



Legisl Letter

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Activities of the Legislature affecting farmers and ranchers in Washington state

LEGISLATORS OF THE YEAR

Each year since 1995, the Washington Farm Bureau Board of Directors has awarded one or more state Legislators with the honor of being the organization's Legislator of the Year. A Legislator's vote record and outstanding actions to help strengthen family farms are key criteria for receiving this award.

Three Legislators were chosen for the honor this year. These Legislators didn't hesitate to take on the difficult issues impacting agriculture in our state, often amidst heated debates.

Farm Bureau's Legislators of the Year for 2008 are Senator Linda Evans Parlette, R-Wenatchee; Representative Bill Grant, D-Walla Walla; and Representative Lynn Schindler, R-Spokane.

Senator Linda Evans Parlette

Senator Linda Evans Parlette was chosen as Legislator of the Year in recognition of her outstanding leadership and steadfast support of agriculture and small business. She championed a number of key bills for Farm Bureau, especially on health care and labor issues.

During the 2008 session, Sen. Parlette led a bipartisan coalition through several close votes that would have significantly expanded access to affordable health care coverage for the uninsured, especially young adults. Senator Parlette also took the lead in opposing legislation intended to hand government control over of our state's private health care system.

Farm Bureau appreciates Senator Parlette's commitment to and effective advocacy on behalf of our state's farm and ranch families.

Representative Bill Grant

Representative Grant, first elected to the House in 1986, is a farmer from Walla Walla County. He has been a voice for agriculture while serving in this capacity.

During the last two legislative sessions in particular, Rep. Grant has provided critical support and leadership on a variety of issues for agriculture. His leadership enabled WFB to achieve a number of public policy goals that would not have happened otherwise. During critical moments in session, Rep. Grant consistently took time to hear Farm Bureau concerns about or support for issues and delivered on promises to work the issue within his caucus.

A long-time supporter of agriculture, Rep. Grant was Washington Farm Bureau's Legislator of the year in 2001. We thank him for serving as an expert consultant on environment, energy, water, labor, and tax and fiscal issues affecting farm and ranch families in Washington.

Representative Lynn Schindler

Rep. Schindler has been a tenacious champion of small business and protecting private property rights.

As the assisting ranking Republican on both the House Local Government Committee and the House Transportation Committee, Rep. Schindler was at the forefront of debates over policies that could have either limited or greatly expanded the role and cost of government.

As in all of her years in the Legislature, Rep. Schindler was a strategic resource in fighting against the expansion of the mandates and constraints of the Growth Management Act. Rep. Schindler led efforts to help property rights advocates coalesce into a more effective voice, and she constantly sought out Washington Farm Bureau's opinion and expertise on agricultural, property, and other policy matters.

Farm Bureau thanks Rep. Schindler for consistently representing the view that government is best when it is contained, minimized, and restrained. Her ability to understand and live the commitment to limited government benefited all Farm Bureau members while she served in office.

Farm Bureau thanks these Legislators for their tireless efforts to protect the interests of farmers and ranchers throughout Washington state.

FARM BUREAU PAC ENDORSES ROSSI FOR GOVERNOR

Other farm-friendly candidates also chosen for early endorsement

The Political Action Committee (PAC) of the Washington Farm Bureau has overwhelmingly endorsed Dino Rossi for Governor.

"Our grassroots leaders are united in the belief that a Rossi administration will finally bring about the kinds of changes we need in Olympia – from solutions to the coming budget crisis, to fixing our transportation problems, to changing the culture of state government, and protecting our homes and families. Dino Rossi's leadership is needed now," said Farm Bureau PAC Chairman Bob Stuhlmiller.

In an impressive show of grassroots support, Rossi garnered endorsement recommendations from 22 county Farm Bureaus across the state. No other gubernatorial candidate received any endorsement recommendations.

"Dino Rossi understands that in order for agriculture to be successful in Washington, it needs a business climate that is favorable and a regulatory climate that is not suffocating for farmers and ranchers," said Stuhlmiller. "Farm Bureau is confident that Dino Rossi's leadership will spur tangible, positive changes for all industries in Washington – and that's something we all can benefit from."

