



2023



# YEAR-END REPORT

**118TH CONGRESS**

**MARIE GLUESINKAMP PEREZ**  
WASHINGTON'S THIRD DISTRICT





## A NOTE FROM MARIE

Dear Friend,

As a rural mom working in the trades, I wasn't your typical Member of Congress when I was sworn in a year ago. But I arrived on Capitol Hill with the mission to serve as an independent voice for Southwest Washington and represent my rural community.

I'm proud to say we've made meaningful, bipartisan progress on the issues that matter most to you, despite the limitations of being a freshman lawmaker in the minority. Things like bringing prestige back to our trades, protecting our right to fix our own stuff, and keeping our woods working – not to mention all the direct constituent support my team provides each day.

I put this report together because you shouldn't have to be a constitutional law expert or watch C-SPAN all day to know what I'm up to. Accessibility is my top priority, so the best part of my job has been getting back home to the better Washington and hearing from you – whether it's through town halls I've held in every county or the over 454 meetings I've had with folks.

If there's anything we can do for you, or if you just want to share your thoughts, my contact information is on the back cover. I'm excited to see what this new year brings, and thank you for your engagement and allowing me to work on your behalf.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "MGP", representing Marie Gluesenkamp Perez.

**Rep. Marie Gluesenkamp Perez**  
Member of Congress





# SERVING SOUTHWEST WASHINGTON BY THE NUMBERS



**\$701,936**

Recovered for Residents  
From Federal Agencies



**59,076**

Responses Sent Back  
to Constituents



**849**

Constituent Cases Closed



**11**

Town Halls Across  
All Seven Counties



**30**

Bipartisan Bills Introduced



**12**

Bipartisan Cosponsored  
Bills Passed the House



**77%**

Bipartisan Votes Cast



**14**

Letters Led in Support of  
Southwest Washington



**13**

Local Ports Visited



# CONSTITUENT SERVICES

While legislation might move slowly in a divided Congress, my team and I work each day to directly advocate for you with the federal government. So far, **we've recovered over \$701,000 owed to constituents** from agencies like the IRS and VA. These are sums of money in the hundreds or thousands of dollars that can really make a difference for folks.

If you need assistance accessing your veterans benefits, tax refund, or Social Security check, **we've helped over 849 people and we're here to serve you**. We can also help with passport delays or just listen to what issues are top of mind for you and your family.

I've also worked to expand our reach by **opening a new office in Kelso** because I live in a rural community and I know it can be difficult to access vital services. So, please give us a call, stop by, or fill out the form on my website if there's any way we can support you!



I contacted Rep. Gluesenkamp Perez's office to see if they could help. The response was awesome! Within a week, my passport renewal application had been located ... and I had my new passport in hand. Just 4 days before our scheduled trip!

- Jerry M., Ocean Park

Hearing from you is one of the best parts of my job, and it's part of my mission to be accountable and accessible as your Representative. This year, **I've held 11 town halls**, 4 coffee hours, and answered your questions online. Engaging with each other is a crucial part of democracy, so I truly appreciate everyone who's taken time to get involved!



Gluesenkamp Perez hosts inaugural town hall, commits to middle-class, rural workers

Skamania County town hall follows a dozen years with little in-person contact with her predecessor

The Columbian | JANUARY 19, 2023



# FINDING COMMON GROUND

I didn't come to Congress to be a cheerleader for either party – I came to be an independent voice for my community. That means finding common ground on common sense solutions to make life better for folks across Southwest Washington. This year, **90% of the bills I've introduced and 77% of the votes I've taken have been bipartisan.**

My core values are best represented by the Democratic Party, but no party has a monopoly on good ideas. **That's why it's been a priority of mine to build relationships across the aisle.** Sometimes this happens in unorthodox ways, whether it's going to a bipartisan workout group or bringing local Washington apples to work for my colleagues. I haven't been apologetic about trying to bridge the gap, because I'm here to serve everyone in Washington's Third District, regardless of your political affiliation.



*Rep. Gluesenkamp Perez meets with Lewis County Commissioners Lindsey Pollock and Scott Brummer.*



*Rep. Gluesenkamp Perez speaks with bipartisan colleagues about working across the aisle.*

As a Blue Dog Coalition co-chair, I've also been focused on maintaining our reputation of being the ones who can cut through the noise of politics and culture wars to reach compromise on a path forward. **It's how you get stuff done, and it's good for democracy.**

**Congresswoman Gluesenkamp Perez emphasizes bipartisanship at most recent town hall**

**The Reflector** | MAY 8, 2023

**In Our View: Rep. Perez's independence is refreshing**

**The Columbian** | SEPTEMBER 8, 2023



# HEARING FROM LOCAL GROWERS

As a House Ag Committee member, I've been focused on making sure we get a Farm Bill that supports Southwest Washington producers. I really appreciate all the folks who have taken the time to give me tours around their farms, and it's been great hearing from you at the **three Farm Bill Listening Sessions** I've held.



