

**CITY OF SEATTLE
2008 STATE LEGISLATIVE BULLETIN**

February 25, 2008

Number 6

February 19 was the cut-off for bills to move out of the house of origin. Committee meetings have begun again and the legislature has until the February 29 cut-off to consider bills in the policy committees.

The House budget proposals – Operating, Capital and Transportation - came out last week. The Senate will propose their budget this week. Due to the revenue forecast showing a decrease of \$423 million the House budget dipped into the reserves but still carries \$750 million into the 2009-11 biennium.

SESSION PRIORITIES – 2008

Affordable Housing

2SHB 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. This bill did not move out of the Rules Committee. **Seattle supports this bill.**

Civil Rights

2SHB 3104, expanding rights and responsibilities for domestic partnerships, will be heard in the Senate Committee on Government Operations & Elections on February 25. These measures provide a wide range of rights related to property. **Seattle supports this bill.**

Climate Protection & Environment

E2SHB 2815, providing a framework for reducing greenhouse gas emissions in the Washington economy, passed the House by a vote of 64-31. The bill was heard in the Senate Water, Energy & Telecommunications Committee on February 22. The bill has gone through a number of revisions. It still has reporting requirements and a focus on the development of green jobs. It also provides a loose framework for the Department of Ecology, as they engage in the Western Climate Initiative negotiations on a regional multi market-based system, which is likely to be a cap and trade system. **Seattle supports this bill.**

E2SHB 2844, regarding urban forestry, will be heard on February 25 in the Senate Natural Resources, Oceans & Parks Committee. This bill in part requires the Department of Natural Resources to develop and conduct inventories and assessments of community and urban forests and create a new grant program for local governments' urban forestry programs. No general fund dollars were

allocated in the House Operating Budget for the grants, but there was funding for the inventory. **Seattle supports this bill.**

Crime Guns

SB 6763, concerning background checks, directs agencies to comply with a reporting requirement in the federal National Instant Background Check System (NICS) Improvement Act. If we comply by July, the state will be eligible for federal funding for an electronic reporting system. This bill did not pass out of the Senate Rules Committee. **Seattle supported this bill.**

SSB 3095, concerning provisions governing firearms possession by persons who have been involuntarily committed, requires the state to report to NICS when a person has been involuntarily committed. This bill did not receive a vote on the House Floor. **Seattle supported this bill.**

Finance/Infrastructure

SHB 3291, enacting the community schools act of 2008, establishes a new program that community-based groups can apply for competitive grant funds to help purchase a surplus school. The bill will be heard on February 25 in the Senate Early Learning & K12 Education Committee. The House Capital Budget, **SHB 2765**, includes \$10 million in 2009-11 for the program created with HB 3291. It also states that \$5 million will be allocated specifically to Allen, Crown Hill, Fautleroy, University Heights, Martin Luther King and Lincoln schools in 2008. **Seattle supports these bills.**

HB 2437 authorizes the project list from the Public Works Board. Seattle will receive \$10,000,000 for a Seattle Public Utilities water project. The Senate approved HB 2437 unanimously and it now goes to the Governor for her signature. **Seattle supports this bill.**

HB 2495 removes the statute (RCW 35.87) requiring a 15-day advertising process and first right of refusal to develop free parking facilities before any sale of municipal property in an area-zoned retail. This bill was heard and passed out of the Senate Government Operations & Elections Committee and referred to the Rules Committee. **Seattle supports this bill.**

Transportation

SSB 6771, temporarily eliminating the Regional Transportation Investment District – RTID, will be heard in the House Transportation Committee on February 27.

Regarding **E2SHB 1773**, **Seattle is supportive with concerns** relating to caps on funding for transit out of the tolls and ensuring that the focus is on moving people and goods, not vehicles. HB 1773 was heard in the Senate Committee on Transportation on February 21.

HB 2880 excludes car-sharing activities from the car rental tax. This bill did not pass out of the Rules committee before the cut-off. **Seattle supports this bill.**

HB 2969 and **SB 6808** require the State Treasurer to withhold 25% of the local gas tax distribution for local governments that have a bridge rating below 10 until at least 50% of the estimated cost to attain a rating of 80 or more on a new or rehabilitated bridge has been reached. Neither bill moved before the cut-off.

SHB 3096 sets up a three-member committee to evaluate a variety of issues related to early tolling and tolling of SR 520 including diversion, tolling technology, traffic management and public outreach. Any actual toll must be approved by the state legislature. This bill did not pass out of the House before the cut-off.

STATEMENT OF POLICY – 2008

Domestic Violence Protections

SHB 2520 creates a pilot project placing a domestic violence advocate in a minimum of one Department of Social and Health Service office. This bill died but it is included in the House budget as a proviso. **Seattle supports this bill.**

Education

E2SHB 2449 provides for collective bargaining for childcare center directors and workers. E2SHB 2449 passed out of the House and was referred to the Senate Labor, Commerce, and Research & Development Committee and is scheduled to be heard on February 25. **Seattle supports this bill.**

Elections and General Government

SSB 5278, allowing local funds to be used to set up programs to publicly fund campaigns if approved by a vote of the people, will be heard in the House State Government Committee on February 27. **Seattle supports this bill.**

SHB 2904 was amended to require local government to develop policies to prevent preferential treatment for incumbent candidates on government TV channels. This bill will be heard on February 28 in Senate Government Operations and Elections Committee.

Health

ESHB 3160 now sets forth a legislative taskforce to look at the issue of nutrition labeling and restricts any local rules from going into effect until April 29, 2009. This bill will be heard in the Senate Government Operations & Elections Committee on February 26. **Seattle opposes preemption in this bill.**

Housing

ESHB 1727, planning to ensure sufficient land and densities available to accommodate growth, had a hearing and passed out of the Senate Government

Operations & Elections Committee. In part this bill requires that comprehensive plans must designate a sufficient quantity of land suitable for development to accommodate projected population and anticipated commercial and industrial land use growth. As amended in committee, there is now language to correct some technical issues and clarify the use of incentive zoning. **Seattle supports this bill.**

Human Services

2SSB 6222 and **E2SHB 2668** provide funding for Area Agency on Aging priorities, including respite care, Family Caretakers support, vendor rate increases, and increases in the Senior Citizen's Service Act. Some funding has been included in the House budget, which now moves to the Senate for further consideration. E2SHB 2668 will be heard on February 27 in the Senate Health & Long-Term Care Committee. 2SSB 6222 was referred to the House Health Care & Wellness Committee. **Seattle supports these bills.**

Public Safety

ESSB 5363 adds speed violations on certain arterial streets to the traffic safety camera law. This bill applies only to Seattle and would give us authority to pass an ordinance to install cameras for speeding. Seattle has requested a hearing in the House Transportation Committee. **Seattle supports bill.**

E2SHB 2712, concerning criminal street gangs, is a comprehensive bill that includes pilot sites focusing on prevention, gang suppression, graffiti abatement, and creation of a gang database. Funding for 2008 is included in the House budget. Full funding will be addressed in the 2009 budget. E2SHB 2712 will be heard on February 27 in the Senate Judiciary Committee. **Seattle supports this bill.**