

CITY OF SEATTLE
2005 STATE LEGISLATIVE BULLETIN

APRIL 18, 2005

NUMBER 14

April 15 was the cut-off for Senate bills to be passed by the House and House bills to be passed by the Senate. Any bills that did not move from the opposite chamber are considered "dead" except for those deemed necessary to implement the budget. April 24 is the last day of the 105 day session.

SESSION PRIORITIES

Transportation Solutions

The House Transportation committee passed a revenue package and project list which includes a 9.5-cent gas tax increase spread out over four years and some new weight fees. The project list includes \$2.3 billion for the Alaskan Way Viaduct and \$1.5 billion for SR-520. There were no local funding options however the vehicle license fee is still being discussed. The Senate revenue package included a new gas tax increase of 3-cents in 2005, 2-cents in 2006 and then a penny a year for ten years plus weight fees. The funding package includes \$2 billion for the Alaskan Way Viaduct project and \$1.2 billion for the SR-520 project. In addition to these projects local government would receive new direct distribution and new local transportation funding options including a vehicle license fee and household excise tax. The House and Senate are in negotiations over the size of a final revenue package as well as the project list. **Seattle is supportive of these efforts.**

SB 6012 would make transportation an authorized use for parking and business improvement areas. This bill passed the House by a vote of 64-32 and will go to the Governor for her signature. **Seattle supports this legislation.**

SHB 1179 authorizing a high occupancy toll lane (HOT lanes) pilot project on SR 167 passed the House and must go back to the Senate for concurrence. **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 floor action in the House and is deemed necessary to implement the budget. **Seattle supports this legislation.**

Session Objectives

Civil Rights

SHB 1515 which adds sexual orientation to the state discrimination laws did not receive a hearing in the Senate Judiciary Committee. This bill has been before the legislature for 28 years. **Seattle supports this measure.**

Clean Cars

ESHB 1397 which adopts California vehicle emission standards passed the Senate by a vote of 29-19. Due to amendments added on the Senate floor this bill will probably go to the House for concurrence and probably a conference committee to solve the differences. **Seattle supports this measure.**

Consumer Protection

SSB 5692 which would regulate tax refund anticipation loans (RAL's) was amended and passed by the House. 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. This bill now goes back to the Senate for concurrence.

McCaw Hall

The House Capital Budget proposal has \$2.5 million for McCaw Hall. The Senate Capital Budget proposal listed \$3 million for McCaw Hall and Gov. Gregoire's Capital Budget contained \$3.5 million.

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 was amended, passed by the Senate and now goes back to the House for concurrence.

POLICY ISSUES

Energy

SHB 1895 would require local jurisdictions to provide information to General Administration on what conservation measures we have carried out. The information will then be transmitted to the legislature.

SHB 1020 which originally dealt with the siting of transmission corridors but a floor amendment struck the entire bill and replaced it with language creating an interconnection technical advisory committee and tax incentives for renewable energy. The bill passed the Senate unanimously. **SSB 5101** which provided incentives for renewable energy passed the House unanimously. The House added amendments requiring 80% of utilities to adopt interconnection standards prior to any incentives being effective. These two bills will now have to be reconciled. **Seattle supported SSB 5101 in its original form.**

Growth Management & Land Use

ESHB 2171 which would allow a one-year extension for the completion of critical area ordinances passed the Senate. However, the Senate hung an amendment on which would extend the timeline for comprehensive plans and critical area ordinances for all jurisdictions, not just those which were due in 2004. The Senate amendment basically moves all the GMA timelines out one-year therefore slowing down the process. The House is not going to concur with the Senate version. We are working with sponsors and other cities to ensure the extensions for 2004 jurisdictions are secured. **Seattle supports this measure.**

Human Services

ESHB 1314 which establishes funding for a domestic violence prevention account passed both chambers. The House version had a \$10 fee on both marriage licenses and dissolutions. The Senate amended it so it is a \$30 fee on recording of a dissolution decree. The bill was passed by the Senate and now must go back to the House for concurrence. **Seattle supported this measure.**

E2SHB 1152 which creates an early learning council passed the Senate. The council is charged with a number of duties including evaluating child care subsidy rates and early childhood programs.

E2SSB 5763 which enacts the omnibus treatment of mental and substance abuse disorders act of 2005 passed by the House and now must go back to the Senate for concurrence. This is a 175-page bill which does a number of things to close the “treatment” gap. This act is phased in over a number of years.

Public Safety

ESHB 1687 which restricts the possession of firearms for persons found not guilty by reason of insanity passed the Senate unanimously. No amendments were made so this will be sent to the Governor for her 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 passed by the House and now goes to the Governor for her signature.

SHB 1854 addresses the issue stemming from a State Supreme Court decision on Driving While License Suspended statute has been passed by both chambers. This gives courts back the authority to enforce traffic infractions. It also requires payment plans be made available. **Seattle supported this measure.**

E2SSB 5454 which would provide additional court funding through an increase in filing fees passed both chambers. There is a difference in how the funds are to be used. The Senate version has half of municipal court judges’ salaries being paid for through these fees, the House version has no funding for municipal court judges. **Seattle supports this measure.**

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. **Seattle supported this measure.**

ESSB 5788 which attempts to ensure recycled materials are not transferred to landfills passed the House and now must go back to the Senate for concurrence. **Seattle supports this measure.**

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