



Mountlake Terrace HS students walk out in protest to support Palestine



Washington public school enrollment climbs by nearly 2,000



Three South County Fire Commissioners Sworn In

Real News Real Impact



AIDS Memorial located at Plaz West of Old Mission Building in Everett. Lynnwood Times | Mario Lotmore

Arlington's Amazon fulfillment center revs up staffing for Holidays

By KIENAN BRISCOE

ARLINGTON—It's been three months since Amazon opened Washington's largest fulfillment distribution center in Arlington, but the warehouse is still far from fully staffed as it enters its first bustling holiday season and is looking to add to its team!

The center currently has around 1,900 staff members, in addition to its management team, but is only about 55% of its target capacity, Bruno Arnal, the building's General Manger told the Lynnwood Times.

"We still have a long way to go. Every week we are still hiring, and we still have incentive for new employees to come in the building," said Arnal. "It's still ramping up."

The incentive mentioned is a \$3,000 hiring bonus as well as competitive wages and benefits. The center is only looking for full-time positions currently to gear up for an ambitious first quarter pipeline coming out of the holiday season. According to the company's current job openings a position at the

Continued PAGE 11 >>

Community gathers for World AIDS Day's 35th anniversary

By KIENAN BRISCOE

EVERETT—A couple dozen community members gathered at Lifelong Everett on World AIDS Day's 35th anniversary, December 1, to raise awareness about HIV and AIDS while honoring the lives that have been, and continue to be, affected by the epidemic.

The event featured refreshments, interactive activities, mingling, enter-

tainment, personal stories about HIV, poems, and giveaways. Concluding the event attendees walked from the non-profit's building at 3501 Colby Avenue to the County campus to visit the AIDS Memorial site on Pacific and Westmore Avenues.

A memorial resides in Everett at Plaza West of the Old Mission Building at Pacific and Wetmore avenues, that was dedicated on World AIDS Day in 2005 thanks to the combined efforts of vol-

unteers, for those affected by HIV and AIDS. On December 1, the memorial was adorned with lights and decorations by the Everett Pride Board — one of the sponsors of the World AIDS Day event.

For James Ludwig, Everett Lifelong Program Manager, the work he does is personal. He lost his partner in 1988 to AIDS and he's been working in the

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Larsen Op-Ed: NATO must continue to stand with Ukraine

By CONGRESSMAN RICK LARSEN

EVERETT—In October, representatives from NATO member countries, including the United States, gathered in Copenhagen, Denmark, for the 69th annual session of the NATO Parliamentary Assembly. The primary focus of this year's session was NATO allies' and partners' unwavering support for Ukraine.

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Jayapal deflects on why progressive women are "silent" on Hamas rapes

By MARIO LOTMORE

WASHINGTON, DC—Sunday on CNN's State of the Union, Progressive Caucus Chairwoman Representative Pramila Jayapal (D-WA07) deflects answering why progressive women are "silent" on the widespread use of brutal rape and sexual violence against Israeli women by Hamas.

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UN Chief invokes Article 99 for an immediate ceasefire in Gaza

By MARIO LOTMORE

NEW YORK—In a rare move and the first time under his tenure, United Nations Secretary General invokes Article 99 of the UN Charter on December 6th urging the Security Council for an immediate humanitarian ceasefire to avert a catastrophe in Gaza.

New home costs set to soar an additional \$9,000 next year because of new policy

By MARIO LOTMORE

OLYMPIA—The Washington State Building Code Council (SBCC) on November 28, adopted rules restricting the use of natural gas/propane appliances to adhere with lawmaker’s goals of building zero fossil-fuel greenhouse gas emission homes and buildings by the year 2031. The new effective date for all building codes is March 15, 2024.

“Despite hundreds of messages urging the council to reject these restrictive new laws, the Building Code Council moved forward with a de facto ban on natural gas in new homes,” said Greg Lane, Executive Vice President of the Building Industry Association of Washington. “These new rules clearly continue to violate the federal Energy Policy and Conservation Act, which expressly preempts state and local regulations concerning the energy use of many natural gas appliances.”

The State Building Code Council voted on May 24, 2023, to delay the effective date of the 2021 codes for 120 days, which changed the effective date from July 1, 2023, to October 29, 2023. On September 15, 2023, the State Building Code Council agreed on another delay.

The delay came after Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals invalidated the City of Berkeley’s natural gas ban stating, “alleging that the Energy Policy and Conservation Act preempts a City of Berkeley regulation that prohibits the installation of natural gas piping within newly constructed buildings.”

Originally, SBCC voted 9-5 on November 4, 2022, requiring builders to install heat pumps for space and water heating rather than natural gas furnaces in all new homes, apartments and commercial buildings built after July 1, 2023. However, this led to public outcry from various developers and the Building Industry Association of Washington (BIAW) calling it “an attack on natural gas.”

The council also passed a new wildland urban interface code and adopted a new rule requiring builders to equip all new homes with carports and garages with 40-amp, 208/240-volt branch circuits for electric vehicles.

In a survey by BIAW, builders shared that the heat pump mandate will in-

crease the cost of a newly constructed home by at least \$9,200 with an additional \$2,400 for homeowners who install both natural gas/propane and electric appliances.

In February of 2023, a coalition of trade associations, union representatives, businesses and homeowners filed a lawsuit challenging the new codes against SBCC.

On September 15, the Council directed SBCC staff to convene two Technical Advisory Groups (TAG) to develop proposals that would modify sections in the commercial and residential energy codes to align with the Energy Policy and Conservation Act. The Council also approved removing the heat pump mandate with instead an incentive of a higher energy efficient credit value that is applied to the score needed to obtain a building permit.

According to BIAW, instead of five credits for a home between 1,500 to 5,000 square feet, the requirement is now eight credits. A home with a heat pump would be allotted three credits towards the eight needed, whereas a natural gas/propane preference would be allotted zero credits.

“The Prescriptive Pathway (035) removes the heat pump mandate but requires more credits for compliance and indirectly ensures that natural gas for space and water heating is so cost-prohibitive (based on credit allotments) that it would deter usage of natural gas in new homes,” BIAW reports.

After a Public Hearing held on November 28 to the proposed changes to the Washington State Energy Code, the Council voted 9-4 to adopt Option 1 for the Commercial energy code provisions and voted 10-3 to adopt Residential energy code provisions. Any vote not meeting the two-thirds majority is considered a disputed provision.

According to the United States Energy Information Administration, natural gas accounted for 12% of Washington state’s electricity generation, second behind hydroelectric, a renewable, which accounts for 67%. Although the state has no natural gas reserves or production, the Jackson Prairie Storage Facility in Western Washington has a storage capacity of approximately 47 billion cubic feet. Approximately two-thirds of natural gas supplied to Wash-

ington comes from Canada through Idaho and more than one-third of all residential households in Washington rely on natural gas for primary heating fuel.

“Moving all newly built homes to electricity will increase demand for electricity with no statewide plan for building more transmission lines,” said 2022 BIAW President Joseph Irons. “An increase in demand for electricity also requires a robust skilled workforce, and the industry is currently struggling to recruit workers. Once recruited, the required training takes years to complete.”

BIAW Vice President Greg Lane urges policymakers to consider scrapping the 2021 code cycle and move straight to the 2024 cycle, already underway at the national level.

“Washington is already on track to meet energy code targets,” Lane said. “The SBCC itself already reports we’re on track to surpass the incremental targets to reduce energy use in buildings by 70% by 2031.”

BIAW will continue to challenge the move by the SBCC with its lawsuit filed in Thurston County Superior Court on February 28.

“These overreaching rules were approved by an unelected body with no

legislative authority,” said BIAW General Counsel Jackson Maynard. “This suit has united folks impacted by the costly and illegal rules across traditional political, economic, and geographic boundaries. We are proud to challenge these decisions on behalf of union workers, families seeking affordable housing opportunities, builders, remodelers and more from all over our state.”

Earlier this year, the Washington State Legislature held hearings for large gas companies such as Puget Sound Energy to cease providing natural gas to new customers as of June 30, 2023, and end all natural gas service by 2050 with House Bill 1589. The bill passed the House with a 52-44 vote pretty much along party lines. It passed committees in the Senate and was returned to House Rules Committee for third reading, where it currently awaits further action.

If passed in its current language in the 2024 Legislative Session, Washington households would have to convert all current natural gas appliances to electrical by 2050.

