

**CITY OF SEATTLE  
2007 STATE LEGISLATIVE BULLETIN**

**February 26, 2007**

**Number 7**

The first policy cut-off occurs at 5:00 pm on Wednesday, February 28. The fiscal committee cut-off is 5:00 pm on Monday, March 5. Both chambers will focus on floor action March 6 – 14.

## **SESSION PRIORITIES**

### **Education**

**SHB 1663** defines key components of the Early Learning plan of Washington Learns. The substitute bill will be heard in the Appropriations Committee on March 1. **Seattle supports this bill.**

**HB 1550/SB 5438** fund after-school programs. HB 1550 remains in the House Education Committee. **SB 5438** passed out of the Early Learning & K-12 Education Committee and will be heard in the Ways & Means Committee on February 26.

### **Civil Rights**

**SSB 5530**, changing requirements for the restoration of the right to vote for people convicted of felonies, passed out of the Senate Committee on Government Operations & Elections. The bill now moves to Senate Rules. **Seattle supports this measure.**

**SHB 1472/SB 5971** create an Advisory Commission to study causes of racial disproportionality in the Children's Welfare system, and to make recommendations to end disproportionality. SHB 1472 is awaiting a vote on the floor. SB 5971 passed out of the policy committee this past week.

### **Environment**

**SB 6046**, allowing utilities to mitigate the environmental impacts of their operations, was heard in the Senate Water, Energy & Telecommunications Committee on February 23. Thanks to Peggy Duxbury in City Light for testifying. This bill addresses the recent State Supreme Court decision. **SHB 1929** is in the House Rules Committee. **Seattle supports these measures.**

**SHB 1303**, encouraging the use of cleaner energy, was heard in the Appropriations Committee. This bill does a number of things to promote the use of cleaner fuels including replacing school buses, and requiring local and state

government to use biofuels as a primary source of fuel by 2015 (unless deemed impractical). **Seattle supports this measure.**

### **Infrastructure/Finance**

The Washington Wildlife & Recreation Program (WWRP) had an advocacy day on February 21. Thanks to Superintendent Ken Bounds and Deputy Superintendent BJ Brooks for coming down to meet with our legislators regarding the program. WWRP is advocating for \$100 million. **Seattle supports increased funding.**

**SSB 5089**, which would implement the Streamlined Sales Tax provisions, was passed out of the House Finance Committee and sent to the Rules Committee on February 14. **Seattle supports this legislation.**

**SSB 5729**, which would direct \$50 million to core public health funding and implement accountability measures, was amended and passed out of the Health Care Committee and will be heard in the Ways & Means Committee on February 28. **SHB 1825** was amended and will be heard in the Appropriations Committee on March 1. **Seattle supports these bills.**

**HB 2309** would give taxing districts, other than the state, the ability to increase property taxes to 101%, or 100% plus the implicit price deflator inflation. This bill will be heard in the Finance Committee on February 26. **Seattle supports this legislation.**

**HB 2334** would allow cities to increase property taxes to 100% plus the implicit price deflator (IPD) for infrastructure system improvements before any other purposes. The state would use property tax revenues in excess of 101% for school construction in high-growth school districts. If used, impact fees could no longer be imposed. This bill will be heard in the Finance Committee on February 26. **Seattle supports this legislation.**

### **Ten Year Plan to End Homelessness**

**SHB 1921/SB 5959** provides funds to Transitional Housing Operations and Rent (THOR). The funds are for rental assistance and case management to homeless families and individuals, or to those at risk of becoming homeless. SHB 1921 is in the Appropriations Committee and SB 5959 is in the Ways & Means Committee. **Seattle supports these bills.**

**SHB 1922** provides housing for youth in transition from dependency, including those in foster care. The bill has moved to the Appropriations Committee. **Seattle supports this bill.**

**2SHB 1201** extends Medicaid coverage to youth from age 18 to 21. The bill was voted out of the Appropriations Committee and now moves to Rules. **Seattle supports this bill.**

## **Transportation**

**SB 5767** would amend the Transportation Benefit District statute to provide councilmanic authority over the first \$20 of the vehicle license fee. This bill was heard in the Transportation Committee on February 22. **Seattle supports this bill.**

**SB 5803** would create a 15-member Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) consisting of nine elected and six appointed officials. The RTC would be responsible for creating a regional investment mobility plan which must include highway and public transportation projects as well as sufficient revenues to finance the project. This plan would be put to the local voters for approval. The Commission would also become the Regional Transportation Planning Organization (RTPO) and Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO). This bill was heard in the Transportation Commission on February 22 and was described as a work in progress.

**SSB 5690** provides for the dissolution of a city transportation authority. This bill was passed out of the Judiciary Committee and sent to the Rules Committee. **Seattle supports this legislation.**

## **POLICY ISSUES**

### **Elections and General Government**

**SHB 1551**, allowing the use of public funds to finance campaigns for local office, was amended to say that only local funds could be used for this purpose. The bill passed out of the State Government & Tribal Affairs Committee and was sent to the Rules Committee. **SSB 5278** was also amended to allow cities only to use this option. It now awaits a vote on the Senate floor. **Seattle supports these bills.**

### **Energy**

**SB 5881**, modifying water power license fees, was heard on February 23. This increase relates to the work state agencies partake in during the relicensing of a dam in the state. It is to pay for the staffing-related costs to agencies. The fee was established in, I believe, 1929 and has not been raised since. Now the fee rate will be evaluated every two years. Seattle City Light worked with the Department of Ecology on this measure. Thanks to Lynn Best for coming to testify on this bill. **Seattle supports the bill.**

### **Health Care**

**2SSB 5093** provides health care to children up to 300% of the Federal Poverty Level by 2010. The bill was heard in the Appropriations Committee and executive session is scheduled for February 26. **Seattle supports this bill.**

**SHB 1088** improves delivery of mental health services to children. The bill was heard in the Appropriations Committee. **Seattle supports this bill.**

### **Housing**

**SSB 5031**, protecting tenants of conversion condominiums, was passed out of the Senate Consumer Protection & Housing Committee. The amendments include setting a limit on the amount of relocation assistance (three times the rent), prohibiting inside construction or remodeling while tenants still occupy the building, and allowing renters to break their leases early if they are not purchasing a unit. The builders who expressed concerns about this bill support these amendments. **Seattle supports this measure.**

### **Libraries**

**HB 2058**, administering the Washington talking book and Braille library, will be heard in the Capital Budget Committee on February 27. This bill transfers the ownership of the library from the City to the Secretary of State's Office. **Seattle opposes this measure.**

### **Public Safety**

**SHB 1811**, regarding automatic sprinkler systems in nightclubs, will be heard in the Finance Committee on March 1. This bill extends the deadline to install sprinklers from December 2007 to December 2009. SB 5832 was passed out of committee and referred to the Ways & Means Committee. **Seattle supports this measure.**

**SSB 5718**, imposing penalties for engaging in the commercial sexual abuse of minors, passed out of the Human Services & Corrections Committee, and now moves to Senate Rules. **Seattle supports this measure.**

### **Telecommunications and Cable**

**SB 6003**, promoting competition for cable television service by providing statewide authorization for private entities to provide cable service or video service in competition with incumbent cable television operators, was heard in the Senate Committee on Water, Energy & Telecommunications. Jill Novik, with the Department of Information Technology, testified in opposition of this bill as President of the Washington Association of Technology Officers & Administrators. Thanks to Councilmember Jean Godden for sending a letter to each member of our delegation in **opposition** to this measure.