

Short calls for budget action

Sen. Short says COVID-19 crisis is expected to bring a budget deficit of \$7 billion and Legislature needs to act now to make program cuts.

RaeLynn Ricarte

Statesman-Examiner

Sen. Shelly Short, R-Ady, is among Washington legislators calling for a special session in June to grapple with a projected \$7 billion budget deficit over the next four years, and to curb the governor's emergency powers.

"We need to make thoughtful and rational decisions about the budget to avoid hurting our most vulnerable populations," said Short. "If we wait until next year



Shelly Short

to begin making cuts, then we will need to cut deeper to achieve the same level of savings and that is going to hurt more people."

She said nearly \$1 billion in new policy spending is set to go into effect July 1 unless the Legislature acts. That spending includes expanding the governor's outreach staff, increasing hot

breakfasts for inmates and providing at least 3% raises for more than 100,000 state employees.

"When you find yourself in a hole, you have to stop digging," said Short. "We should convene now and forego the scheduled new spending rather than resort later to cutting into vital services that Washingtonians currently rely upon."

Gov. Jay Inslee's shutdown of businesses to stop the spread of COVID-19 has led to the budget crisis, said Short.

The Economic Revenue Forecast Council is set to report new numbers for the possible deficit on June 17 and Short expects them to

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PEACEFUL PROTESTS

Protesters in Kettle Falls line up along the fence of Happy Dell Park to draw the attention of passing motorists. A Black Lives Matter event was also held in Chewelah and both rallies were without incident.

Black Lives Matter demonstrations in Kettle Falls, Chewelah, draw support and detractors

RaeLynn Ricarte

Statesman-Examiner

A Black Lives Matter protest against police brutality in Kettle Falls on Saturday drew about 150 people — most in support but some to guard businesses — and was without incident.

"The turnout is more than I expected, so this is exciting," said Amber Howell, who organized the event.

She made the decision to join other communities in protesting the death of George Floyd, a black man,

at the knee of a white police officer, Derek Chauvin, in Minneapolis, Minnesota, on May 25.

Chauvin has been charged with murder and three officers with him at the scene where he knelt on Floyd's neck until the man died have been charged as accomplices.

Protesters across the U.S. and beyond are demanding that government leaders and law enforcement agencies eliminate systemic racism that puts black lives at danger during interactions with

police. "I wanted a big show of locals who believe similarly to me and my children," said Howell.

Although she lives in Colville, Howell decided to hold the protest in Kettle Falls, where she grew up, because she feels more comfortable dealing with the Stevens County Sheriff's Office and police in that town.

Her teenage daughter, Isabel Bennett, held a sign that read, "Racism isn't getting worse, it's getting filmed" and said Floyd's death had

made her an activist.

"It's time to do something bigger and we're so proud of that," she said.

Callie Dallman's sign read, "So bad even the introverts are here." She joined the protest because, "We're all the same, nobody's better because of the color of their skin."

Many of the protesters lined up along the fence of Happy Dell Park so motorists on Highway 395 could read their signs. They cheered when drivers honked and some called out

support. Some of the protesters reported seeing a few people in cars make obscene gestures to show disagreement.

Chris Loggers, who serves on the Colville city council but was there as a private citizen, was masked to comply with social distancing guidelines. He left home for the first big gathering since Gov. Jay Inslee enacted "Stay home, stay healthy" orders in March out of the belief the time had come to fight for social justice.

"How can we not?" he

asked. "I haven't left home in three months but I had to come here."

He gave an analogy for the reason that people should support Black Lives Matter instead of saying "All Lives Matter" and being complacent.

"All our houses matter and some houses are on fire and you don't send the fire department to houses not on fire. Currently, it is the black houses on fire so that's where we need to focus," he

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Lech Radzimski appointed to Tri-County Superior Court seat by Gov. Inslee

RaeLynn Ricarte

Statesman-Examiner

Gov. Jay Inslee has appointed Lech Radzimski, a former deputy prosecuting attorney and court commissioner, to serve as the third Superior Court Judge for Ferry, Stevens and Pend Oreille counties.

He will fill a newly created seat that becomes effective June 11.

"Lech has established roots in the tri-county judicial district, where



RADZIMSKI

he has lived and worked for move a decade," Inslee said. "Not only does he have credibility as a leader in the community, but he also has extensive jury trial and judicial experience that will allow him to flourish from day one.

Radzimski joins judges Patrick Monasmith and Jessica Reeves in overseeing trials and hearings in the region.

He has served as a court commissioners since September 2019 and presided over civil commitments, exparte dockets and juvenile matters, as well as other criminal, civil and family law cases.

Prior to taking that position, he worked under Stevens County Prosecutor Tim Rasmussen for 10 years, eventually becoming the chief criminal deputy prosecutor.

"I'm very pleased the governor chose Mr. Radzimski for this important position," said Rasmussen.