A concern I've heard a lot is increasing consolidation – **Lewis County used to have 100+ dairy farms, but now there's roughly a dozen.** And when foreign investors buy up broad swaths of farmland, our food access and national security are put at risk – at a time when we import a significant chunk of the fruits and vegetables we consume each day. **It's clear Congress must act so local producers can keep doing what they love.**

**I introduced the bipartisan *Farmland Security Act*** to increase oversight of foreign ownership of American farmland. It would help maintain control over our food supply and ensure family farms don't get squeezed out.

Another major concern of mine is microplastics making their way into our soil and food. As a mom, it's worrisome that these particles can affect growth and have harmful impacts on those consuming them. **My bipartisan *Research for Healthy Soils Act* would help us learn more about the impacts of microplastics on the biosolids we use for farming.**





# IMPROVING ACCESS TO CARE



Rep. MGP visits Columbia River Mental Health Services (above) and Vancouver Clinic (below).



Rep. Gluesenkamp Perez at WSU Vancouver's childcare center.



## LOWERING HEALTHCARE COSTS

When you live in a rural community, routine medical appointments or pharmacy trips can be anything but. **Access, affordability, and choice are key** – so my *Protecting Consumer Access to Generic Drugs Act* would combat predatory practices where Big Pharma limits access to lifesaving drugs for the sake of profit.

I also led a letter to the CFPB urging them **to prevent medical debt from being included on credit reports**. People don't have control over falling ill, so their credit score shouldn't be tanked and their financial future ruined for having to take on this debt. Enduring a medical emergency is stressful enough as it is.

## ADVOCATING FOR PARENTS

Before coming to Congress, my husband and I brought our son to our auto repair shop most days because there were no other options available. Speaking with parents at my rural childcare roundtable in Ilwaco, **it's clear finding affordable care is a common challenge**.

I teamed up with my bipartisan colleagues to introduce the *Expanding Childcare in Rural America Act*. This bill makes life easier for parents by improving the quality, availability, and cost of childcare in agricultural and rural communities.

**Gluesenkamp Perez among trio of lawmakers to introduce legislation to lower cost of generic drugs**

*The Chronicle* | NOVEMBER 10, 2023

**Perez, peninsula stakeholders gnaw on childcare puzzle**

CHINOOK OBSERVER | SEPTEMBER 5, 2023



# REBUILDING OUR INFRASTRUCTURE

**I live down a gravel road and get my internet from a radio tower**, so I know a thing or two about the need to invest in rural communities and rebuild our crumbling infrastructure. The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law has been vital for funding these projects, so I've been working to help our local communities actually access these dollars.

**Investing in our infrastructure is about more than just physical roads or bridges** – it's about connecting folks, driving our economy, and returning jobs in the trades.

## FUNDING LOCAL PROJECTS

**Washougal's 32nd Street Underpass Project is a prime example of that.** We know all too well how badly the road can back up when trains come through Washougal – and it creates traffic, affects our safety, and slows down emergency services and the transport of goods. **I helped secure over \$40 million in Bipartisan Infrastructure Law funding for this effort** so we can get things moving again and make life a bit easier for folks.

On our coast, some communities are facing the existential crisis of sea level rise. **I was able to help secure \$24 million of Department of Transportation funding for the Shoalwater Bay Tribe** to relocate vital community infrastructure, and I'm glad I could visit to see the ways they're battling this aggressive flooding.

This fall, our region was awarded a **\$1 billion federal investment in green hydrogen production** – including Centralia. I supported this effort, because clean energy can't happen without rural communities – and it'll lead to good jobs, energy security, and a cleaner future.







## REPLACING THE I-5 BRIDGE

The I-5 Bridge over the Columbia River is over 100 years old and in desperate need of replacement. **The bridge is highly vulnerable to earthquakes and is functionally obsolete.** Mayor Anne of Vancouver described it as pretzels driven into chocolate pudding.

**I helped secure a \$600 million DOT Mega grant to replace this bridge** – which will be a major step toward strengthening the safety and efficiency of this vital interstate artery for our local drivers and economy.

I pushed for this Mega funding each time I spoke with the Secretary of Transportation, and I brought White House Infrastructure Coordinator Mitch Landrieu to see how desperately the bridge needs these funds.

