



## GOVERNOR CHRIS GREGOIRE 2005–12

As Washington's 22nd governor, Chris Gregoire was a tireless champion for the people of the state, their livelihoods and the communities in which they reside. On a platform of improving the education system, creating family-wage jobs, protecting the environment and streamlining state government, then-Attorney General Gregoire was first elected in 2004 by a bare margin. Nonetheless, she swiftly embarked on policy courses that defined her administration.

### EDUCATION

Within her first 100 days in office, Governor Gregoire laid out ambitious plans to overhaul the state's education system to help students build a better future. The Governor led the push for funding for all-day kindergarten, starting in districts with the greatest concentration of low-income students. She formed the Washington Learns Committee and charged it with charting the course for learners from preschool through college and professional training. A number of its recommendations were adopted through legislation in the following years, including the formation of a Department of Early Learning, revisions to the process of evaluating teachers and administrators, commitments to more enrollments at the public colleges and universities, and designing university laboratory schools to promote innovation and aid struggling schools. The Governor proposed the creation of the Student Achievement Council in 2012 to operationally link the separate "silos" that compose the education system from high school through college. In the area of higher education, the Governor created the endowed Opportunity Scholarship Program to help students earn a baccalaureate degree, particularly (though not exclusively) in high-demand fields. She also expanded opportunities at the University of Washington campuses at Tacoma and Bothell, as well as at the Washington State University branches at Everett, Vancouver, Tri-Cities and Spokane, by admitting freshmen and sophomores.

### HEALTH CARE

Within the first 100 days of her administration, Governor Gregoire launched a bold plan to reform health care in Washington. Her decisiveness was reinforced by the Blue Ribbon Commission on Health Care, a group she chaired in 2006–7 to identify ways to expand coverage and tamp down costs while driving better outcomes for patients. Among her many achievements was covering more than 97 percent of children in the state through her Apple Health for Kids program. She also devised a preferred drug list to save spending on prescriptions, set parity for mental health services to be comparable to physical health services and supported moving individuals from expensive institutional care to community-based care, where appropriate. The Governor championed boosting the immunization rate for Washington's children and led the charge in emergency preparedness. To ready Washington for federal health care reform, the Governor signed legislation she requested to create Washington's Health Benefit Exchange, a simple, user-friendly website to display health care information for prospective buyers and consumers. Due to her leadership, Medicaid health care inflation in Washington is among the lowest in the nation, thanks to a number of measures she took, including merging the state's Medicaid program with the Health Care Authority, implementing innovations to save money on care for state inmates and speeding up the return of injured workers to the job.

## AEROSPACE

To spur even more competitiveness in one of Washington's signature industries, Governor Gregoire created the Washington Council on Aerospace in 2009 to oversee state efforts to ensure we remain the world's leader in designing and building airplanes. She invested \$4.5 million of her federal Workforce Investment Act funding in aerospace training to develop training centers at Everett's Paine Field and Spokane International Airport and to buy new equipment for training programs in our public colleges. The Governor signed legislation to help complete the supply chain for the state's promising biofuels industry. Washington is now home to more than 720 aerospace companies that design and manufacture a host of products. On her watch, Boeing launched the 787 and 737 MAX, a long-distance version of the company's storied workhorse. The Governor successfully led a coalition of governors supporting Boeing's bid for the Air Force's aerial refueling tanker, bringing 11,000 jobs to our state. In 2012, the Governor signed into law her measure to establish a Center for Aerospace Technology Innovation at the University of Washington and Washington State University to advance research on new technologies for products in aviation, aerospace and defense. The Governor co-convened, with congressional and local partners, the Washington Military Alliance to coordinate a unified message as military budget decisions are considered and recommend actions that can be taken at the local, state and federal levels to enhance military mission retention and expansion and military contracting in the state.

## PUGET SOUND

Governor Gregoire asserted her goal to make Puget Sound "fishable, swimmable and diggable" during her administration. The centerpiece of the Governor's strategy to restore and protect the country's second-largest estuary was the creation in 2007 of the Puget Sound Partnership. This agency sets science-based priorities, spurs implementation of priority actions and ensures accountability so every dollar spent on restoration represents a wise, productive investment. Much of what the Partnership accomplishes is driven by an extensive public education campaign in collaboration with a number of state, local and private partners. The Governor understood that to reach her goal, everyone must contribute to the solution.

## ENVIRONMENT

As a former director of the Department of Ecology, Governor Gregoire understood that protecting our environment is essential for our health, economy and enjoyment as well as those of future generations. To this end, she proposed successful actions to increase wind energy production, promote green building construction and craft a clean energy future. The Governor successfully brokered agreements on water usage from the Columbia River, Lake Roosevelt and the Yakima River. Her leadership broke a century-old stalemate among multiple parties over water for drinking, salmon, agriculture and recreation. Thanks to her efforts, Washington is the No. 1 renewable energy-producing state in the country.