"Mr. Radzimski has proven himself in the 10 years he worked for me as an able and talented prosecutor. He tried cases at every level and in every court system.

"We have missed his talent in our office, but are pleased he will

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(USPS 520-680)

Weekly weather

| Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday | Sunday | Monday | Tuesday |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| June 17 | June 18 | June 19 | June 20 | June 21 | June 22 | June 23 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 20% chance rain | 10% chance rain | 10% chance rain | 0% chance rain | 10% chance rain | 10% chance rain | 0% chance rain |
| High 72 | High 75 | High 79 | High 82 | High 82 | High 81 | High 85 |
| Low 50 | Low 52 | Low 55 | Low 58 | Low 56 | Low 56 | Low 58 |

10-Day forecast collected from the Weather Channel on June 15

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Subscription Rates
(Payable in advance)
Stevens, Ferry, Pend Oreille Counties

| | |
|-------------------|------|
| One-year | \$38 |
| One Year (senior) | \$35 |
| Nine-month | \$33 |
| Six-month | \$29 |

Out of Area

| | |
|------------|------|
| One-year | \$46 |
| Nine-month | \$39 |
| Six-month | \$34 |

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Judge

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continue to serve the citizens of Stevens County.”

In 2018, Radzinski ran an unsuccessful campaign against District Court Judge Gina Tveit. During that campaign he said that judges must be free from the improper

influence of other branches of government and political interests.

“Judges share a legal duty to promote public confidence in the independence, integrity and impartiality of the judiciary,” he said.

He said as a candidate that, if a law is clear and unambiguous, it is to be interpreted as written. When the verbiage of a statute renders its meaning unclear, but the legislative intent is clearly stated, the law is

to be interpreted with its intended meaning.

In cases where legislative intent is now provided, or clearly and expressly stated, Radzinski said the state and federal constitutions, legal precedents and the rules of statutory construction are considerations to factor into rulings.

In addition to court duties, Radzinski volunteers as a firefighter with the Colville Fire Depart-

ment, an organization that he has been involved with since 2017. He has also been involved in recent years with the Colville Rotary Club and the Colville Civil Service Commission.

Radzinski earned his bachelor’s degree from the University of Washington and his law degree from Gonzaga University School of law.

He and his wife, Christy, live near Colville with their two children.

State

Continued from Front Page

be grim, which is why she believes it is imperative for state official to act now.

Democrats control both the House and Senate so a special session will not happen without their support, said Short.

“Convening a special session this month is the responsible path forward,” she said.

Inslee has demanded that agencies make 15% across the board cuts, but Short said the Legislature could make selective cuts.

“Under state law, the governor may only reduce agency budgets by an equal percentage, whereas the Legislature can come in and act with more precision and care,” she said.

Between tapping into “rainy day” savings and suspending new policy spending, Short said the Legislature should be able to cover about \$3.5 billion of the projected deficit.

“If we didn’t have that emergency fund, I don’t know what we would do,” she said.

Democratic leaders are talking about raising taxes to cover the loss of revenue, but Short and other GOP leaders are strongly opposed.

Short serves the 7th Legislative District, which encompasses Ferry, Okanogan and Stevens counties and part of Pend Oreille and Spokane counties.

She said it would be “adding insult to injury” to call on small businesses that al-

ready struggle in rural areas to pay more when they are fighting for survival.

She said people who lost their jobs when businesses were shuttered for week to stop the spread of coronavirus are also dealing with tough times and shouldn’t have to pay more taxes.

“Everything was shut down with no real notice so people didn’t have time to prepare,” said Short.

“Taxation shouldn’t even be on the table right now — to me it’s offensive to create an economic crisis and then go back to the people that have been harmed for more money.

“The government needs to step back and allow our communities to recover.”

She said there has been an 18% growth in state spending during the last two budget cycles and GOP leaders strongly objected to imposing extra taxes and fees to cover added expenditures when revenues were at a record high.

It is now imperative that the state curb costs to balance the budget, said Short.

She said Inslee has not yet disbursed millions in federal funds sent to help address the economic fallout of the COVID-19 pandemic, and the Legislature could address that budget issue also in a special session.

If state leaders are successful at getting the Legislature to convene, Short said there needs to be clear boundaries established around the emergency powers given to the governor.

The actions of Inslee over the past few months has shown the need for intervention, she said.

“When our governor praises people gathering in the streets to protest police brutality, and condones activists taking over six city blocks in Seattle after he has threatened people protesting the forced closure of their businesses, this crisis is over,” said Short.

The occupants of the “Capital Hill Autonomous Zone” are demanding that the city’s police department be abolished, the use of armed force banned, officers be removed from schools, juvenile jails and prisons eradicated and reparations be made to victims of police brutality.

They took over the Seattle neighborhood during protests and riots across the country following the death of George Floyd, a black man, by white Minneapolis Police Officer Derek Chauvin on May 25.

