

# **SENATOR JIM HONEYFORD**

## **15TH LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT - WASHINGTON STATE**

### **SENATE**

**360-786-7684 | 800-562-6000 | P.O. Box 40415 Olympia, WA 98504-0415**

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**Media Contact:**

[Liz Coleman](#) 360-

### **Honeyford says fiscally-responsible capital budget a boon to water, education**

**OLYMPIA...** Sen. Jim Honeyford said the new \$3.9 billion capital budget passed by lawmakers tonight mirrors the budget priorities that have defined the 2015 legislative session: strong reforms, accountability and providing maximum return to taxpayers for every dollar. Honeyford led the Senate team that negotiated the 2015-17 list of capital investments.

“Going into negotiations, there was a clear difference in priorities between the Senate and House proposals. Finding a middle ground was a lot of work, but we managed to find a compromise and the investments we agreed on are going to benefit the people of Washington greatly,” said Honeyford, R-Sunnyside.

The capital budget funds the acquisition, construction and maintenance of capital assets across Washington, including schools and projects with recreational and economic-development value. It also provides funding for water projects and drought relief.

“Folks in central and eastern Washington who need a reliable source of water for farming or industry can sleep better because of the funding we dedicated to the Yakima Basin Integrated Project and the Columbia River Basin Program and toward drought relief,” said Honeyford. “Water is easy to take for granted until you either have too much or not enough.”

A \$200 million appropriation will build roughly 500 new K-3 classrooms. Not only will this give students in Washington’s poorest and most crowded classrooms more breathing space, but the funding further bolsters the Legislature’s commitment to building a 21<sup>st</sup>-century educational system.

“If there is a real winner this session, I have to say it’s our schools and our kids. Not only did the operating budget dedicate a historic amount toward education, it became a bit of challenge to see how much more our capital budget could add to that number. We also made significant investments in our skills centers and higher education,” said Honeyford.

The proposal seeks to address mental-health treatment needs across Washington, in part by including a \$32 million in grants that would expand the number of community behavioral-health treatment beds.

“The capital budget also creates many family-wage construction jobs and provides better facilities for our state’s most vulnerable residents. It’s rewarding to pass a budget that builds things you can see and touch. This year we went a step further and found ways to maximize efficiency and accountability in many of the projects.”

[Engrossed House Bill 1115](#) will take effect tomorrow.