

**CITY OF SEATTLE
2008 STATE LEGISLATIVE BULLETIN**

February 11, 2008

Number 4

The first cut-off for the session was Friday, February 8. Bills in policy committees had to have been voted out before this cut-off or they are likely finished for the session. The cut-off for bills to move out of the fiscal committees is Tuesday, February 12. If bills have not been voted out of a fiscal committee by Tuesday they are technically dead. Both chambers now have until February 19 to pass bills out of their house of origin.

SESSION PRIORITIES – 2008

Affordable Housing

HB 2625 is an employer-assisted housing bill that would provide a 50-cent tax credit for each dollar donated by employers towards employer housing (i.e. down payment or rental assistance) or loan counseling. The bill passed out of the House Housing Committee but has not been scheduled for a hearing in the House Finance Committee. **Seattle supports this bill.**

HB 2849, concerning affordable housing financing did not pass out of the House Housing Committee. This would have created a Housing Everyone Finance Tool, which would assist in the creation of affordable housing. **Seattle supports this bill.**

Civil Rights

SSB 6716 and **SHB 3104**, expands rights and responsibilities for domestic partnerships including a wide range of rights related to property. **SHB 3104** passed out of the House Finance Committee and was referred to the Rules Committee. **SSB 6716** passed of the Senate Ways & Means Committee and goes to the Senate Rules Committee. **Seattle supports these measures.**

SB 6533 makes it unlawful to discriminate in the rental of a dwelling because of one's "lawful source of income" (i.e. social security, public assistance, or retirement benefits). The public hearing was held in the Senate Judiciary Committee but it did not move out of committee. **Seattle supports this bill.**

Climate Protection & Environment

SHB 2815, regarding greenhouse gases emissions and providing for green collar jobs, passed out of the House Ecology & Parks Committee, had a hearing in the House Appropriations Committee and was voted out of committee. The bill now moves to the House Rules Committee. **SSB 6516**, its companion, passed out of the Senate Water, Energy & Telecommunications Committee, was referred to the Senate Ways & Means Committee and is scheduled for a hearing on February 11. **Seattle supports these bills.**

SSB 6469, regarding urban forestry, was heard in the Senate Natural Resources, Ocean & Recreation Committee. The committee included an amendment that would require cities of a certain size (19,000 acres or greater, which includes Seattle) to adopt an urban forest ordinance consistent with the “model ordinance” the Dept. of Community Trade & Economic Development is required to adopt. It is scheduled in the Senate Ways & Means Committee February 11. **SHB 2844**, its companion, does not have this provision. It creates a new grant program for local governments' urban forestry programs but does not require that cities adopt urban forestry ordinances. It is scheduled for a hearing on February 11 in the House Appropriations Committee. **Seattle supports this measure.**

Crime Guns

SSB 3095, concerning provisions governing firearms possession by persons who have been involuntarily committed, passed out of the House Judiciary Committee and was referred to House Appropriations Committee. This bill would require that the state statute comply with federal laws regarding persons who have been involuntarily committed. This is a response to the Virginia Tech shooting in which the State recognizes they are not systematically reporting to the National Instant Background Check System (NICS) person who fall into this category. **Seattle supports this measure.**

SB 6763, concerning background checks, passed out of Judiciary Committee and referred to Senate Rules Committee. Congress passed the Federal NICS Improvement Act which requires that states report the estimated number of persons who would be prohibited from possessing firearms for a number of restrictions (i.e. felony convictions, domestic violence orders, etc.). If we comply by July, the state will be eligible for federal funding for an electronic reporting system. **Seattle supports this bill.**

Infrastructure/Finance

SB 6872 and **HB 3291**, enacting the Community Schools Act of 2008, were introduced. These bills establish a new program that will allow community based groups to apply for competitive grant funds to help purchase a surplus school. SB 6872 was heard and passed out of the Senate Committee on Early Learning & K-12 Education and referred to the Ways & Means Committee. HB 3291 was heard in the House Capital Budget Committee and is scheduled for executive session on February 12. **Seattle supports these bills.**

