

CITY OF SEATTLE
2009 STATE LEGISLATIVE BULLETIN

April 13, 2009

Number 13

The fiscal and transportation committee cut-off occurred on April 6. Policy bills and those that are not deemed “necessary to implement the budget” must pass the opposite house by 5:00 p.m. on Friday, April 17. Sine die for the regular session is set for April 26.

SESSION PRIORITIES – 2009

Housing Resources

SHB 1464 is scheduled for signature by the Governor on Monday, April 13. SHB 1464 makes modifications to the incentive zoning for affordable housing statute. **Seattle supports this bill.**

Public Safety

HB 1498 would make changes to state law regarding when a person's right to possess firearms is revoked after a certain time of involuntary commitment for mental health treatment, making state law consistent with federal law. On April 9 the bill was placed on second reading and could come up for a vote in the Senate at any time. **Seattle supports this legislation.**

Regional Transportation

Both the Senate and House Transportation Budgets as passed by each chamber include \$2.4 billion for the AWW replacement and an additional \$10 million of the Spokane Street project. **ESSB 5352** was approved by the House on April 10 by a vote of 65 – 30. The transportation budget will now go to conference committee to work out the final document for legislative approval.

ESSB 5768 authorizing the replacement of the State Route 99/Alaskan Way Viaduct with a bored tunnel is in the House Rules Committee. It was amended to include updated cost estimates by January 1, 2010, to require incentives and penalties avoid cost overruns, tin include a single of information on all components related to the overall tunnel project. Finally it was amended to require the City of Seattle to perform and pay for a number of projects, some of which are the current responsibility of other agencies, or the state will withhold \$50,000,000 from the Spokane Street project. The project requirements and time lines are such that it could jeopardize the entire project and the \$15.4 million from the federal stimulus package. Seattle is opposed to this last amendment. However, because it was removed from the transportation budget it will likely be removed or replaced with language that doesn't restrict funding for other projects.

SHB 2211 allows tolls on the State Route (SR) 520 corridor, sets up a tolling authority to set a schedule of toll rates to maintain travel time, speed, and reliability in the corridor and increase the toll rates. It caps the total cost of the project at \$4.65 billion, with caps of \$1.85 billion on

the floating bridge, \$800 million on the east side of the corridor, and \$2 billion on the west side of the corridor. Any funding over \$2 billion on the west side of the corridor must come from local revenue sources. This legislation is in the House Rules Committee.

Health Care

2SHB 1985 requires local health districts to comply with minimum health standards as a condition for receiving state funding. This legislation was not heard or passed out of the Senate Ways & Means Committee.

Education

ESHB 2261 moved from Ways and Means into the Rules Committee and was placed on second reading on April 9. ESHB 2261 states that the Legislature intends to monitor the progress of developing formulas, processes, and systems and to begin a schedule of implementation in the 2011-12 school year. The Senate version, **ESB 6048**, passed from the Ways and Means Committee to Rules on April 6. **Seattle supports these bills.**

STATEMENT OF POLICY – 2009

Civil Rights

SB 5952 would expand the definition of “sexual identity” as it relates to protection under the malicious harassment statute. It was passed by the Senate on April 8 by a vote of 68-30 and is on its way to the Governor’s desk for signature. **Seattle supports this legislation.**

Energy

E3SSB 5854 passed out of the House General Government Appropriations Committee to Rules on April 3 with an amendment that prohibits local governments from adopting residential energy codes that exceed the requirements of the state code. The House version, **E2SHB 1747**, did not pass out of Ways and Means by the April 6 cutoff and is considered ‘dead’ for the session. These bills promote low-energy-use building codes; disclosure of buildings’ energy use scores; financing energy-saving upgrades to existing buildings; and reducing low-income households’ utility bills. The original versions of the bills allowed cities and counties to create a “conservation utility”; this authority is removed from the current versions of these bills. **Seattle supports these bills.**

ESSB 5840 moved from General Government Appropriations Committee to Rules on April 6. 5840 proposes changes to I-937, the Energy Independence Act. **Seattle supports this bill.**

Growth Management, Land Use and Annexation

SSB 5321 would continue the current sales tax credit for annexation over 10,000 by cities under 400,000. It also allows smaller cities an extra 0.1% sales tax credit if an annexation “commences” before 2010. The amended version would provide Seattle or Burien up to \$5 million if an annexation of over 18,000 people in North Highline area takes place. This legislation is on the floor calendar and eligible for a vote at any time.

Infrastructure/Finance

2SSB 5433 in its original form would allow the 0.3% sales tax, permitted under existing statute with a public vote, and the 0.1% sales tax for mental health and chemical dependency programs to be used for supplanting and extends the definition of “criminal justice” to include fire protection. It now is a much larger bill that would allow supplanting of the public safety sales tax, of the mental health/chemical dependency sales tax and multi-year lifts. It allows an unincorporated utility tax in King County and reduces the property tax for ferry districts to a maximum of 7.5 cents per \$1,000 assessed value (down from 75 cents) and also allows 7.5 cents for transit. It requires cities in King County to annex unincorporated area or lose access to Transportation Improvement Board and Public Works Trust Fund grants and loans. It allows cities to impose utility taxes on water and sewer districts and clarifies the taxation of brokered natural gas. Finally, it requires a performance audit of King County.

Although we have not seen a new version of the bill, we understand that it may change substantially. This legislation is on the floor calendar and eligible for a vote at any time.

Planning & Development

2SHB 1481 did not pass out of the Senate Ways & Means Committee by the April 6 cutoff, but has been deemed necessary to implement the budget. 2SHB 1481 requires that certain new public and private construction must include parking for electric vehicles and/or electric vehicle circuitry or infrastructure, exempts installation of electric vehicle infrastructure from most State Environmental Policy Act provisions, requires local governments to provide certain parking for electric vehicles, and provides tax incentives for electric vehicle infrastructure. **Seattle supports this bill.**

Sexual Assault & Domestic Violence

SHB 1505 was placed on second reading by the Rules Committee on April 9. SHB 1505 would authorize diversion for sexually exploited juveniles. **Seattle supports this bill.**

Telecommunications and Cable

E2SHB 1701 provides that the authority for overseeing broadband adoption and deployment efforts in the state is vested in DIS. The bill was passed by the Senate Ways & Means on April 6 and made eligible for second reading on April 9. **Seattle supports the concept behind this legislation but is seeking several amendments in order to become supportive.**