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Lynnwood City Council slashes mayor's 22% property tax hike, calls for audit



Former Lynnwood Councilman Ted Hikel at the Lynnwood City Council meeting on November 20, 2023, questioning \$23.9 million in budget increases within the last two years.

By **GEORGE FTIKAS**

LYNNWOOD—The Lynnwood City Council approved a 5% increase (or \$225,000) to the property tax levy, down from the mayor's proposed 22% figure, during its business meeting on November 27. Council members call on a third-party audit to rein in city spending.

According to Finance Director Michelle Meyer, this is roughly an \$11 a year increase based on the average home price in Lynnwood of \$643,000. This is down from the 22% increase — or \$58 a year — the city originally proposed, which residents opposed during the November 20 public hearing.

“The 22.5% increase is craziness,” Councilmember Jim Smith said. “If the economy does go a bit sour, all I’ve been hearing from some people is that, ‘Well, how is the city going to be able to handle that?’ But I think what they really should be saying is, ‘How are the people going to be handling that when they are not having as much money to pay for their bills?’ And, quite candidly, there’s a little bit of hypocrisy with some things that have been said, in that, we’re always hearing about how we need to be taking care of those less fortunate, etcetera, yet you’re going to tax the heck out of them.”

Smith put forth a motion to keep the property tax at the same rate, but after some discussion among the council, amended the motion to limit the property tax levy increase to 5% upon Councilman Goerge Hurst's evaluation.

“Since we held the property tax for two years, I really have a problem jumping

it another million dollars,” said Hurst. “But if I look at the Consumer Price Index for our area...that CPI was 4.6 percent, then it jumped in August to 5.4 percent, then it went down in October to 4.8 percent. I propose, I would be comfortable with a five percent property tax increase.”

Councilman Hurst shared that the council needs to take a “hard look at our expenditures and see if we can start getting some control” after sharing that the mayor's proposed 2025-2026 biennium budget has \$2.5 million property tax increases and another \$2 million in the subsequent biennium budget.

Smith's amendment to change the property tax levy percentage passed in a 5-2 vote, with Council President Shannon Sessions and Councilmember Joshua Binda opposed. After the motion passed and the 5% increase was essentially locked in, the levy was passed unanimously. Sessions and Binda were in favor of increasing the property tax, but likely wanted the full amount 22% put forth in the financial forecast.

“It's either we do 5% or we don't do anything, correct?” Sessions asked prior to the final vote on the levy.

Earlier, it was clarified that the council would have to introduce motions until a levy amount is agreed upon.

“I just hope we can look pass the percentage for a second and actually look at the dollar amount is \$58 per year to help our budget be what it needs to be to move the city forward,” Councilman Binda said smiling. “If anyone is \$58 away from the poverty line...I think that is a bigger problem for the city and what we are doing for our community than it is for our property tax... \$58...I

think we need to be smart about this... that is not a high dollar amount.”

After the vote on the property levy, the council debated utilizing an external auditing service to find areas in the budget to trim. The discussion was tabled in a 5-1-1 vote, with Binda abstaining. Council Vice President Julietta Altamirano-Crosby voted against it, arguing that the use of an external audit should be decided and voted on by the new, upcoming council next year.

“I am from the corporate world and where there is doubt you do the best thing,” Councilwoman Shirley Sutton said. “I am going to suggest that we have an outside auditor come in and talk to us and tell us what we need to do so we can get back on track... The community needs to know where their money is going and where it will continue to go.”

The discussion on the need for an audit was similar to comments made during the public hearing held for the mid-bi-

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Permit fees to increase 12 percent in Lynnwood and council approves compensation schedule

By MARIO LOTMORE

LYNNWOOD—In just over 30 minutes, the Lynnwood City Council passed four ordinances at its Special Meeting on Monday, December 4. Mayor Christine Frizzell did not attend the meeting as she was a panelist for a Building Bridges event.

EMERGENCY MEDICAL DEPARTMENT ORDINANCE

Councilman Jum Smith motioned to approve adding emergency medical departments as an off campus use to Lynnwood’s zoning code which was seconded by Councilman Patrick Decker. The motion passed unanimously, 7-0.

“Off-Campus Emergency Department” means a building or portion of a building providing emergency services with or without ambulance service, including but not limited to observation beds (limited to less than 48 hours), a diagnostic lab, radiology services, and point-of-care pharmacy, according to Karl Almgren, Community Planning Manager for the city of Lynnwood. This definition does not include a hospital, any ongoing drug addiction treatment, substance abuse facility, supervised drug consumption facility, residential treatment center or sanitarium, mental or behavioral health facility, trauma facility or operating room, group home or any facility defined as an essential public facility by RCW 36.70a.200.

A public hearing was held during the Lynnwood City Council business meeting on November 13 that pertained to the update to allow for smaller emergency medical facilities that can accept ambulances, something the council received a presentation on during their business meeting on October 23.

These facilities, according to Multi-

Care Vice President of Emergency Services Michael Mboob, are in between a full-fledged hospital and a clinic. They can take on patients a clinic would be unable to handle and route more serious cases to a fully equipped hospital. Most insurance plans are accepted, and the facility will accept patients without regard to immigration status.

These MultiCare facilities will have transfer agreements with nearby hospitals for patients needing a higher level of care.

DEVELOPMENT AND BUSINESS SERVICES FEE SCHEDULE AMENDMENTS

The Council passed an ordinance to approve the Development & Business Fee Schedule for 2024. Below are the proposed increases:

- Plan Review Fees – 23 to 45%
- Permits – 12 to 14 %
- Water and Sewer Permits – 12%
- Zoning Fee – 12%

Councilman George Hurst moved to approve the ordinance with a second from Council Vice President Julieta Altamirano-Crosby. The motion passed 5-1-1 with Councilman Smith dissenting, and Councilwoman Shirley Sutton abstaining.

Smith’s no vote, he shared, rest on what he considers excessive spending by the department, specifically its rental of office space at \$300,000 per year at the North Business Park located at 20816 44th W, Ste 230.

TEAMSTERS LABOR AGREEMENT 2024 – 2026

Councilman Decker motioned to authorize Mayor Christine Frizzell to sign the Teamsters Labor Agreement

2024” for the new contract for continued fire marshal services from South County Fire.

These costs were offset by the \$3 million surplus in unexpected sales tax revenue — something mentioned several times during debate over the property tax levy.

The council also approved an ordinance to allow the zoning change needed for the Housing Authority of Snohomish County (HASCO) redevelopment of the Timberglen and Pinewood apartments on 5710 and 5714 200th Street SW. The change allows for HASCO to build a new complex with more units. This passed 6-1 with Smith voting no.

“This is just the tip of the iceberg and if it was just this property that was being changed, I wouldn’t have too much problem with it,” Smith said. “But this is going to be causing others to do the same.”

Smith, along with Councilmember Patrick Decker, stated concerns with the over-densification of Lynnwood and the problems that could entail. However, unlike Smith, Decker voted in favor of the zoning change.

for 2024 – 2026. Smith seconded the motioned and it passed unanimously, 7-0.

“The council actually spent a lot of time looking at this and this is one that we’ve been very interested in,” Councilman Decker said. “I feel that our team who did negotiations did a good job, balancing both respect for the taxpayers and making sure our tax dollars are properly used, but also taking care of the people that provide such great services for the city and work so hard to help our city really be the best that it can.

“I thought that what they were able to agree to was not everything that everybody wanted, which is normal for these types of discussions, but as I understand it, the labor union was satisfied and agreed to this, and the Council saw this also as a good agreement to sign off.”

2024 SALARY SCHEDULE & ORDINANCE

Council Vice President Julieta Altamirano-Crosby motioned with Council President Shannon Sessions seconding, for the Lynnwood City Council to accept proposed amendments to the 2024 salary schedule with the following increases:

- Contractual AFSCME COLA of 4.1%
- Contractual Police Officer & Sergeants COLA of 5%
- Contractual Police Support Services COLA of 5%

- Contractual Police Commanders COLA of 5%
- Contractual Teamsters COLA of 8%
- Proposed 4.1% COLA for GSO positions.

Councilman George Hurst shared that he will vote for the salary schedule but will “fight” for a third party to perform a compensation study in the future and an independent audit of the city’s finances. These were echoed by Councilman Smith.

The motion passed 6-0-1 with Councilwoman Sutton abstaining. Sutton called for a third party audit at the

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LYNNWOOD PROPERTY TAX LEVY

ennial budget amendment, as cutting costs was mentioned by several residents. The mayor’s office did not propose any opportunities for budget cuts during the meeting.