Chauvin has been charged with murder for kneeling on Floyd’s neck for about 9 minutes despite the man saying that he couldn’t breathe and then becoming unresponsive. Three other officers at the scene have been charged for being accomplices to the crime.

“Although unpermitted, and we should remember we are still in a pandemic, the area is largely peaceful,” tweeted Inslee about the Seattle demonstrations.

“Peaceful protests are fundamentally American, and I am hopeful there will be a peaceful resolution.”

Conversely, Inslee has referred to protests against his “Stay Home, Stay Healthy” order that has boosted Washington’s unemployment rate to a record high as

“illegal and dangerous acts.”

“He is picking winners and losers,” said Short. “To me, he is acting as if he is the legislative branch and gets to make law, but that is not the authority of the executive branch.”

She pointed out that the ideological double-standard is also applied by health experts, as evidenced by an open letter that was drafted by infectious-disease experts at the University of Washington.

The letter, signed by hundreds of medical care providers from across the country, states that “white supremacy is a lethal public health issue that predates and contributes to COVID-19, especially in the black population, so protests are an important way to deal with social injustice.”

Although social distancing protections are encouraged, such as wearing masks and using good hygiene, the letter encourages demonstrations.

“COVID-19 among black patients is yet another lethal manifestation of white supremacy. In addressing demonstrations against white supremacy, our first statement must be one of unwavering support for those who would dismantle, uproot or reform racist institutions,” states the letter.

Short said, while Inslee praises a cause that supports his ideology, he instills fear into churches and business owners who don’t comply with his directives. People are told that if they don’t follow social distancing rules, the Attorney General’s office or the Bureau

of Labor & Industries will come after them and they will face penalties.

“It isn’t ‘guidance,’ when you are going to be punished if you don’t do as he says,” said Short. “I think people in my district are just over this, they want to return to their lives.”

Whenever the Legislature convenes, Short said there is likely to be a call from Democrats to defund or dismantle police departments, and she also strongly opposes that idea.

“I think this is mostly a big city problem,” she said. “We have officers who work really, really hard to establish good relationships in our communities. They do a good job and we need to support them.”

She said if Democrats want more police training in deescalation tactics, or something along that line, she will review these proposals with an open mind, but she will not back any plan to decrease law enforcement services, and she believes other Republicans will follow suit.

“The primary role of government is public health, safety and welfare,” said Short. “We can’t make decisions based on what some bad officers did in Minneapolis that are going to decrease protection for all of our communities.”

She said the chaos of the past several months should serve as an encouragement for people to get out and vote in November.

“It’s all of our responsibility to never let this happen again,” she said. “We can’t let what is happening now our new normal.”

Group lends ranchers a helping hand

Statesman-Examiner

The Northeast Washington Wolf-Cattle Collaborative was established to help ranchers, particularly those with grazing allotments on the Colville National Forest, to minimize livestock loss from large predators, primarily wolves.

The collaborative consists of a five-member, volunteer board made up of local residents who have, or had, careers in ranching, agriculture extension, wildlife conflict and/or biology, politics and teaching.

Current board members are: Sheila Stalp, Jay Shepherd, Wayne Madson, Chris Loggers and Steve Fuhrman.

According to a new release, the collaborative supports ranch families and ranching, and the laws and regulations of the various agencies involved in the issue.

The collaborative views wolves as part of the native spectrum of wildlife in the region, as having “neither angels’ wings nor devils’ horns,” but as “having the

right to live on the landscape, but not having the right to kill livestock.”

Supporting the continuation of a sustained, multi-generational ranching community with a recovered wolf population is the goal of the collaborative.

In its news release, the collaborative states that wolves started to recolonize northeast Washington as a breeding population about 2009, and there are now more wolves in the northeast part of the state than in other area of Washington.

Living with wolves has not been an easy transition for some ranching families because wolves have attacked and killed their

livestock, says the collaborative. The killing of wolves that have preyed on livestock has not been easy for those who want to hear the howl of wolves on the landscape of northeastern Washington, according to the collaborative.

The group wants to minimize livestock predation and subsequent killing of wolves by applying non-lethal deterrence methods learned from others, especially the Blackfoot Challenge and the Tom Miner Basin Association in Montana.

Toward that end, the collaborative receives grants to deploy non-lethal deterrence methods, mainly range riding, from the

Washington Department of Agriculture, which initially funded the collaborative to operate in Okanogan, Ferry, Stevens and Pend Oreille counties.

Recently, WSDA gave the collaborative funding to hire and manage range riders in the Kettle Mountains north of highway 20 (Sherman Pass Highway). That area has a contentious history of wolves killing livestock and wolves getting killed.

The collaborative part-

ners with ranchers that want assistance, more often hiring their trusted family members or friends, known entities, to conduct the riding because they are familiar with the grazing allotments and have a vested interest in minimizing the loss of livestock.

This year, range riders associated with the collaborative, who may or may not share its view, are working across northeastern Washington to minimize wolf-livestock conflicts.

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