

STATE REPRESENTATIVE
40th LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT
DEBRA LEKANOFF

State of
Washington
House of
Representatives



STATE GOVERNMENT &
TRIBAL RELATIONS
—
APPROPRIATIONS
—
RURAL DEVELOPMENT,
AGRICULTURE & NATURAL
RESOURCES

Dear Honorable Members of the Whatcom County Council,

I'm writing to strongly endorse Western Washington University's proposal for support to construct a Coast Salish-style Longhouse adjacent to the WWU campus and the Sehome Arboretum. I was proud to lead efforts in the Washington State Legislature to secure \$4.5 million in state bond funding for this project in the 2021-23 Capital Budget, and I urge the Council to help WWU close the gap on this historic project.

This project aims to increase representation of Native students and enhance their recruitment, retention and graduation, and it has been a top request of the Native American Student Union at WWU, as well as the Associated Students of WWU for several years. Many tribal leaders throughout the Salish Sea region have expressed their strong support for this project, and the Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians of the United States recently passed a resolution in support of the project.

[Here is a link to a video](#) featuring students, staff and tribal and community in support of the Longhouse.

Thank you for considering this request and for your public service to our region.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Debra Lekanoff".