



Christine Rolfes

Quick Facts

Birth: 1967, NY

Death:

Occupation: Legislator

Party Affiliation: Democrat

Years served: 2007- (H)
2011- (S)

Office: Representative, Senator

District: 23, Kitsap (p)

Legislative Biography:

Christine is a state senator from the 23rd Legislative District, including the Kitsap County communities of Hansville, Kingston, Poulsbo, Bainbridge Island, Keyport, Silverdale, and East Bremerton.

Christine was appointed to the Senate on July 20, 2011. Prior to her appointment, Christine had served in the House of Representatives since 2007, where she fought to advance legislation reflecting the common-sense values of the 23rd District. Her leadership advocating for small businesses, downtown revitalization, ferry reform, military-families and veterans, and public education has yielded tangible results for Washington families.

During the 2012 legislative session she passed legislation aimed at stimulating entrepreneurship (SB 6289), removing duplicative state requirements for business licenses (SB 6098), mandating state agencies to accept electronic document submissions from businesses (SB 6354), and helping Kitsap families maintain access to health insurance (SB 6412).

From her position on the Transportation Committee she helped to secure funding to sustain ferry operations and ensure construction of the additional 144-car Olympic Class ferry necessary for the system's long-term viability.

Providing congestion relief and safety improvements on our region's smaller state highways has been a priority, and during her first term in the Senate, Christine worked to fund the preliminary design work for improvements along Highway 305 and at the intersection of Hwy 3 and Hwy 304 in Bremerton, as well as safety improvements for bicyclists and local residents at the Hood Canal Bridge.

In 2012 Christine was selected by her peers to serve on the Joint Committee on Veterans and Military Affairs, where she will continue to serve as an advocate for Kitsap County military families and veterans.

Following her earlier work as vice chair of a state task force on military children, Christine sponsored legislation (HB 1075/SB 5248) in 2009 to ease the often-complex school transfer process for military children. Signed into law by the governor, the legislation helps to ensure such things as easy access to educational records, continuation at the same grade level, access to similar special courses (such as honors or English as a second language) and participation in extracurricular activities.

In 2009, veterans' relief opportunities were expanded when the governor signed into law Christine's HB 1049. The bill expands the definition of what a "veteran" is to include current members of the National Guard and Armed Forces Reserves who have been deployed to serve in an armed conflict. This enables veterans and their families to be eligible for the veteran relief programs that all counties administer, both during their deployment and upon their return. During the 2011 and 2012 legislative sessions, bills sponsored by Christine were enacted to allow military experience to qualify for state professional licensing requirements, and making it easier for military spouses to transfer their experiences from other states.

Christine was recently appointed to the Joint Select Committees on Education Accountability and Addressing School Funding, where she will provide the perspective of a parent and public school advocate on key education reform and financing issues.

As the Vice Chair of the House Ecology and Senate Environment Committees, Christine has a strong interest in the clean-up and protection of Hood Canal and Puget Sound waters. In 2011 she led the effort to protect our state waters from catastrophic oil spill risks (HB 1186) and she has been a leading proponent of removing derelict fishing gear from the Sound. This year, with the passage of HB 2502, Kitsap County will be better positioned to preserve key recreational and commercial forestland between Kingston and the Hood Canal bridge.

Additionally, through the state's capital construction budget, clean-up of toxics in Port Gamble Bay will be accelerated and various regional drinking water infrastructure projects will be delivered.

Before her election to the House, Christine served two terms on the Bainbridge Island City Council.

After earning a Bachelor of Arts degree in Economics from the University of Virginia and a Master's in Public Administration from the University of Washington, Christine worked for the Kitsap County Department of Community Development as an open space program coordinator and watershed planner. She later moved to the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), where she counseled Northwest businesses and organizations on humanitarian assistance and commercial opportunities overseas. Also for USAID, Christine spent time working out of the U.S. Embassy in Moscow, Russia, managing environmental and economic development projects. Christine lives on Bainbridge Island with her husband Leonard and their two school-aged daughters.