The mid-biennial review of the budget is required by state law, as Lynnwood adopts a two-year budget, and allows the city to modify the budget for unforeseen “significant items.”

There were three major items where the city needed to allocate additional funding.

The first was \$1.5 million for contract jail housing. As construction of the Community Justice Center (CJC) is delayed, the city has continued to contract “with other jurisdictions to house the City of Lynnwood’s population.”

The second was \$1 million for the city’s liability and property insurance due to an unexpected increase in the premium by the provider.

The third was a \$425,500 “retro payment for prior years, actual costs for 2023 and an updated estimate for

Lynnwood Chick-Fil-A rolls out 12 Days of Christmas and Cookies with Santa Cow



The Chick-Fil-A team of Highway 99 and 196th Street. SOURCE: Chick-Fil-A Lynnwood.

BY KIENAN BRISCOE

LYNNWOOD—Lynnwood’s Highway

99 and 196th Street Chick-fil-A location rolled out its 12 Days of Christmas special this Monday, December 4, that

rewards app users with one free item a day from Monday, December 11, until Saturday December 23.

All that’s required of guests is to download the Chick-fil-A app on their mobile device, check-in to the Lynnwood location at Highway 99 and 196th Street by making a single purchase, then every day for the next twelve days (excluding Sundays, when Chick-fil-A is closed) a coupon for one free item (per customer) will be available on the app to redeem. The free item changes daily and ranges anywhere from a free chicken sandwich; to free soup; to a free milkshake.

The Lynnwood Chick-fil-A will also be hosting a Cookies with Santa Cow event, on Friday, December 15, where guests will be able to meet Santa Cow – Chick-fil-A’s signature cow mascot dressed up in a Santa Claus suit – from 5 p.m. until 7 p.m. In addition to photo opportunities with Santa Cow the mascot will be giving away one free cookie per guest.

Lynnwood Chick-fil-A, located at 19615 Highway 99 (on the intersection of Highway 99 and 196th Street), first opened its doors last March, offering drive-thru, dine-in and carry-out services from 6:30 a.m. to 9 p.m., Monday through Saturday.

Guests of Chick-fil-A Hwy 99 & 196th can also place an order for pickup, dine-in or delivery on the Chick-fil-A® App or online. When joining the Chick-fil-A One® tiered membership program,

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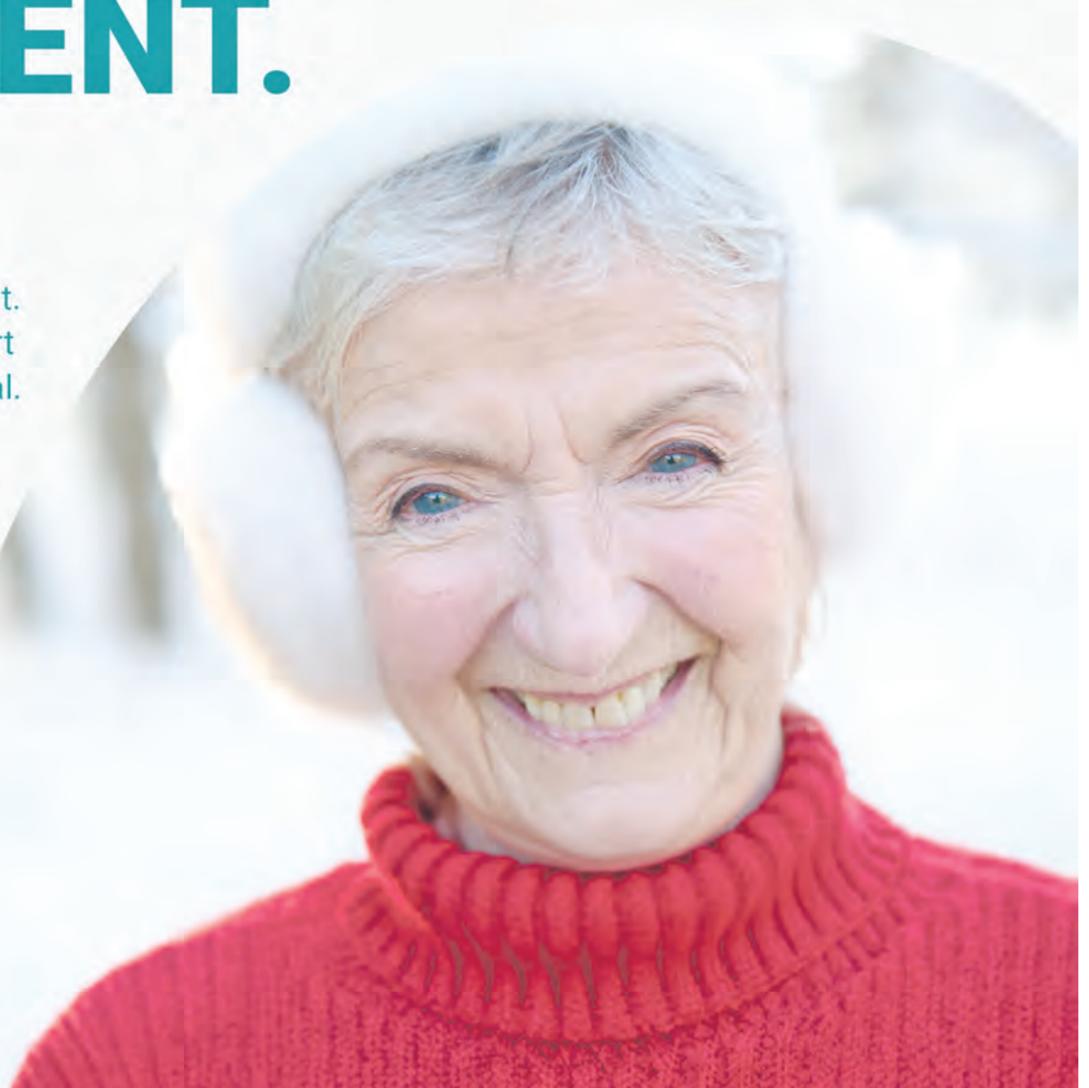
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Mountlake Terrace High School students walk out in protest to support Palestine

By KIENAN BRISCOE

MOUNTLAKE TERRACE—Approximately 50 Mountlake Terrace High School students waked out of their classes in protest on the morning of Tuesday, November 21, to show their support for Palestine amidst Israel's retaliation on Gaza for Hamas' early October surprise attacks.

Beginning around 9 a.m., the students marched from the school down 44th Avenue to a nearby Starbucks, chanting "from the river to the sea Palestine will be free" and sporting placards reading: "Free Palestine" and "Zionism equals genocide." The students continued to protest in front of the Cedar Plaza QFC for a good 45-minute until returning to class around 11 a.m.

"I just wanted to spread awareness within my school and get people talking about the topic," the event's organizer, Mountlake Terrace High School student Mudabrah Amber, told the Lynnwood Times. "I felt like I had to do something to get the word out there."

Mudabrah has been advocating for Palestinians on her social media pages since the beginning of October but felt like she needed to do more. She spread the word through various clubs at school, such as the Asian Student Union – where she gave a presentation on the history of the Israel/Palestine conflict and urged fellow students to join her cause.

Initially Mudabrah planned to bring more schools in the area, including schools in Everett and Lynnwood, but quickly realized it would be too large of a gathering for her to organize single-handedly.

"I wanted to do the walkout because I feel like, as a student and also a teenager, it's kind of hard to go to protests because sometimes protests can be a little dangerous, considering what happened with the BLM [Black Lives Matter] protests," said Christina J, Mountlake Terrace High School student and member of the Asian Student Union who heard about the protest during Mudabrah's presentation.

Mudabrah is now working with her close friend Anabelle Westby, a fellow pro-Palestinian protester, on future events and protests. Westby informed the Lynnwood Times she had been following the events of Israel and Palestine since October 7 and was alarmed when a teacher of hers referred to the 1,200 Israelis (most of them civilians), who were murdered on October 7 by Hamas terrorists, "victims" while referring to the children killed in Gaza, by airstrikes conducted by the Israeli military, "collateral." She said she conducted her own research and arrived at a different conclusion than her teacher's "Pro-Israel" stance.

"The Palestinian struggle has been minimized and ignored for so long and I feel like what Hamas did was a result of that ignorance," Westby told the Lynnwood Times.

