

# 2004 Legislative Wrap-Up



## Addressing Domestic Violence

Last summer the Crystal Brame tragedy opened our eyes to the threat of domestic violence, especially among law enforcement personnel. The reaction to her death prompted concerned citizens to reexamine law enforcement policies when dealing with one of their own accused of spousal abuse.

The Legislature worked together to pass legislation requiring law enforcement agencies to develop a set of guidelines addressing domestic violence, as well as restricting police officers from carrying a weapon in a courtroom when involved in the allegations. The package of legislation also allows victims of domestic violence to terminate rental agreements

without paying additional rent and prohibits landlords from evicting or refusing to rent to them. In addition, the final supplemental budget includes \$2 million for domestic violence shelters. These steps ensure that we remove any barriers preventing victims of domestic violence from escaping the abuse.

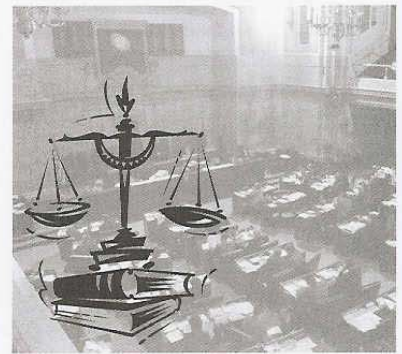
## Accountability from Government

As always, I continued to push for greater private and public sector accountability and efficiency measures, and advocated for the Washington Quality Award Council. This council recognizes outstanding efforts by the state's industries, businesses, and organizations in setting higher standards of cost-effectiveness and public satisfaction. Recognizing and rewarding excellence by businesses and agencies in Washington results in overall improvements in the state's economy.

For several years now, I have also prime sponsored House Bill 1053 to require independent performance audits of state government. This bill would have created a Citizen Oversight Board to

collaborate with other auditing and review efforts of the state, and eventually grade every service operation the state provides.

The House has passed this bill two years in a row now with an overwhelming majority. Unfortunately, the Senate has killed it or watered it down to the point of having little or no effect. I will however continue to advocate for greater government efficiencies. There are few displays of our good faith to the people of Washington more effective than candid appraisals of our performance. Performance Audits find waste in state government – but just as importantly, it also finds what works so we can build on those improvements in the future.



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