I'm so glad these efforts paid off, and every dollar matters, so **I'll keep working to bring all the possible federal funding home to get this done.**

## EXPANDING RURAL BROADBAND

Struggling to get online is an everyday part of life for my family and our entire community. Yet **high-speed internet is essential** to participating in the economy, accessing telehealth and telework, and so much more.

It's why I was really excited to help Lewis County PUD secure \$24.2 million in USDA funds for rural broadband expansion. This funding will make high-speed internet available to **2,863 people, 119 businesses, 487 farms, and four educational facilities** in Lewis County. It's huge – and it'll change peoples' lives.

**I also introduced the *Rural Internet Improvement Act*,** a bipartisan bill to enhance successful USDA programs to get more folks connected, no matter where they live.

**Gluesenkamp Perez introduces bipartisan bill to help streamline rural broadband access**



| MAY 19, 2023



# KEEPING OUR WOODS WORKING

**I'm really proud of my timber heritage** – my mom is from Forks and my grandfather worked in the woods as a faller. I grew up understanding that people who work in the woods love being in the woods and that there's deep pride in working with your hands as a career. **This culture of hard work is central to who we are as rural Americans**, so we've got to rebuild these good jobs to keep our woods working for future generations.

**In September, the House passed my bipartisan *Treating Tribes and Counties as Good Neighbors Act***, which would expand lands eligible for Good Neighbor Authority forest management efforts and ensure Tribes and counties can reinvest the receipts of these projects back into restoration. **It would support the health of our forests and watersheds**, while reducing cross-boundary wildfire risk.

**I also introduced the bipartisan *Jobs in the Woods Act*** to provide young people the training and pathways needed to pursue fulfilling, lifelong careers in forestry. But we also have to stimulate the demand-side of our forest products economy – which is why I introduced two bipartisan bills to drive innovation and invest in wood energy programs. I'll be working to get these over the finish line, because **it's clear that maintaining strong wood product markets is essential for Southwest Washington's success**.



**Perez introduces bill to address forestry labor shortage**

The Columbian | SEPTEMBER 7, 2023



# STRENGTHENING LOCAL ECONOMIES

**Before coming to Congress, I ran an auto repair and machine shop with my husband.** Thanks to an SBA loan, we could buy the building for our shop – and it's programs like these that can help local businesses succeed. Nevertheless, small business owners will tell you it can be a nightmare to navigate these programs. **As a member of the Small Business Committee**, I've had the chance to welcome local witnesses to share their experiences – and **I've made it my priority to slash burdensome red tape.**



Across our district, I've heard from local businesses, governments, and nonprofits that **accessing federal grant funding is just too difficult.** My bipartisan *Streamlining Federal Grants Act* standardizes currently uncoordinated federal grant rules, forms, and notices to make the application quicker, easier, and less redundant.

I also know how hard it can be for small shops to have the resources to hire an apprentice – yet they're crucial to investing in the next generation of tradespeople. It's why **I introduced a bill to help small businesses recruit CTE graduates** and help them start their own businesses.

**A bill of mine also made it through committee** to ensure veteran-owned, women-owned, and small disadvantaged businesses are given a fair shot competing for contracts – since our government hasn't met its benchmarks.



Rep. Gluesenkamp Perez speaks with Josh Phillips of Spawn Fly Fish in Ilwaco.



Rep. Gluesenkamp Perez speaks with Kathleen Nisbet Moncy of Goose Point Oysters in Willapa Bay.



# BUILDING UP THE TRADES

Across our country, we're seeing labor shortages in the trades – and you're feeling the impacts if you're a family looking for a skilled carpenter or plumber. This is in part because **it's not always easy to build a pathway in the trades**. Too many of our kids are being told it's wrong to work with their hands as a career, and anyone who's looked to buy their own tool set knows it can be prohibitively expensive.

One of the main reasons I came to Congress was to help **restore the dignity of the trades** and support the career and technical education and apprenticeships necessary for folks to build these good-paying, lifelong careers.

In addition to my bill to help small businesses recruit CTE grads, I introduced legislation



*Rep. MGP invited Kalama School District CTE Director Cory Torppa to be her State of the Union guest.*

that would ensure students hear about pathways in the trades as a rigorous alternative to costly four-year degrees. **We also need to make the FAFSA process easier** and expand aid eligibility for technical education programs.

I've visited CTE programs across our district and met with Washington Skills Center directors to discuss how we can expand these meaningful opportunities for local students. Cory Torppa, a teacher of over 18 years and Kalama School District's CTE Director, stood out for his work to open doors for his students. **It was an honor to have him as my guest for the State of the Union** and use the opportunity to highlight the fantastic contributions of our hardworking educators.