HB 2965 would direct the Department of Revenue to develop a feasibility plan for state administration and collection of local B&O taxes. This bill was heard in the House Finance Committee but has not been scheduled for executive session. **Seattle opposes this legislation.**

HB 3244 and **SB 6894** purport to clarify the definition of customer location for purposes of municipal business and occupation taxes. HB 3244 was heard in the House Finance Committee. Thank you to Dwight Dively for testifying in opposition to this bill. SB 6894 was referred to Senate Ways & Means. **Seattle opposes these bills.**

HB 3327 which would repeal the square footage tax imposed by the City of Seattle was referred to Finance.

HB 2437 and **SB 6182** authorize the project list from the Public Works Board. Seattle will receive \$10,000,000 for a Seattle Public Utilities water project. HB 2437 was heard in the Senate Ways & Means Committee and passed with amendments to Rules Committee. **Seattle supports these bills.**

HB 2495 removes the statute (RCW 35.87) requiring a 15 day advertising process and first right of refusal for sale to develop free parking facilities before any sale of municipal property in an area zoned retail. The bill passed out of the House unanimously and was referred to Senate Government Operations & Elections Committee. We have asked the Chair for a hearing on this bill. **Seattle supports this legislation.**

Municipal Electricity

HB 2961, authorizing the establishment of utility local improvement districts for underground facilities that transmit or distribute electricity or communications, was heard in the House Local Government Committee. Unfortunately, a telecommunications company wanted to amend the statute that gives cities authority to charge for relocation of lines. Because opening the discussion of this statute would raise significant concerns from all cities, we decided to not pursue this measure this session. **Seattle supports this measure.**

Ten - Year Plan to End Homelessness

HB 2433 suspends, not terminates, GA-U financial assistance of incarcerated persons. For those eligible for Medicaid upon entering incarceration, Medicaid continues and is not terminated. This bill was referred to House Rules Committee but then re-referred to the Appropriations Committee and has not been scheduled for a hearing. **Seattle supports this bill.**

Transportation

SB 6771 would repeal the Regional Transportation Investment District – RTID. This bill was heard in the Senate Transportation Committee on February 5.

SB 6772 would set up a new Regional Transportation Authority in the King, Pierce, and Snohomish region with a twelve member board made up of seven elected and five appointed members. Project authority would include roads and transit with revenue from the existing roads and transit sources and the bill removes sub-area equity. The boundaries would be consistent with the Sound Transit boundaries, not county wide. This bill was heard in the Senate Transportation Committee on February 5.

HB 3096 and **SB 6754** are governor-request bills that would allow tolling on the existing SR 520 Bridge and/or a new bridge. Its would set up a three member tolling implementation committee tasked to look at issues such as traffic diversion, technology, traffic management, variable tolling and set up a public outreach effort around tolling. The bills also state the bridge will be six lanes with the ability to expand for light rail. SHB

3096 was amended and passed out of the House Transportation Committee and referred to the Rules Committee. SB 6754 was heard in the Senate Transportation Committee but has not been scheduled for executive session.

HB 2889 and **SB 6484** exclude car-sharing activities from the rental car tax. HB 2889 was heard in the House Finance Committee. SB 6484 has not been scheduled for a hearing in the Senate Transportation Committee. **Seattle supports his measure.**

STATEMENT OF POLICY – 2008

Domestic Violence Protections

HB 2764 adds domestic violence court order violations, punishable for 0 to 12 months for two or more convictions, to the list of offenses eligible for notification by the Department of Corrections. The bill passed out of the Human Services Committee and was referred to the Rules Committee. **Seattle supports this bill.**