Westby also criticized the United States



(TOP/BOTTOM) Mountlake Terrace High School students waked out of their classes in protest on the morning of Tuesday, November 21, 2023. SOURCE: Mountlake Terrace Protest account. (@mths.protests) • Instagram photos and videos

Government for aiding Israel while not sending aid to Gaza. Instead of sending bombs to Israel she said the United States should have sent the necessary supplies to people in Gaza that would prevent starvation and dehydration.

While the U.S. Department of Defense has in fact aided Israel's military with several ground-penetrating munition, including buster bunker bombs, it has also mobilized \$100 million in humanitarian assistance to aid the civilians in Gaza affected by the conflict, which includes airlifting over 54,000 pounds of supplies.

"Often we ignore the oppression and emotions of the oppressed, when talking about conflicts, because we're always trying to understand the oppressors," Mudabrah added. "We try and justify what [Israel] is currently doing, and humanize what they are currently doing, while ignoring all of the emotions that Palestinians have felt until now."

Mudabrah clarified that her protest was not against the Jewish people nor about religion in general; It was simply about showing solidarity with Palestine. Mudabrah has witnessed a rise in both antisemitism and islamophobia in local schools lately, as well as the community at large, but she condemns both prejudices, she said. As a Muslim and Hijabi woman she fears every day, walking down the halls of her high school, that she may be the victim of Islamophobic attacks or remarks – especially after organizing the walkout event last month.

"I condemn antisemitism, that is not what I speak for. I speak for the ending of this genocide and for Palestinians not to be killed in inhumane conditions while being justified as self-defense by



Israel," said Mudabrah.

Both Mudabrah and Westby plan to organize another rally in January but as of now the details have yet to be finalized. Mudabrah also wishes to start a fundraiser to raise funds for Palestinians affected by the conflict and eventually print out the names of Palestinians who lost their lives so that people

never forget. For updates on future events people can follow her on Instagram at mths.protests.

Students who participated in the protest were docked for unexcused absences but otherwise there was no further reprimand from the school for their demonstration.

Consulate of Israel releases grisly video footage of Hamas terrorist attack

By KIENAN BRISCOE

SEATTLE—The Consulate of Israel to the Pacific Northwest in San Francisco visited the Jewish Family Services center in Seattle Thursday, November 30, to share with select journalists a grizzly reel of footage detailing the horrific nature of the Hamas October 7 terrorist attack against Israel.

The roughly 45-minute, video is arranged from body cam, dash cam, mobile phone video (including social media posts and live streaming), first responder video, and CCTV footage. Out of respect for the victims Reporters were not allowed to capture any video or photos of the event but here is the Lynnwood Times' account:

Warning: the following details graphic descriptions of violence, some involving children.

The beginning opens to Hamas terrorists in the back of a truck with loaded assault rifles pledging their love for Allah. These soldiers then blockade a populated road on the Israel/Palestine border and murder motorists with their weapons as they slow down. A later clip shows the same road littered with the bodies of the deceased, blood staining the road, as soldiers take selfies and smile.

In an Israeli suburban neighborhood near the Gaza strip, Hamas soldiers infiltrate houses and gun down residents as they go about their day-to-day activities; some watching television, some cooking meals, children playing in the playgrounds in the back of their houses. A curious dog pokes its head out to see what all the commotion is about, walking up to the soldiers with its tongue out and tail wagging. The terrorist's reaction was not so friendly.

A father at home with his two boys hears the gunshots and attempts to retreat out of their house through the back door. They find shelter in a shed outside, but a terrorist promptly throws a grenade inside. In an explosion of light and blood the father is gone but the boys, traumatized by what they have just seen, are escorted back inside their home while the terrorists raid their refrigerator. Crying, the children mourn their father, one of them complaining they can no longer see. A later clip shows the mother returning home after the neighborhood is defended by local security. She finds her husband's remains in the shed and breaks down in agony. There is no sight of the two children nor is their fate known.

Terrorist soldiers are then seen setting houses in the development on fire.

In an intercepted mobile phone call, audio recordings capture a terrorist calling home in Palestine bragging about how many Jews he has killed. He claims he has murdered "ten Jews" and is using one of his victim's phones to make the call.

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from page 1 **JAYAPAL**

"With all due respect, I was just asking about the women, and you turned it back to Israel," host Dana Bash told Rep. Jayapal, pressing for an answer.

"I already answered your question Dana," Rep. Jayapal responded.

During her 13-minute interview with Bash, Jayapal stood firm in her position to an indefinite ceasefire saying this is needed for Israel "to create a durable and strong coalition of allies within the middle east."

"We were able to see a significant number of hostages released," Rep. Jayapal said on the benefits of the latest ceasefire. "We were able to get aide into Gaza."

On November 24, Israel and Hamas brokered a ceasefire that saw the release of 105 hostages in exchange for 240 Palestinian prisoners. On December 1, Israel Defense Forces resumed its military offensive in the Gaza Strip

after Hamas failed to provide a list of hostages it intended to release that morning and then began firing rockets into Israel.

Jayapal told Bash that although she is a supporter of President Biden, his handling of the war has "alienated huge communities."

In clarifying her statement warning that President Biden's approach "jeopardizes his support of progressive and Muslim voters and that they could stay home [in the 2024 General Election]," Jayapal said, "At the end of the day, the United States has its reputation to think about globally. And if we alienate all of our allies in the Middle East, that is not going to help us ensure that President Biden wins domestically at home."

Jayapal condemned the "urban warfare" approach of Israel saying that it will only lead to more casualties.

"For Israel, the only way through this is to create a situation where there is a political solution that involves a Pal-

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Please join Sno-King Community Chorale (www.sno-kingchorale.org) as we present Light Returning. Our 90-member choir will sing through the darkness and into the light, celebrating the holidays, the beauty of winter, and the love of family and friends. Our Light Returning concert is ALS facilitated.

Date & Time: 3 p.m., Saturday, December 9, 2023
Place: Edmonds Center for the Arts
Address: 410 4th Ave N, Edmonds, WA 98020

Tickets: \$15— Youth / \$22 – Senior/Student / \$25—Adult
<https://www.edmondscenterforthearts.org>

estinian state and an Israeli state," said Jayapal.

When pressed on how Israel can broker such a deal, when Arab states in the region do not appear to be willing to put pressure on Hamas for a resolution, Jayapal blamed U.S. foreign policy telling Bash, "We [The United States] have been allowing Israel to literally and indiscriminately bomb hospitals and violate international humanitarian law."

Earlier in the interview Jayapal shared that the U.S. should not condone the killing of 15,000 Palestinians where "three quarters of whom are women and children and say that is going to help us in the long term."

So far during the war, Hamas has used its own civilians as human shields by storing weapons at hospitals—the Hamas command center was housed under Al Shifa Hospital—which is a violation of the Geneva Convention.

"If we want to defeat terrorist, we have

to abide by international humanitarian law...that is my fundamental belief," Jayapal told Bash.

However, when pressed to explain why progressive women appear "silent" on the use of rape against Israeli women by Hamas as a war tactic in a clear violation of international humanitarian law, although Jayapal condemned Hamas, she deflected the question away from what polls are pointing out is a growing divide within the Democratic Party—its waning support for Israel.

According to a recent Quinnipiac poll, "among Democrats, a plurality (41 percent) say their sympathies lie more with the Palestinians, while 34 percent say their sympathies lie more with the Israelis. In October [immediately after the Hamas attack], nearly half of Democrats (48 percent) said the Israelis and 22 percent said the Palestinians."

"But I think we have to remember that Israel is a democracy," Jayapal said.

Continued PAGE 12 >>

Alderwood Mall Macy's workers strike on Black Friday

By MARIO LOTMORE

LYNNWOOD—More than four hundred Macy's workers began picketing on Black Friday, one of the busiest shopping days of the year, at Alderwood, Southcenter and Bellis Fair Macy's stores.

On October 6, Macy's workers voted nearly unanimously at 96% to authorize an Unfair Labor Practice strike if the billion-dollar retail juggernaut fails to offer substantial improvements during contract negotiations. Macy's reported revenue of \$25 billion in 2022 with a net income of \$1.177 billion after all expenditures. For 2022, the company reported similar figures. It is projecting net sales for 2023 between \$22.9 to \$23.2 billion.

"We are out here protesting because we want a fair wage, more affordable healthcare, and we want safety," Mary Stevens, a 14-year Macy's sales associate at Alderwood Mall told the Lynnwood Times.

