

CITY OF SEATTLE
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The cut-off for fiscal and transportation committees was Tuesday, February 7. Bills still in committee at that time are unlikely to move forward unless they are related to the budget. The full House and Senate are voting on bills between February 8 and February 14. The 2006 supplemental budgets (operating, capital and transportation) may be out this week.

Session Priorities

Transportation

SHB 2871 is awaiting a vote on the House floor. A strike to the bill that passed out of committee has been made public. The strike would prohibit a Sound Transit and/or Regional Transportation Investment District (RTID) vote in 2006 or until the new regional governance commission approved the plan(s). It enacts all of the changes requested by the RTID Executive Board. It allows transit operations to be funded in the RTID plan. It creates a new nine member Regional Transportation Commission which must include the three County Executives, the rest are appointed by the Governor. The Commission is to develop a proposal for a new governing entity, with revenue sources and planning authority. It shall also develop an integrated regional transportation finance plan to go to the voters and look other issues relating to boundaries and governance of transit agencies. The Commission must issue a report by November 15, 2006 allow enacting legislation to be approved and sent to a regional vote November, 2007. The City of Seattle would have the authority to propose to use the Monorail Authority's taxing options for local or high capacity transit if the new governing entity included it in their regional plan and the voters of the region approve it. Also, new to the bill is the inclusion of the Transportation Benefit District provision for the three county area without the limit on local projects. This would provide the local options we have been looking for but requires a vote of the people.

If a regional transportation bill moves forward it is likely going to be HB 2871, not SB 6599.

SSB 6599 is awaiting a vote on the Senate floor but is unlikely to move. The bill would not prohibit a regional vote in 2006 but requires that a vote must include Sound Transit and the Regional Transportation Investment District (RTID). It includes most of the legislative changes requested by the RTID. It also includes the expansion of the Transportation Benefit District contained in HB 3138 (see below). Finally, it sets up a Governor appointed seven member Central Puget Sound Regional Transportation Governance Commission to develop a proposal to restructure a regional transportation funding and operating system into a single point of accountability. The Commission must issue a report by December 1, 2006 to allow enacting legislation to be approved and sent to a regional vote November, 2007.

SSB 6786 was amended and passed out of the Senate Transportation Committee. This bill would shrink the Monorail authority to a 5 member Board. The elected members would be retained and others would be appointed by the Mayor of Seattle. The MVET would be locked at 1.4% until the debt is paid off. Portions of the authorizing statute not needed for dissolution

would be repealed. Two other bills relating to the Monorail, **SB 6733** and **SB 6872** did not pass out of the Senate Transportation Committee.

HB 3138 which would modify the transportation benefit districts to include King, Pierce and Snohomish Counties and allow all of the revenue to be used for local roads is in the House Rules Committee. **Seattle supports this legislation.**

SB 6566 which would revise the commute trip reduction program was approved unanimously in the Senate. The companion bill **HB 3089** awaits a vote on the House floor. **Seattle supports these bills.**

Housing

SHB 2418 is an attempt to increase the availability of affordable housing using 3.039% of existing state Real Estate Excise Tax (REET) or \$25 million for housing programs and help reducing the backlog of Housing Trust Fund projects. This includes \$4 million for the homeless families services fund. The overall intent is to make this a four year effort totaling \$100 million. This bill passed the House by a vote of 72-24. **Seattle supports this legislation.**

SHB 2984 authorizes cities, towns, and counties to implement affordable housing incentive programs. This bill gives local jurisdictions the option of encouraging or requiring a number of tools to increase the availability of affordable housing. This bill is awaiting a vote in the House. **Seattle supports this legislation.**

Education

ESHB 2998 is the compromise bill relating to the WA Assessment of Student Learning (WASL) test. This bill requires a study to explore options for students to demonstrate that they have met learning standards. It also requires a review and statistical analysis of those that do not meet the WASL standards to try to identify similar characteristics and possible barriers to meeting the standards. This bill passed the House by a vote of 80-18. The companion bill **SB 6618** was approved unanimously in the Senate.

E3SHB 1484 would allow a county wide voter approval property tax to be used for collectively bargained cost-of-living supplements for school employees. The revenue would be distributed to school districts based on the number of full-time equivalent employees in each school district. This bill passed the House by a vote of 50-48.

Session Objectives

Environmental Health

SSB 6428 provides no-cost options for individuals and small governments and small business to recycle their computers and televisions. ESHB 6428 passed out of the Senate 41-8 and will be heard in the House Natural Resources, Ecology & Parks Committee on February 16. The companion bill **SHB 2662** is in the House Rules Committee. **Seattle supports these measures.**

HB 1731 would require mercury components to be removed from cars that are no longer useful and are being scrapped. This bill passed out the House Appropriations Committee and is now in the Rules Committee. **Seattle supports this legislation.**

Human Services – TANF

SSB 6628 and **SHB 2970** preserve the WorkFirst child safety net program. The purpose of this bill is to ensure that children whose parents are out of compliance with WorkFirst requirements continue to receive benefits. SSB 6628 bill is awaiting a vote on the Senate floor. SHB 2970 bill did not move out of the House Appropriations Committee. The fiscal note has raised some concern the fiscal note was for over \$3 million, up from the original \$900,000. **Seattle supports these measures.**

Streamline Sales Tax

SSB 6594, conforming Washington's tax structure to the streamlined sales and use tax agreement, will be heard in the House Finance Committee on February 15. The bill includes full mitigation to cities that are adversely affected by the shift in the distribution of sales tax from a point of purchase system to point of delivery. **Seattle supports this legislation.**