# PROTECTING THE RIGHT TO REPAIR

**It's our American ethos that we know how to fix our own stuff** – DIY is part of our DNA. Nevertheless, we're increasingly seeing that things like cars, tractors, and iPhones are manufactured to be disposable, or at least not repairable without being brought to an authorized dealer. **Being disenfranchised from the technology we rely on is bad for our planet, terrible for our middle class and trades, and harmful to our identity.**

These burdens can be especially taxing on those in rural communities, because **you can't always afford to take a day off to drive hours to a dealership for a costly repair.** Rob B., a Ridgefield farmer, shared that he bought a three-year-old John Deere tractor which stopped working during harvest. He couldn't get diagnostic information and a service appointment was available weeks away, so he had to use a 1965 tractor to finish the job.



*Rep. Gluesenkamp Perez jumps in a pool to celebrate Wahkiakum High School's robotics team's win.*



**I introduced the *Agricultural Right to Repair Act*** for local farmers like Rob who just want to be good stewards of their own stuff. I also cosponsored the bipartisan *REPAIR* and *SMART* Acts to lower automotive repair costs and ensure folks can go to their local shops.

**We've also seen some great movement** on protecting the right to repair in Congress, with the first-ever hearing in a committee with jurisdiction, as well as the *REPAIR Act* passing an Energy and Commerce subcommittee markup. I'll be working to keep up the momentum on this, since it's crucial we have the right to fix our own stuff.

**Backed by former auto shop owner, 'right-to-repair' bills pick up steam in Congress, statehouses**

THE SPOKESMAN-REVIEW | MAY 13, 2023





## HONORING OUR VETERANS

**It's our responsibility to ensure our heroes are well-supported after returning home.** That's why I'm fighting to get our veterans and their families the health care, resources, and benefits they deserve. A highlight this year was our **Veterans Career and Resource Fair**, which helped connect over 200 veterans and family members to local resources.

On the legislative front, **Congress passed the bipartisan VET MEDS Act** – a bill I co-led to support veterans' access to VA-certified specialists and examiners in rural and high-need communities. I also introduced the bipartisan **Helping Heroes Act** to create additional support structures for veteran families and the children of disabled veterans so they have the mental health and peer support necessary to live healthy, fulfilling lives.

In Lewis County, I met with veterans and visited VA Puget Sound's Mobile Medical Unit to hear from providers and patients about their experiences. **Unfortunately, they're facing dramatic reductions in services** and spending hours on hold for basic scheduling needs. To ensure we have county-level data to address these issues, I wrote to the VA Secretary urging further transparency as a crucial initial step toward solving this situation.

Gluesenkamp Perez holds  
veterans career and resource  
fair at Clark College

**The Columbian** | NOVEMBER 11, 2023

Additionally, Skamania County veterans discovered crucial federal grant funding for rides to VA appointments was in jeopardy. This service put lifesaving care into reach for folks, and I was saddened to hear community leaders were given minimal time to find alternative solutions. **I again called on the VA Secretary to reconsider the eligibility requirements** – so that rural veterans aren't left behind.





## SUPPORTING FIRST RESPONDERS

**Our first responders keep us safe, yet they face constant challenges** with training times, recruitment, and getting the equipment they need to stay safe. It isn't right. I've met with Sheriffs and fire and police chiefs across Southwest Washington to hear their priorities and discuss the bills I'm working on to get them funding and support.

As our nation faces worsening addiction and mental health crises, **we need to work together** to tackle the spread of fentanyl. I appreciate Vancouver FD welcoming me on a ride along so I could see their work responding to these calls firsthand. I joined bipartisan efforts to put pressure on China to reduce the flow of fentanyl precursor chemicals and push our Governor to reconsider plans that could divert funding from regional drug task forces. Ultimately, **Congress needs to pass the *FEND Off Fentanyl Act* to target opioid traffickers** and the *HERO Act* to ensure first responders can access mental health care.

When the Tunnel 5 Fire broke out this summer, I visited the fireline and got my team on the ground so we could be present for those affected. **I can't thank the wildland firefighters enough who battled this fire**, and I cosponsored *Tim's Act* to increase pay and benefits for those who sacrifice so much to keep us safe.



In a remote community like mine, it can take long enough to receive emergency services without the added strain of staffing shortages. I introduced the bipartisan ***PARA-EMT Act* to support EMS staff recruitment in rural communities** and cut red tape for veterans looking to become a certified EMT or paramedic after returning home. I'll keep working to strengthen this line of defense for our communities.



# We're Here to Help!

## WASHINGTON, DC

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## KELSO

308 S. Pacific Ave.  
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Open Tues. & Thurs.  
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## VANCOUVER

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Stay in Touch:



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**MARIE GLUESENKAMP PEREZ**  
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