Education

SSB 6522 and **SHB 2449** provide for collective bargaining for childcare center directors and workers. Each bill has received public hearings in their respective policy committees. SSB 6522 was amended and passed from the Senate Labor, Commerce, and Research & Development Committee and was referred to the Ways & Means Committee. SHB 2449 was heard in the House Appropriations Committee and is scheduled for executive session on February 11. **Seattle supports these bills.**

SSB 6314 and **HB 2500** providing for arts education funding were passed out of both the Senate Early Learning & K12 Education Committee and the House Committee on Education. They were referred to the Senate Ways & Means and House Appropriations but neither has been scheduled for a hearing. **Seattle supports these measures.**

Elections and General Government

SHB 2904 was amended to require local government to develop policies to prevent preferential treatment for incumbent candidates on government TV channels. The bill excludes official meetings that are shown on television. The bill passed out of the House State Government Committee and was referred to the Rules Committee.

Energy

SB 6585, concerning attachments to utility poles of locally regulated utilities, was heard in the Water, Energy & Telecommunications Committee but did not pass out of committee. This bill places rate-setting authority as they relate to pole attachments under the Utilities & Transportation Commission for municipal electric utilities, public utility districts and rural electric cooperatives. **Seattle opposes the Senate bill.** **SHB 2533** its companion, which took municipal electricity out of the bill, is scheduled for a vote in House Appropriations.

Health

SB 6659, setting statewide nutrition labeling requirements for restaurants with twenty-five or more locations in the country and pre-empting local government from doing more until

2013, did not pass out of the Senate Health & Long Term Care Committee. The companion bill **SHB 3160** was stripped of any authority and passed out of the House Labor & Commerce Committee with only the intent section. **Seattle opposes preemption in this bill.**

Housing

HB 2684 appropriates \$6 million to the homeless families services program (better known as the Washington Families Fund). HB 2684 did not pass out of the House Housing Committee. However, **SB 6335**, its companion, passed out of both houses and was signed by the Governor. **Seattle supports these bills.**

ESSB 5959 would provide assistance to homeless individuals and families through the Transitional Housing Operating and Rent (THOR) program and would appropriate \$15 million to the program. This bill passed unanimously out of the Senate and was heard in the House Housing Committee. **Seattle supports this bill.**

SB 6411 and **SHB 2014**, regarding condominium conversions, were heard in the Senate Consumer Protection & Housing Committee. These measures provide a number of provisions to protect tenants in apartments that are being converted to condominiums. Provisions include increasing relocation assistance from the current cap of \$500 to three times the monthly rent, the ability to break your lease early without penalty, and more notification time to the lessee to allow time to finance the purchase of a unit. **SB 6411** was not voted out of committee but **SSB 5031** which was introduced last year is still under consideration of the Senate. Thank you to Councilmember Tom Rasmussen for coming to testify on these bills. **Seattle supports these bills.**

Human Services

2SSB 6222 and **SHB 2668** provides funding for parts of the Area Agency on Aging agenda, including respite care, Family Caretakers support, vendor rate increases, and increases in the Senior Citizen's Service Act. **2SSB 6222** was voted out of the Senate Ways & Means Committees and referred to Senate Rules. **SHB 2668** is scheduled to be voted out of the House Appropriations Committee on February 11. **Seattle supports these bills.**

Parks

SSB 6547, prohibiting discrimination in community athletics programs, was voted out of the Senate Government Operations & Elections Committee and referred to Senate Rules. This bill takes out the reporting requirements from the original bill and directs cities and counties to adopt anti-discrimination policies for athletic fields. **HB 3001**, its companion, was voted out of the House Judiciary Committee and referred to House Rules. We are reviewing the substitute bill.

Public Safety

SB 6608 and **SHB 2712**, concerning criminal street gangs, is a comprehensive bill that includes a number of provisions. It did not pass out of the Senate Judiciary Committee but was voted out of the House Committee on Public Safety & Emergency Preparedness.

The bill had a hearing in House Appropriations but has not been scheduled for a vote.
Seattle supports these measures.