UFCW 3000 workers at Macy's say the corporation is not doing enough to address shoplifting, violent shoppers, and other safety threats to workers and customers.

When Liisa Luick, a Macy's Alderwood sales associate in the Macy's Men's Department, witnessed someone shoplifting she called Macy's managers and then mall security. But they refused to help. So, she called 911, to protect Macy's, her customers, and herself. Macy's immediately disciplined Luick for calling 911, putting her on unpaid leave for more than 2 weeks. She eventually was provided her back pay.

UFCW Local 3000 filed an unfair labor practice charge against Macy's for disciplining Luick because their actions were in relation to her involvement in union activities.

According to Macy's policies, an employee is to call a loss prevention officer instead of 9-1-1 if they witness theft. However, employees informed us that loss prevention officers are simply overwhelmed and are unable to respond to every incident.

"For the longest time we didn't have



TOP: Macy's workers strike on Black Friday at Alderwood Mall. BOTTOM: Lynnwood Councilman George Hurst with Macy's workers on Black Friday at Alderwood Mall. Lynnwood Limes | Mario Lotmore

enough Assest Protection [personnel] in the store," Kaleen told the Lynnwood Times. "There are a good amount of times we don't have any on the store and no response just because there are so many thieves in the store."

She shared how one of their female co-workers was "beat up" by three visitors to the mall and workers stood by afraid to call 911 for the fear of being fired.

Lynnwood City Councilman George Hurst joined Macy's workers on their strike for better wages and a safe working environment. He shared with the Lynnwood Times that Macy's policy discouraging employees to call 9-1-1 is of great concern.

"We just had a business roundtable at the city council with the police department and other businesses and the police department kept on saying, if something happens, 'we need to know, we need you to call us,'" Hurst said. "I am listening now that actually Macy's discourages their employees from calling 911; that's exactly what the Lynnwood



wood Police Department wants, to have those calls so they can understand what's happening in the area...that is a big concern."

All of the employees we spoke with work at the Alderwood Mall Macy's store and love their job. They hope Macy's and Union can come to a mutually beneficial agreement.

UFCW Local 3000 has also filed

charges against Macy's for allegedly violating union members' contractual rights to speak to other members on the sales floor, surveillance of union members, and engaging in bad faith bargaining. More than 14,700 shoppers have already signed the pledge to respect striking Macy's workers.

Macy's workers will picket each weekend until an agreement is reached.

from page 5 CHICK-FIL-A

guests receive points on every qualifying purchase which can be used to redeem available rewards. Visit chick-fil-a.com/delivery to view delivery options in your area.

In celebration of its opening, Chick-fil-A, Inc. donated \$25,000 to Feeding America in honor of the restaurant's opening. These funds will be distributed to partners in the greater Seattle-Tacoma area to aid in the fight against hunger.

Now that the popular chicken restaurant is about nine months in from opening they're fully staffed with a crew of about 70 employees.

Chick-fil-A Operators are committed to hiring, developing and retaining top talent and providing a positive work environment for people of all ages and backgrounds. Team Members have opportunities for flexible work hours and

leadership growth, competitive pay and benefits, hands-on training and mentoring and the chance to apply for scholarships to support their continuing education.

"We've definitely felt the love of Lynnwood and feel respected in our community – it's been a lot of fun," Josiah Ober, independent franchised Owner/Operator of Highway 99 and 196th Street Chick-fil-A, told the Lynnwood Times.

Hailing from Hillsboro, Oregon, Ober wasn't familiar with Chick-fil-A until he moved to St. Louis, Missouri for college. In 2011, what started as a Team Member role evolved into a career. Over the course of six years, Ober advanced to serve as the restaurant's General Manager and earned a well-deserved Chick-fil-A Remarkable Futures™ scholarship. In 2018, Ober hit the road to participate in the Chick-fil-A®Leadership Development Program, where he was given the opportunity to support

Chick-fil-A restaurant openings across the country and learned the valuable skills needed to operate a restaurant. A resident of Snohomish County since 2020, Ober now resides in Lynnwood with his wife, Esther, who has been a part of his Chick-fil-A journey from the beginning. Esther began working alongside him as a Team Member in St. Louis and will support restaurant administration at Chick-fil-A Hwy 99 & 196th.

"I'll never forget my first meal at Chick-fil-A when I was just a teenager: a Chick-fil-A Deluxe Sandwich, our iconic Waffle Fries, a Milkshake and of course, lots of Chick-fil-A Sauce!" said Ober. "As a Pacific Northwest native, it means the world to me to be given the opportunity to grow the Chick-fil-A brand and share our signature hospitality with Lynnwood. It's our restaurant's vision to serve our community by providing enriching jobs, developing future business leaders and setting and executing a standard of excellence."

from page 4 LYNNWOOD COUNCIL

Council's business meeting on November 27.

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, Compensation costs for private industry workers increased 4.3 percent in the Seattle-Tacoma, WA Combined Statistical Area (CSA) for the year ended September 2023. Regional Commissioner Chris Rosenlund noted that one year ago, Seattle experienced an annual gain of 3.0 percent in compensation costs. (See chart 1 and table 1.) Locally, wages and salaries, the largest component of compensation costs, advanced at a 4.9-percent pace for the 12-month period ended September 2023. (See chart 2.) Nationwide, compensation costs increased 4.3 percent and wages and salaries rose 4.5 percent over the same period.

Three South County Fire Commissioners Sworn In

By **SOUTH COUNTY FIRE**

EVERETT—South County Fire’s Board of Commissioners swore in three members, including one newly elected commissioner, at a meeting Tuesday.

Retired Fire Chief Edward Widdis joins the board after being elected in November to one of two at-large commissioner positions. Widdis served as chief of Snohomish County Fire District 1 from 2003 to 2015 after spending 25 years as a firefighter. Widdis was president of the Snohomish County Fire Chiefs Association during the 9/11 attacks and has also served on the Northwest Region Emergency Medical Services and Trauma Council.

Widdis said he is grateful for a new role ensuring the community receives the highest quality fire and emergency response. “After devoting so much of my life to helping people, I’ve realized - I’m not done yet,” he said.



Board Vice Chair Michael Fearnough, Board Chair Micah Rowland, Commissioner Ed Widdis SOURCE: South County Fire.

“It’s a true honor and I look forward to working with the other commissioners, firefighters and staff to guide these vital services for our community.”

Two other commissioners elected in November also took the oath of office Tuesday: Micah Rowland (District 4) and Michael Fearnough (District 2). Both were previously appointed

to their positions and elected by voters in November to continue serving. Widdis fills the board position formerly held by Board Chair Derek Daniels. On Tuesday, commissioners elected former Vice Chair Rowland to serve as board chair and Fearnough as vice chair through the end of this year.

The Board of Commissioners is responsible for defining the regional fire authority’s long-term vision, approving the budget, hiring the fire chief and adopting policies to be implemented by the chief and administrative staff.

Regular board meetings take place the first and third Tuesday of each month. Work sessions take place on the second Tuesday of each month. All board meetings begin at 7 p.m. and can be attended remotely or in person at South County Fire Headquarters, 12425 Meridian Ave. S, Everett. To view agendas and meeting videos, visit www.southsnofire.org/.

from page 1 **WORLD AIDS DAY**



James Ludwig. Lynnwood Times | Mario Lotmore.

HIV field since 1990. Ludwig commenced the event by sharing a few words on his personal experiences and the work he does.

“It never ceases to amaze me to see the resiliency of the people who have HIV but still stand up and continue to live life,” said Ludwig.

The approximate caseload of Lifelong in Everett is around 480 Snohomish County residents and there are approximately 25 new HIV infections in the county every year.

Following Ludwig, Frank Busichio, President of the AIDS Project Snohomish County, read a proclamation signed by County Executive Dave Somers recognizing December 1 as World AIDS Day — the first time in the county’s history since World AIDS was first recognized in 1988.

Busichio then announced the AIDS Project Snohomish County will be returning its Friendship Meals in February, which offer a place for people living with HIV and AIDS, and their friends and family, to gather, find support, and connect with the community.

These monthly dinners were originally provided to the clients of HOPWA (Helpers of People with AIDS) with support from government funding. In 2008, a group of volunteers decided to

keep this program alive once the funding faced heightened restrictions, no longer covering the costs of food. In 2012, AIDS Project Snohomish County began to cover the costs of these meals, with generous support from local organizations and businesses, offered in various locations but the dinners have been effectively suspended since the COVID-10 outbreak.