Weights and Measures Fees

SB 6365 would increase the registration fees for weights and measuring devices. The bill has been amended to double the current fees, which is lower than the fee schedule suggested by the Dept. of Agriculture, and awaits a vote on the Senate floor. **Seattle supports this legislation.**

Policy Issues

Air Quality and Climate Protection

SHB 2738 and **SSB 6508** which develops minimum renewable fuel content requirements and fuel quality standards in an alternative fuels market are awaiting votes on the House and Senate floor. These bills face a tougher challenge than originally anticipated. Concerns are being raised that the bills are trying to do too much too fast. **Seattle supports these bills.**

Economic Development

HB 2818 would form a WA motion picture competitiveness program to provide incentives for this industry to film in the state. The program will be funded by private contributions in exchange for state tax credits. This bill is awaiting a vote on the House floor. **Seattle supports this legislation.**

Elections and General Government

SB 6221 which would provide cities and counties the option of implementing a program, after a public vote, to allow publicly financed campaigns for local offices passed the Senate by a vote of 27-22. **HB 1436** which does not contain the public vote provision is awaiting a vote on the House floor. **Seattle supports HB 1436.**

Energy

ESHB 1010 concerning energy efficiency and renewable energy standards passed out of the House by a vote of 96-1. This bill requires public and private utilities to produce integrated resource plans (IRP). We supported this bill last year but a number of changes have been made which broaden the definition of renewable. We are currently reviewing the bill that passed out of the House.

SHB 2349 which provides new renewable energy standards for state agencies is awaiting a vote on the House floor. The bill requires state agencies to purchase all available anaerobic digester power from local utilities at the green tag rate, but will likely receive further

amendments before passage. **SHB 2352** which modifies net metering provisions was approved in the House by a vote of 97-1. This bill does change the percent of net metering we must accept from 0.05 to 0.25 and increases the generating capacity of a net metering system from 25 kW to 100 kW. It also changes definitions of renewable energy. Both bills are expected to come to the floor and both bills are expected to have changes made to them. We will be able to review the bills once they are made available.

Growth Management, Land Use and Annexation

SHB 2217 would have imposed new expensive data gathering and analysis requirements upon cities planning under GMA and would give counties more authority over local zoning decisions associated with residential growth. This bill did not pass out of the House Appropriations Committee before the cut-off. **Seattle opposed this measure.**

SHB 2325 which encourages the development of affordable housing passed out of Local Government is awaiting a vote on the House floor. This purpose of this bill has to do with requiring how jurisdictions deal with "odd shaped lots." This bill is very prescriptive and basically overrides our zoning codes. **Seattle opposes this measure.**

SHB 3017 and **SSB 6701** reaffirm Washington State's eminent domain laws. SHB 3017 is in the House Rules Committee and SSB 6701 is awaiting a vote on the Senate floor. These bills were Governor request legislation. Some people still question the need to restate case law. **Seattle continues to monitor these bills.**

Human Services

SHB 2002 will allow up to 50 foster care youth to continue receiving benefits if they stay in school up to age twenty-one. This bill passed out of the House by a vote of 97-1. **Seattle supports this bill.** We believe all eligible kids should be able to access these benefits.

SHB 2376 which prohibits the department of social and health services from imposing medical premiums on children in households with income at or below two hundred percent of the federal poverty level passed out of the House by a vote of 74-24. This bill simply codifies current departmental practices. **Seattle supports this measure.**

SHB 2649 and **SHB 2650** which related to homeless programs/affordable housing did not pass out of the House Appropriations Committee before the cut-off. Concerns had been raised about the bills being too prescriptive and both had significant fiscal notes (\$3-4 million apiece.)

SHB 2353 which provides for collective bargaining for child care workers passed out of Commerce & Labor Committee and was heard by Appropriations. This bill gives the state authority to bargain with child care workers that recently voted to be represented by SEIU. If this bill passes the state and SEIU will bargain and in 2007 the legislature would vote on their contract. We hope child care subsidies would increase as a result of the bargaining. **Seattle supports this measure.**

Key Arena

HB 3233 and **SB 6849** would provide the King County Council authority to impose (or continue) a number of taxes that would be used for arts and heritage organizations in King County and to improve or build a facility for the Sonics and improve the existing Mariners facility. The taxes include a two percent lodging tax, sales tax credit of 0.017, two percent car rental tax and a restaurant sales tax of 0.5 percent. All of these taxes are currently in place

and set to expire once bonds for Safeco Field and Qwest Field are paid off. HB 3233 was originally referred to the House Economic Development, Agriculture & Trade Committee but was re-referred to the House Finance Committee. SB 6849 was referred to the Ways & Means Committee. There was a work session in the House Finance Committee on February 9. A Senate Way & Means Committee hearing may occur on February 22.

Public Safety

HB 3205 clarifies the authority to apprehend conditionally released persons. Persons who fall into this category are the violent sex offenders who will receive 24-hour supervision while residing at the new facility located at 1st & Spokane. This legislation would give law enforcement the authority to detain a person who is violating their conditions of release by either taking them to the county jail or back to the secure facility. This bill was passed out of the House unanimously. **Seattle supports this measure.**

SSB 6214 modifies requirements for security guard training. The purpose of this bill is to ensure better and more consistent training is provided for private security guards. It is in the Rules Committee. **Seattle supports this measure.**

Water Stewardship

SHB 2884 concerning the use of reclaimed water is awaiting a vote on the House floor. **SSB 6730** also related to reclaimed water did not pass out of the Way & Means Committee before the cut-off. While these bills are not companions the purpose is to set in motion the updating of the rules related to reclaimed water. The rules were last updated in 1997. **Seattle supports these measures.**

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