## TRANSPORTATION

Governor Gregoire made her mark, too, in the area of transportation. Early in her administration, she won approval for a landmark transportation package to create jobs and begin repairs of our roads and bridges. During the first year of her initial term, the Department of Transportation was placed under her control, offering the Governor greater opportunity for realizing her vision of a vital, thriving and safe transportation system. Following years of contention, Washington is moving forward on a host of

important transportation projects, including State Route 520, the Alaskan Way Viaduct and the Columbia River Crossing. In a point of particular distinction, more than 88 percent of transportation projects were completed early or on time, and 91 were completed on or under budget. In 2011, the Governor established the Connecting Washington Task Force to design a 10-year sustainable investment strategy that ties system needs and priorities to new revenue. Throughout her terms, the Governor placed a high priority on preserving and maintaining our transportation assets — roads, bridges, rail, ferries — and on projects connected to economic corridors.

## **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

Though the Governor faced a roughly \$2 billion shortfall in 2005 when she was sworn in, a rebounding economy soon led to the state's first budget surplus since 2001. The Governor focused on strategic investments in education, public safety and health coverage for children. Yet she also took steps to stabilize the state budget, such as proposing a constitutionally protected "rainy day" reserve. At the start of the Governor's second term, the onset of the Great Recession spawned the deepest and most prolonged budget shortfalls in state history. She attacked the crisis head-on. She implemented furloughs of state employees and successfully negotiated a 3 percent salary reduction for state workers, who also paid a greater share of their health care costs. She froze hiring, travel and training. The state workforce was cut by more than 11 percent, or comparable to 1996 levels. And she reduced the number of state boards and commissions by nearly one-third. Over four years, the state budget was cut by more than \$11 billion in actual or projected spending. The Governor was a vigorous advocate for trade, too. She conducted 12 trade missions to such trading partners as India, China, Japan and Vietnam. And she established a sister-state relationship with India. By the time she left office, Washington had been recognized as the most wired state in the country, thanks to her efforts to expand broadband services and apply for federal grants.

## **GOVERNMENT REFORM**

One of the first steps in balancing the state budget was ensuring that state services were delivered as leanly as possible. To this end, she initiated a host of reforms to save taxpayer money. Chief among them were enacting the largest changes to the workers' compensation system in a century to save an estimated \$1.5 billion over four years as well as supporting a bipartisan package that helped businesses save \$300 million in unemployment insurance. As the Governor left office, she left the unemployment insurance trust fund one of the healthiest in the nation. The Governor offered the first-ever amnesty on back taxes that brought in \$343 million. She halved the unfunded liability in the state's older pension plans for savings pegged at \$7.6 billion over 25 years, making Washington's public pension system one of the country's most sustainable. The award-winning Government Management, Accountability and Performance program created by the Governor measures whether citizens are getting value from the state programs their tax dollars cover. In addition, the Governor closed one residential habilitation center for individuals with developmental disabilities and moved its residents into safe, high-quality community placements. She also closed McNeil Island Corrections Center, Maple Lane School, Pine Lodge Corrections Center and Ahtanum View, the first major institutional closures since the 1970s. In 2011, the Governor introduced private sector-proven Lean techniques to streamline state government operations to save taxpayer money, drive efficiency and deliver measurable results.

Chris O’Grady was raised in Auburn, Washington, by her mother, who worked as a short-order cook to support the family. After graduating from Auburn High School, Chris entered the University of Washington, where she earned a teaching certificate and Bachelor of Arts degree in speech and sociology. She met her husband, Mike, in September 1971 when they both worked for the Washington Department of Social and Health Services. Chris received her law degree in 1977 from Gonzaga University. Chris and Mike have two daughters, Courtney and Michelle. Courtney is married to Scott Lindsay; both are attorneys. Their daughter, Audrey Christine, is the Governor’s first grandchild. Michelle expects her law degree in 2013.

Chris was appointed director of the Washington State Department of Ecology from 1988 to 1992 by Governor Booth Gardner. She then ran for the office of Attorney General in 1992 and served three terms before she entered the Governor’s race in 2004.

In retirement, the Governor and Mike look forward to spending time with family — and especially their granddaughter — and friends, traveling and maintaining a number of charitable interests.

From balancing the state budget through the roughest economic period since the Great Depression to transforming our education and health care systems to streamlining government, Governor Gregoire worked hard over two terms in office to make Washington a great place to raise a family and work.

Governor Gregoire served in the following capacities:

## **NATIONAL GOVERNORS ASSOCIATION**

<b>2005–06</b>	Vice Chair, Education, Early Childhood and Workforce Committee
<b>2006–07</b>	Chair, Education, Early Childhood and Workforce Committee
<b>2006–07</b>	Member, Task Force on TANF (Temporary Assistance to Needy Families)
<b>2007</b>	No Child Left Behind Co-Lead Governor
<b>2007–08</b>	Member, Task Force on Securing a Clean Energy Future
<b>2008–09</b>	Member, Task Force on Strengthening our Infrastructure for a Sustainable Future
<b>2009</b>	Member, Task Force on Health Reform
<b>2010–11</b>	Chair
<b>2011–12</b>	Marketplace Fairness Act Co-Lead Governor

## **WESTERN GOVERNORS ASSOCIATION**

<b>2010–11</b>	Vice Chair
<b>2011–12</b>	Chair
<b>2012–13</b>	Member, Executive Committee

## **OTHER**

<b>2009</b>	Appointed by Secretary Napolitano to the Homeland Security Advisory Committee to review the Homeland Security Advisory System
<b>2010–13</b>	Appointed by President Obama as Co-Chair, Council of Governors
<b>2013</b>	Appointed to the Export Import Bank’s Advisory Committee