The meals will resume either the second or third Thursday of February, most likely held at Trinity Lutheran Church which once hosted meals. However, the details have yet to be solidified and Busichio said he’ll make a formal announcement in the future.

The mic was then open for personal testimony. The first to speak was a man named Dangma who shared that he moved to Everett from North Carolina “with a lot of baggage,” but through the services provided at Lifelong he has found a sense of community and support he never knew he needed.

“When I first came to Lifelong I didn’t realize I needed a life line but I’m here to tell you all thank you,” said Dangma. “Without your support I don’t know where I would be today.”

Following Dagnma, Jordan Konrad, local poet, took the mic to perform his poem *A Tale Untold*, about overcoming adversity.

*Laughing at the jaws of fate
Snapping at my feet
I’m laughing at the jaws of fate are
Snapping at my feet
Laughing at the reaper sitting on his throne
Because I know the one who sows is
The one who’s in control
And so I’m laughing at the jaws of fate
Snapping at my feet
Laughing ad the jaws of fate are
Snapping at my feet*

*Laughter fills the room reaching way
up to the rafters
Captured in a place and time
Raptured in reverse
Crafter of the genesis designs my
prison flesh
As I feign to laugh and yet I cry
Oh why, I cry, oh why*

*Sigh is all that I can say, cry is all I do
High upon a feast of milk, I try, at
least, I fail
Impaled upon this bag of bones, a
vagabond of spirit
So hear it! I’m so near it now! But
Slumber steals the show*

*I’ll try again when I awake
I’ll try to tell the tale
I sailed a thousand seas of light!
I rode a lightning bolt
Then hit the ground with great re-
sound
And tumbled through the mist*

*Ionized and lionized, my formless spir-
it hissed
I—on my own—must atone for a care-
less flick of wrist
I wondered at the splendor that
Powers could be had
Should I be good, should I be bad
Or should I be at all?
I stood upon the precipice
I gazed into the hole
I told the world, but no one heard
The tale that can’t be told
I told the world, but no one heard
The tale that can’t be told*

*Waking at the dawn of time
Peering into Peril
I’m waking at the dawn of time
Peering into Peril
Waking at the dawn, waking in the
morning
It’s the same as waking up the day one
is being born
And so I’m waking at the dawn of time
Peering into Peril
And as I peer into the depths
Of the abyss that’s at my feet
It’s open arms beckon a welcoming
deceit
And just as I prepare to be
As one with all the blackness
I hear a voice PIERCE the air that
calls Calls me back*

*I durst to heart, it burst the fear
Of what could be the worst
I cursed the tears that welled within
the rage and then dispersed
My rage turns into lighting bolts
My tears—torrential rains
I rearrange the searing pain
Which moves a mountain range
I shatter the illusions that kept me in*

the trap

*No longer miss the great abyss
That kissed me as I slept
I craft a floor for aching soul
The clouds become the rafters
I capture fate into a game he’ll lose
forever after*

*And so I’m laughing at the jaws of fate
Snapping at my feet
Laughing as the jaws of fate are
Snapping at my feet
Laughing at the reaper sitting on his
throne
Because I know the one who sows is
the one who’s in control*

*I told the world, and who would hear,
the tale that can’t be told*

- Jordan Konrad, 2014

On December 1, 2023, the White House Office of National AIDS Policy (ONAP) released the 2022 NHAS Interim Action Report, highlighting work done by federal and community partners to energize and invigorate our nation’s collective national work to end the HIV epidemic and ensure that no population or region is left behind.

In his FY2024 budget proposal Joe President Biden requested \$850 million to aggressively reduce new HIV cases by increasing access to HIV prevention, care, and treatment while supporting research initiatives implemented in the U.S. and worldwide. The budget included funding for domestic HIV activities across multiple agencies, a boost in funding for the EHE initiative, and proposals for a national PrEP delivery program to improve PrEP access for Medicaid beneficiaries.

New HIV infections in the U.S. have declined in recent years, after a period of general stability. Estimate annual new HIV infections were 12% lower in 2021 compared to 2017—dropping from about 36,500 infections to about 32,100.

Over the course of its 20 years, PEP-FAR saved 25 million loves and enables 5.5 million babies to be born HIV-free to mothers living with HIV.

Washington public school enrollment climbs by nearly 2,000

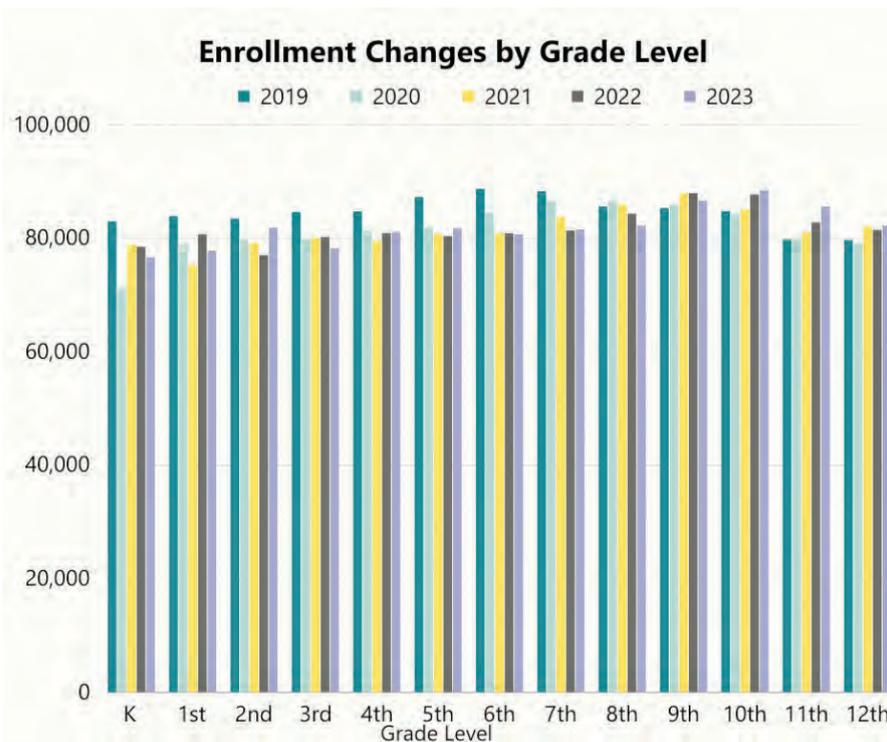
By OFFICE OF SUPERINTENDENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

OLYMPIA—Today, the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) announced that enrollment in the Washington public school system this fall has climbed by nearly 2,000 students when compared to fall of last school year. Approximately 1,092,977 students were enrolled at the beginning of the 2022-2023 school year.

The largest increases over the last year are in the 2nd grade (6.3% increase), Running Start (4.3% increase), 11th grade (3.3% increase), and 5th grade (1.7% increase). The largest decreases are in 1st grade (3.7% decrease), 8th grade (2.5% decrease), kindergarten (2.4% decrease), and 3rd grade (2.4% decrease). In the earlier elementary grades, continued declines in enrollment appear to be attributed to additional homeschooling and declining birth rates.

Student enrollment has an impact on the amount of state funds that school districts receive to serve their students with dedicated staff, supplies, and other operating costs. To support school districts in continued service delivery and in student learning and well-being recovery, during the pandemic, Congress allocated billions of dollars to schools nationwide, including \$3 billion to schools in Washington.

These one-time, flexible dollars were provided over multiple years, and are



Washington public school enrollment. The data displayed in the chart above are from the October enrollment count each year. SOURCE: OSPI.

set to expire in September of 2024. School districts are on track to have all funds spent before the deadline. In Washington, the funds made up just 3-5% of the average school district's budget, and the \$800 million provided each year only slightly offset the \$600 million that districts lost in state funds after a decline in student enrollment at the height of the pandemic.

"While our enrollments are continuing to climb, they aren't yet where they

were before the pandemic, and many of our school districts are making tough financial decisions as a result," said State Superintendent Chris Reykdal. "The impacts on local budgets are compounded by persistently high inflation."

To reengage students who disconnected from school or who are at-risk of disconnecting from school, OSPI invested some of the agency's federal emergency relief funds in the Atten-

dance and Reengagement Program during the 2022-23 school year. With OSPI's portion of emergency relief funds, the agency has chosen to invest in evidence-based, community-driven strategies to support student learning and well-being recovery, prioritizing supports for student groups who were most impacted by the pandemic.

