

From Newsletter sent by Derek Kilmer, US. Representative, 6<sup>th</sup> Congressional District  
Emailed Dec. 6, 2013

...On to the meat and potatoes of this update: This week we had some big news to announce.

### **Announcing the Olympic Peninsula Collaborative**

I've always said we don't have to choose between economic development and environmental protection.

Earlier this week, I was very happy to announce a new partnership between stakeholders in conservation, timber, and government that I hope will prove that's true.

It's called the Olympic Peninsula Collaborative and it will show how we can build consensus and can bring folks together to simultaneously create a more environmentally healthy forest, provide for increased, sustainable timber harvests on the Olympic National Forest, and provide economic benefits to timber communities on the Peninsula.

One of the reasons I care so much about these issues is because I grew up on the Olympic Peninsula and saw firsthand what happened to folks when mills closed down and folks were laid off. Unfortunately given the challenges of recent decades, there's often a lot of toxicity in the dialogue about land-use issues on the Peninsula.

It's my hope that we can turn down the volume a bit and have a commonsense conversation about these issues. That's part of the rationale behind this effort.

To read more and take a look at the goals of the partnership, click [here](#).

What I like about a collaborative approach is that it brings people who might normally disagree together around common goals. We can do more, and we are much stronger when we work on things we agree on rather than fight over things we disagree on.

We're just getting started and there's much more to do. I'll be sure to keep you posted as we announce specific projects.

### **My Innovation Bill Passes in the Science, Space, and Technology Committee**

We also had some good news yesterday from the Science, Space, and Technology Committee. A bill I've co-sponsored and championed, the TRANSFER Act, was passed by unanimous consent. The TRANSFER Act is a bipartisan piece of legislation that would help spur America's competitiveness and create new jobs by helping innovators and entrepreneurs commercialize their ideas.

To remain competitive in the 21st century, we need to step up our game and look for ways to facilitate innovation by giving our universities, entrepreneurs, and small businesses the tools to grow ideas into commercial products.

Passing the TRANSFER Act will help stimulate the growth of new ideas, new investments, and new small businesses. This legislation not only provides early-stage proof of concept funding, but encourages mentoring through creating programs to provide advice, entrepreneurial education, project management, and technology and business development expertise.

The legislation will now move on to the Small Business Committee for passage. I'll keep you updated on its progress!

### **Puget Sound Caucus Hearing**

Many of us care about maintaining a healthy Puget Sound. The Sound is an icon of our region that has weaved itself into the DNA of those of us who live here. But not only is protecting the Sound consistent with our environmental values, it's part of our state's economic imperative. Puget Sound is a cornerstone that supports tourism, fishing, shellfish harvesting, and other important industries.

In our ongoing effort to protect the Sound, this week, Representative Denny Heck and I hosted our first Puget Sound Recovery Caucus roundtable discussion in Washington, D.C. We had an extraordinary turnout that included representatives of the Puget Sound Partnership, along with folks from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, National Park Service, Department of Interior, NOAA, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and EPA Region 10 Administrator Dennis McLerran. The meeting was a good follow-up on the successful briefing we held this past August in Tacoma.

The meeting was timely, following on the release of the Puget Sound Partnership's 2013 State of the Sound Report. That report detailed the initiatives on which our state has made progress and identified the areas in which we are coming up short.

While I was encouraged to hear we've made strides in restoring shellfish beds, beaches, and estuaries, there have been mixed results in the progress of on-site sewage, shoreline armoring, sand development and cover, freshwater, marine sediment, toxins in fish, and worsening circumstances for the health of our marine waters and the orca and herring populations.

We've got work to do. Our work on Puget Sound recovery efforts is only just beginning and with another budget cycle fast approaching, we have to highlight the importance of the Puget Sound to our economy in Washington State. Both Representative Heck and I as well as the other members of the Puget Sound Recovery Caucus are committed to working in a coordinated effort with Washington State and our federal partners to make meaningful strides in improving the health of the Puget Sound.

For me, making progress on this is not just about the impact to our economy. As the dad of two little girls, I want to make sure Puget Sound remains one of our state's crown jewels for generations to come.

### **Upcoming Telephone Town Hall**

Finally, I'll be holding one more telephone town hall before the year ends, this coming Wednesday, 12/11 at 6pm PT. I work for you, and I like to make sure that I continue to be accessible and accountable to you. If you'd like to be a part of it, please email your name and phone number to [kilmer.teletownhall@mail.house.gov](mailto:kilmer.teletownhall@mail.house.gov) or sign up [here](#).

As always, thanks for reading and hope to talk with you soon.

Sincerely,  
Derek