to see it vetoed. Education continues to be a top priority for the Senate Majority. Our schools

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have not seen an increase in education funding for eight years and during that time we've seen inflation costs grow significantly. That's why the Senate passed a bill to increase education funding last year and we continued to push for an increase again this year after that bill died in the House.

Priorities for the Senate Bi-partisan Majority

- Education
- Returning to a Defined Benefit
- Energy
- Developing a comprehensive and sustainable fiscal plan