Farm Bureau PAC also endorsed Attorney General Rob McKenna for re-election, as well as candidates for legislative and local offices:

STATE SENATE

Sen. Mark Schoesler (R-9th Dist.)

Sen. Linda Evans Parlette (R-12th Dist.)

Sen. Mike Hewitt (R-16th Dist.)

Sen. Don Benton (R-17th Dist.)

Sen. Joseph Zarelli (R-18th Dist.)
Sen. Brian Hatfield (D-19th Dist.)
Sen. Dan Swecker (R-20th Dist.)
Sen. Jim Hargrove (D-24th Dist.)
Connie Lord, candidate (R-23rd Dist.)
Sen. Val Stevens (R-39th Dist.)

STATE HOUSE

Rep. Jim McCune (R-2nd Dist.)
Rep. Joel Kretz (R-7th Dist.)
Rep. Steve Hailey (R-9th Dist.)
Rep. Joe Schmick (R-9th Dist.)
Rep. Barbara Bailey (R-10th Dist.)
Rep. Cary Condotta (R-12th Dist.)
Rep. Mike Armstrong (R-12th Dist.)
Rep. Maureen Walsh (R-16th Dist.)
Rep. Bill Grant (D-16th Dist.)
Rep. Deb Wallace (D-17th Dist.)
Rep. Jaime Herrera (R-18th Dist.)
Rep. Ed Orcutt (R-18th Dist.)
Rep. Dean Takko (D-19th Dist.)
Rep. Brian Blake (D-19th Dist.)
Rep. Richard DeBolt (R-20th Dist.)
Rep. Gary Alexander (R-20th Dist.)
Rep. Lynn Kessler (D-24th Dist.)
Jan Angel, candidate (R-26th Dist.)
Rep. Dan Kristiansen (R-39th Dist.)
Rep. Kirk Pearson (R-39th Dist.)

JUDICIAL

Tim Ford, Court of Appeals, Division 2, District 2, candidate
Bruce Danielson, Kitsap County Superior Court, Pos. 1, candidate
John Lohrmann, Walla Walla Superior Court, Pos. 1, candidate

LOCAL

Commissioner Mike Blankenship (R), for re-election to Ferry County Commission, Dist. 3
Commissioner Brad Miller (R), for re-election to Ferry County Commission, Dist. 1
Terry Willis (D), Grays Harbor County Commissioner, Dist. 1, candidate
Commissioner Ron Averill (R) for re-election to Lewis County Commissioner, Dist. 1
Bruce Schulte (R), Lewis County Commissioner, Dist. 2, candidate
Larry Campbell (R), Okanogan County Commissioner, Dist. 1, candidate
Commissioner Don "Bud" Hover (R), for re-election to Okanogan County Commission, Dist. 2
Commissioner Jon Kaino (D), for re-election to Pacific County Commission, Dist. 1
Ron Wesen (R), Skagit County Commissioner, Dist. 1, candidate
Don Gordon (R), Skagit County Commissioner, Dist. 2, candidate

Candidates are recommended for endorsement based on their voting records (if already in office) and their understanding and support of Farm Bureau policy. To see the complete legislative vote record for 2008 and past years, visit www.wsfb.com/issues/voterecord.

WFB CAMPAIGN SCHOOL ~ JUNE 3 & 4

Washington Farm Bureau and the Building Industry Association of Washington are again joining forces to present a campaign training seminar.

This year, the seminar will be held at the Davenport Hotel in Spokane on Tuesday June 3 and at Tacoma's La Quinta Inn & Suites on Wednesday June 4. The program runs from 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. and includes lunch. There is no cost to attend.

Special emphasis will be placed on fundraising strategies and methods; image and media presentation; developing and writing a campaign plan; and direct mail.

Space is limited, and June is fast approaching, so if you or someone you know would benefit from the advantages this training provides, register today.

To register, complete the form posted at www.wsfb.com and return it to the address listed on the form.

For more information, contact Patrick Connor, WFB Director of National Affairs, at (800) 331-3276 or pconnor@wsfb.com.