To date, the Attendance and Reengagement Program has served over 8,000 students across Washington state with direct one-on-one support. Of the students served by the program, 56% of students who were unenrolled at the start of the program later re-enrolled in school, and 94% of students who were enrolled at the start of the program were still enrolled at the end of the school year. The students that have been served through this project were selected because they had the highest rates of absences or were completely disengaged from school.

The program enables direct outreach, relationship building, accessing community resources, and supporting students to remain engaged in school or to re-enroll. In addition, the program supports schools and districts in building systems that address attendance and engagement, such as accessing and analyzing attendance data and building staffing teams to deploy to provide interventions and other supports.

OSPI leveraged \$4.75 million to pro-

Continued PAGE 12 >>

from page 1 **NATO**

As a member of the Assembly's Defence and Security Committee, I presented my second report on Ukraine's ongoing fight for freedom and the international response to Putin's illegal war. The report outlines the evolution of the war, NATO's support for Ukraine and the impact the war is having on Ukraine, the region and the world.

The report also outlines six recommendations to reaffirm and strengthen NATO's commitment to Ukraine as Putin's war of aggression grinds through its second year. Those recommendations are:

- NATO countries must sustain and boost military and financial support for Ukraine to enable Ukraine to defend itself from aggression and recapture territory seized by Russian forces;

- NATO countries must support the continuity of deterrence and defense missions; for example, by investing in critical weapons stockpiles;
- NATO countries must tighten sanctions on Putin and his enablers to greatly limit the Kremlin's ability to prosecute its illegal war;
- NATO countries must throw their political and diplomatic weight behind Ukraine and rally the world to support the young democracy;
- NATO countries must look ahead and plan for Ukraine's reconstruction to enable Ukraine to consolidate its significant democratic gains;
- NATO countries must consider the global context of Putin's war.

Putin's war has changed accelerated competition between the United

States and China. Putin's war has also revealed a global division between democracies and revisionist states looking to upend the rules-based international order. These dynamics will have a profound impact on the future of the world's political organization and on American security.

The NATO alliance was founded on democratic values after World War II. Nearly 75 years after its founding, NATO countries must again defend the rules-based order, an order that has greatly benefited the United States.

NATO allies and partners have learned that Ukraine's victory will be neither quick nor easy. Defending democracy, self-determination and sovereignty is no small task. But NATO countries, including the United States, cannot allow authoritarian actors like Putin to violate these principles with impunity.

That is why Congress must soon pass legislation that fully funds the president's request for security and humanitarian aid in support of Ukraine. And that is why Congress and our NATO allies must stand by our values and reaffirm that we will support Ukraine as long as it takes for the young democracy to control its own borders, select its own leaders and determine its own future.

U.S. Representative Rick Larsen (D-Everett) represents Washington's Second Congressional District, which includes Everett and parts of Snohomish County, as well as all of Skagit, Whatcom, Island and San Juan counties. Larsen serves as a member of the NATO Parliamentary Assembly, an organization made up of delegates from all 31 NATO member countries with a mission to engage parliamentarians in transatlantic security issues.

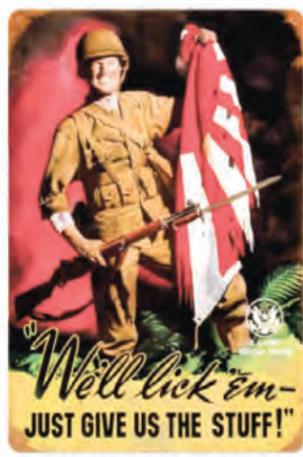
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from page 1 **AMAZON**

facility pays around \$20 an hour. Full benefits kick in on day one of hiring and by day 90 the company even pays college tuition assistance.

It's one of Amazon's priorities, when staffing, to ensure a diverse and equitable workplace, Arnal added encouraging anyone and anyone to apply and training staff to operate in a "very inclusive way."

"Walking the floor each and every day it's a success to see how diverse our workforce is, and how healthy it is" said Arnal.

The PAE2 center, named after nearby Paine Field Airport, has been consistently hiring since launch but Arnal said it's a passion project to continue preparing his workers for the next steps of their career.

A big focus of the center lately has been an emphasis on training both new employees and existing employees for promotion – either to trainers themselves or robotics specialists, ensuring the 24 Robin Arms, 950 P-Drives, and 3,800 H-Drive robotics healthily carry out their duty of moving, sorting, and scanning packages for distribution.

In just the last three months 24 entry level employees have been promoted to Processing Assistants, six Processing Assistants have been promoted to Manager, and one Area Manager has been promoted to Operations Manager. Promotion opportunities also exist for those interested in entering the company's corporate offices.

"Almost everyone who came in three months ago is wearing a new vest," said Arnal. "You want to make sure that when the volume comes you have enough skilled employees to complete complex tasks...I have employees who were seasonal associates eight, nine, years ago who are now leading a team of over 800 employees."

To prepare for the holidays, from a management perspective, Arnal said it takes "a lot of reviewing how the building will react to the volume coming in."

Arnal and his management team do their best to create a fun working environment throughout the holiday season with weekly "snack attacks" (giving snacks to teammates as a token of appreciation for their hard work), treasure hunts, raffles, and costume days. The center also hosted a free hot meal day, in partnership with Everett's Angel of the Winds arena, to provide a free hot meal to each of its nearly 2,000 employees.



Amazon employees at its Robotics Sortable (ARS) facility in Arlington, Washington. Phot courtesy of Amazon.

"Hiring, upscaling, and bringing the fun I would say is [holiday season] preparation for us," said Arnal. "Because it's a new launch in a very good location we have room to grow and up-scale a lot of leaders."

The company said it's hard to tell just how much the volume increases during the holidays, mainly because the center has made the decision to cap its numbers to ensure deliveries are on time and accurate. The exact number of that capacity the company was not able to say exactly but, in order to contextualize the increase, Leigh Anne Gullet, Amazon Communications Director, said Amazon's fulfillment center in Kent does anywhere from one-and-a-half to two times its typical volume this time of year.

"It's making sure that everything is working well instead of taking too many customer orders and taking the risk of being late or not of the right quality," said Arnal.

Since opening last September, the fulfillment center has undergone some finetuning to adjust to volume which is to be expected when launching a new building, the online retailer said.

"Once peak time is finished, I'm excited for Q1 to start but right now it's trying to deliver products to customers as quickly as we can," said Arnal. "I'm managing my managers to take care of their workforce and that's my number one missions statement. I don't believe in a building where mission number one is not to take care of the people."

Amazon's PAE2 facility, located at 4620 172nd Street Northeast in Arlington, opened its doors September



Bruno Arnal, General Manager for Amazon's PAE2, speaking to the ribbon cutting ceremony on September 14, 2023. Lynnwood Times | Mario Lotmore.



Inside Amazon's Robotics Sortable (ARS) facility in Arlington, Washington on September 14, 2023. Lynnwood Times | Mario Lotmore.

14. At 100-feet high, and nearly 3 million square feet, it is Amazon's largest fulfillment center in Washington with 21,000 tons of structural steel (enough

to build three Eiffel Towers). The building also has 52 docks and parking

Continued **PAGE 12** >>

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from page 10 **ENROLLMENT**

vide grant funds to school districts, state-tribal education compact schools, and regional educational service districts based on need. OSPI targeted the

funds to districts and schools with the highest historical rates of student absences and/or students who have disengaged from school without graduating.

To sustain this state-level effort as the

federal emergency relief funds expire in 2024, OSPI put forward a request to the Governor and Legislature to support more schools and districts in building early warning data systems focused on attendance. The data systems aim to

sustain student engagement by detecting students at-risk of disengaging and then deploying staff to support the students. The proposal will be considered during the 2024 Legislative Session

from page 11 **AMAZON**

for approximately 1,245 vehicles. At the time of opening the company said it created 1,000 jobs for the region.

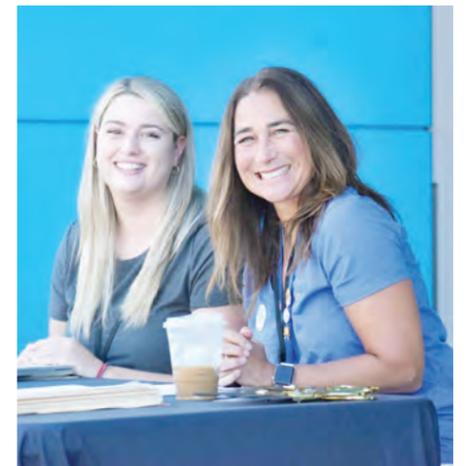
The fulfillment center is an Amazon Robotics Sortable (ARS) facility, essentially the “first mile” where customers orders are picked up and packed. The site can hold up to 40 million units of inventory, typically a wide range of household goods with each item weighing less than 25 pounds and no more than 18 inches long, wide, or tall.

