

CITY OF SEATTLE
2005 STATE LEGISLATIVE BULLETIN

APRIL 25, 2005

NUMBER 15

THE SESSION ENDED "SINE DIE" AS SCHEDULED ON APRIL 24TH. THANK YOU TO THE ENTIRE SEATTLE LEGISLATIVE DELEGATION FOR MAKING THE 2005 SESSION A VERY MEMORABLE AND PRODUCTIVE ONE.

SESSION PRIORITIES

Operating Budget – SB 6090

Mental health funding for non-Medicaid recipients was funded at \$80.7 million which makes up most of the \$82 million lost due to changes at the federal level.

There is an \$18 million reduction to General Assistance for the Unemployable (GAU) leaving approximately \$96 million in the program.

The budget includes \$48 million to "backfill" public health funding lost with the repeal of the motor vehicle license fee (MVET).

The earlier proposed co-pays for prescription drugs and transportation fees were not included in the final operating budget.

New revenue totaled approximately \$485 million funded primarily through an estate tax on estates valued over \$2 million and a 60-cent increase of the cigarette tax.

Capital Budget – SB 6094

Housing Trust Fund - \$100 million

McCaw Hall - \$3 million

Discovery Park - \$1 million

WA Wildlife & Recreation Program - Myrtle Edwards/Sculpture Park (\$300,000), Lower Woodland Skate Park (1st alternate), Ercolini Park acquisition (\$245,000), SLU Park, Phase I development (\$300,000)

Wing Luke Museum - \$2 million

Asian Counseling and Referral Services (ACRS) - \$2 million

El Centro de la Raza - \$900,000

Transportation Solutions

The Senate and House came to an agreement on a transportation revenue package which includes a 9.5-cent gas tax increase phased in over four years and new weight fees of \$10, \$20 and \$30. The total package was a little over \$8 billion. The project list includes \$2.0 billion for the Alaskan Way Viaduct and \$500 million for SR-520. In addition to these projects local government would receive new direct distribution splitting 1-cent between cities and counties. Local transportation funding options were not included in the final package. **Seattle is very supportive of this transportation package.**

SB 6012 would make transportation an authorized use for parking and business improvement areas. This bill was signed into law. **Seattle supports this legislation.**

SHB 1179 authorizing a high occupancy toll lane (HOT lanes) pilot project on SR 167 has been awaits the Governor's signature. **Seattle supports this legislation.**

State Funding

E2SSB 5581 creates the life sciences discovery fund using revenue from the tobacco settlement case. These revenues will be used to support the Bio 21 effort and future statewide, comprehensive strategies to lead the nation in life sciences-related research & employment. This bill awaits the Governor's signature. **Seattle supports this legislation.**

Session Objectives

Civil Rights

SHB 1515 which adds sexual orientation to the state discrimination laws was voted down in the Senate by a vote of 24-25. This bill has been before the legislature for 28 years and this was the first time the Senate has voted on the bill. **Seattle supports this measure.**

Clean Cars

ESHB 1397 which adopts California vehicle emission standards awaits the Governor's signature. **Seattle supports this measure.**

Consumer Protection

ESSB 5692 which would regulate tax refund anticipation loans (RAL's) awaits the Governor's signature. This bill would require all participants providing RAL's to register with the Dept. of Financial Institutions and limits RAL providers to a tax preparer and accepted as an IRS e-filer. This bill would also require the loan facilitator to disclose information including the loan schedule, information relating to electronic filing of the applicant's income tax return, the facilitator must not engage in dishonest, fraudulent or unfair business practices and applies the protection of the state's consumer protection act. Violators may be fined up to \$500 per offense. Seattle's ordinance would still be preempted.

McCaw Hall

The final Capital Budget held \$3 million for McCaw Hall.

Public Disclosure

2SHB 1758 would make some changes to the Public Disclosure Act as it relates to overly broad requests. Public agencies would not be allowed to refuse a request because it was overly broad however they could ask for a down payment, provide the information in smaller batches and continue to request clarification to help specify the request. As currently written the legislation does not affect the issue of attorney-client privilege. This bill awaits the Governor's signature.

POLICY ISSUES

Growth Management & Land Use

ESHB 2171 allows a one-year extension for the completion of critical area ordinances and comprehensive plans due in 2004. This bill awaits the Governor's signature. **Seattle supports this measure.**

Human Services

ESHB 1314 imposes a \$30 fee on the recording of a dissolution decree which will fund a domestic violence prevention account. This bill awaits the Governor's signature. **Seattle supported this measure.**

E2SSB 5763 which enacts the omnibus treatment of mental and substance abuse disorders act of 2005 to help close the "treatment" gap awaits the Governor's signature. **Seattle supports this legislation.**

Public Safety

ESHB 1687 which restricts the possession of firearms for persons found not guilty by reason of insanity awaits the Governor's signature. **Seattle supports this measure.**

ESSB 5060 would allow local jurisdictions to use automated traffic safety cameras at two-arterial intersections, railroad crossings, and school speed zones. This bill was signed into law.

Solid Waste

SHB 2085 deals with the cleanup of waste tires. A \$1 fee is added to the purchase of new tires. The money raised will assist in the removal of tires in unauthorized sites and to fund a study to determine the extent of the problems related to waste tires. This bill awaits the Governor's signature. **Seattle supported this measure.**

City of Seattle Office of Intergovernmental Relations – Olympia
David Foster, david.foster@seattle.gov
Rose Feliciano, rose.feliciano@seattle.gov