The company said the use of robotics is to ease the physical labor of employees, prioritizing safety above all else. At the time of the building’s opening the company had already invested over \$550 million in safety improvements across its network.

“This is so vital for our future,” said Snohomish County Executive Dave Somers at the ribbon cutting ceremony. “I’m very excited about the partnership with Amazon to build the workforce for the future.”

Arlington’s Amazon FC is Snohomish County’s third warehouse. In 2017 it opened a 92,000 square foot warehouse in South Everett and in 2019 it leased the lion’s share of a building developed by Panattoni, a 204,498-square-foot facility at the Riverside Business Park in northeast Everett.

To learn more about employment opportunities for students, warehouse, and software development, and visit Amazon jobs at <https://www.amazon.jobs/en/>

from page 7 **JAYAPAL**

“That is why they are a strong ally of ours and if they do not comply with international humanitarian law, they are bringing themselves to a place that makes it much more difficult strategically for them to be able to build the kinds of allies to keep public opinion with them.”

She continued, “Terrorist organizations like Hamas obviously are using these [rapes] as tools. However, I think we have to be balanced about bringing in the outrages against Palestinians; 15,000 Palestinians have been killed in Israeli airstrikes, three-quarters of whom are women and children.”

When Bash pointed out that Israeli soldiers aren’t raping Palestinian women, Jayapal again deflected saying, “I don’t want this to be the hierarchy of oppressions; 15,000 people [Palestinians] have been killed.”

Florida Representative and former

Chair of the Democratic National Committee, Debbie Wasserman Schultz (D-FL25) took to X to criticize remarks from Jayapal pertaining to Bash’s questions of sexual violence against Israeli women and girls by Hamas as double-speak.

“Hamas terrorists raped Israeli women and girls. The only ‘balanced’ approach is to condemn sexual violence loudly, forcefully and without exceptions. Outrageous for anyone to ‘both sides’ sexual violence.” Rep. Schultz (D-FL25) tweeted.

Washington State Senate Majority Leader Andy Billig (D-Spokane) in a statement to the Lynnwood Times condemned the use of rape as a war tactic by Hamas.

“The actions by Hamas to kill and kidnap civilians to terrorize the people of Israel should be unequivocally and universally condemned,” Senator Billig wrote in a Facebook post a few days after the October 7 attack by Hamas.

“Hamas’ ultimate goal is to wipe the State of Israel off the face of the Earth. There is no way to negotiate a peaceful resolution to this conflict with Hamas, and Israel has the right and responsibility to respond and to neutralize Hamas.

“It is important to differentiate between civilians in Gaza and the fighters, supporters and leadership of Hamas. I hope that any action against Hamas will avoid or minimize the impacts on civilians living in Gaza who want and deserve peace, just as the people of Israel do.”

Jayapal chairs the Congressional Progressive Caucus with Deputy Chair Ilhan Omar (D-MN05), who is a fierce critic of Israel and who was removed earlier this year from the House Foreign Affairs Committee over her antisemitic remarks.

Omar, a Muslim American, introduced a joint resolution on November 16, disapproving of the proposed export of \$320 million in weapons to Israel. Her

colleague and fellow caucus member, Rashida Tlaib (D-MI12), who is also Muslim American but of Palestinian background, faced backlash from fellow Democrats when she posted on X criticizing President Joe Biden for his support of Israel.

“We will remember in 2024,” Talib said in the video followed by the text: “Joe Biden supported the genocide of the Palestinian people.”

The Congressional Progressive Caucus is composed 103 members of the U.S. House of Representatives and U.S. Senator Bernie Sanders. According to its website, caucus members are committed to standing up “for progressive ideals in Washington and throughout the country.” As of the date of this article the Caucus has not released an official statement condemning the October 7 attack by Hamas on Israel nor address the sexual violence against Israeli women committed by Hamas.

from page 7 **HAMAS ATTACK VIDEO**

The video then shows chaos in the city streets. Trucks hauling piles of dead bodies race down the road while the terrorists, their assault rifles aimed toward the sky, cheer. A young female victim is passed around in a truck. An Israeli soldier is decapitated with a knife, his head thrown into a box as a trophy. Another man inside a house is seen being mutilated by terrorists using a gardening hoe. In between these grim acts members of Hamas are heard calling for the complete annihilation of Jews.

Security camera footage at a kindergarten shows teachers and children hiding underneath desks. Terrorists enter the early learning facility and shoot them where they hide.

Recovered radio audio by an unknown caller to an unknown recipient asks what he should do with his hostages. The recipient answers that he should “crucify them” in the town square.

The second segment of the video focuses on the Nova music festival, an open-air festival celebrating the Jewish holiday of Sukkot that took place near Kibbutz Reim. Festival goers live stream their reaction to rockets overhead. Hamas soldiers then begin to carry out the civilian massacre shooting anyone and everyone they come across, even searching for those who are fleeing or hiding.

One clip shows a video live streamed by a festival goer of themselves, along with three others, seeking refuge in a portable restroom. A follow up clip shows Hamas body cams unloading shots into each portable restroom. Lastly another clip shows the blood stains left behind by those who tried to hide.

A group of girls seeking refuge in a building console each other. One of them reassures her friend, who is crying, that nothing is going to happen to them right as a man wearing tactical gear and bearing an assault rifle enters the room. The video cuts out here.

The video ends with a slideshow of gruesome photos taken of several victims’ bodies – some burned, some beaten, some mutilated. The bodies include women and children, all of whom are civilians.

Each victim featured in the video only makes up 10% of the, roughly, 1,200 Jews who were killed in Israel when Hamas led the deadliest attack on the Jewish people since the holocaust. More Jews were killed that day than any single day during the holocaust and it was also the bloodiest civilian attack in Israel’s history.

Reporters asked the consulate whether the Israeli residents of the cities and settlements attacked harbored anti-Palestinian or radical beliefs. The answer the consulate gave was that it was the

contrary. These were towns that were full of Palestinian sympathizers who often accepted Palestinian refugees into their homes, providing food and shelter. Meanwhile the Palestinian refugees they helped, were allegedly reporting to Hamas the number of family members living in each home, if there were a dog or guns, so that Hamas could ensure the annihilation of each and every one of them, according to the consulate.

Prior to local reporters, including the Lynnwood Times, being invited to view the harrowing footage Thursday, a bipartisan group of dozens of lawmakers and Senators attended a closed-door viewing of the footage on November 28.

The audience included Majority Whip Dick Durbin (D-IL), Armed Services Committee Chairman Jack Reed (D-RI), Intelligence Committee Chairman Mark Warner (D-VA), Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand, (D-NY), Sen. Elizabeth Warren (D-MA), Sen. Ted Cruz (R-TX), and Republicans Marsha Blackburn of Tennessee, Thom Tillis of North Carolina and Pete Ricketts of Nebraska.

“There is a level of evil and hate and depravity that defies words, and it is astonishing that there are still some in America and across the globe who deny these atrocities occurred,” Sen. Cruz said of the footage.

Majority Leader Chuck Shumer (D-

NY), who was also in attendance delivered a major address on the Senate floor about the “dangerously dark and terrifying trend of antisemitism that is on the rise” the next day.

“It was jarring and harrowing. It shook all of us up in the room. I had to go sit in my office for a half-hour alone after seeing it,” said Schumer of the video’s impact.

A recent poll shows the majority of Palestinians (76%) support the attack. Hamas has been the de facto governing body in the Gaza strip since 2007 when it ousted the Palestinian government from power. While the official purpose of Hamas is to establish a Palestinian state within all of its 1967 borders, many members of Hamas have called for the complete annihilation of the state of Israel, the world’s only Jewish state, either through speeches, charters, statements, or public discourse.

Hamas officials have also said their purpose is not to enact utter genocide of the Jewish people but their movement is against Zionism in general – a nationalist movements that emerged during the first World War to establish a home state for Jewish people. Still the video the Israeli consulate released to the Lynnwood Times on Thursday depicts Hamas soldiers bragging about how many Jews they murdered, calling for their complete and utter annihilation.