

**CITY OF SEATTLE**  
**2009 STATE LEGISLATIVE BULLETIN**

March 23, 2009

Number 10

Last Thursday the Economic and Revenue Forecast Council released their official quarterly revenue forecast, which projects that revenue is down an additional \$552 million since the unofficial preview in February, making the budget deficit for the 2009-11 biennium roughly \$9 billion. The March forecast typically precedes the release of the legislative budget proposals by a week or so. The Senate capital budget proposal could be released mid-week this week, with others following close behind.

***SESSION PRIORITIES – 2009***

**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. The Senate Human Services & Corrections Committee heard the bill on March 17 and moved it out of committee with a “do pass” recommendation on March 20. **Seattle supports this legislation.**

**Housing Resources**

**SHB 1464** is scheduled for a hearing in the Senate Financial Institutions, Housing & Insurance Committee on March 24. SHB 1464 makes modifications to the incentive zoning for affordable housing statute. **Seattle supports this bill.**

**Regional Transportation**

**ESSB 5768** authorizing the replacement of the State Route 99/Alaskan Way Viaduct with a bored tunnel was heard in the House Transportation Committee on March 18. **Seattle supports this legislation.**

**Health Care**

**SHB 1985** requires local health districts to comply with minimum health standards as a condition for receiving state funding. This legislation will be heard in the Senate Health & Long Term Care Committee on March 25.

**Education**

**ESHB 2261** is scheduled for a hearing in the Senate Committee on Early Learning & K-12 Education on March 25. 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**, is scheduled for executive session in the House Committee on Education Appropriations on March 24. **Seattle supports these bills.**

## **STATEMENT OF POLICY – 2009**

### **Civil Rights**

**SB 5688** would expand rights, responsibilities, and protections for registered domestic partners. It has been scheduled for a public hearing in the House Judiciary Committee on March 23. **Seattle supports this legislation.**

**SB 5952** would expand the definition of “sexual identity” as it relates to protection under the malicious harassment statute. It is scheduled in the House Public Safety & Emergency Preparedness Committee for a public hearing on March 24. **Seattle supports this legislation.**

**HB 1517** would restore the right to vote to persons convicted of a felony in a Washington State Court when he or she ceases to be in the custody of the Department of Corrections. It has been scheduled for a public hearing in the Senate Government Operations & Elections Committee on March 23. **Seattle supports this legislation.**

### **Climate Protection & Environment**

**SB 5735**, by request of Governor Gregoire, would take steps to implement a regional cap-and-trade program in line with the Western Climate Initiative. **Seattle testified in support of the original legislation**, though the bill has been modified significantly since its introduction. SB 5735 was heard on March 17 in the House Committee on Ecology & Parks and has been scheduled for executive session on March 27.

### **Elections and General Government**

**SB 5130** relates to prisoners making public records requests. SB 5130 passed the Senate 47-0 on March 3, received a public hearing and vote on March 17, was passed by the House by a vote of 94-2 on March 18, received Senate concurrence on March 20, and was delivered to the Governor for her signature.

### **Energy**

**E2SHB 1747** is scheduled for a hearing in the Senate Environment, Water & Energy Committee on March 24. The Senate version, **E2SSB 5854**, was heard in the House Technology, Energy & Communications Committee on March 18. **Seattle testified in support of this legislation.** 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** is scheduled for a hearing in the House Technology, Energy & Communications Committee on March 25. The bill's prime sponsors have been working with stakeholders and will be offering a striking amendment to the current bill. **Seattle is monitoring 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 provides approximately \$600,000 for Seattle in the event of an annexation in the North Highline area. It also allows smaller cities an extra 0.1% sales tax credit if an annexation "commences" before 2010. The bill was heard in the House Finance Committee on March 20.

### **Human Services**

**SSB 5301** was heard in the House Finance Committee on March 17. SSB 5301 would allow the 0.1% sales tax imposed by the County Council to be used for supplanting of existing funding for chemical dependency or mental health treatment programs. As currently written the supplanting could be up to 25% in 2010 and decreases by five percent each year until sunseting at the end of 2014.

### **Infrastructure/Finance**

**SSB 5301** would allow the 0.1% sales tax imposed by the County Council to be used for supplanting of existing funding for chemical dependency or mental health treatment programs. As currently written the supplanting could be up to 25% in 2010 and decreases by five percent each year until sunseting at the end of 2014. This bill was heard in the House Finance Committee on March 17.

**SSB 5433** would allow the 0.3% sales tax, permitted under existing statute with a public vote, to be used for supplanting and extends the definition of "criminal justice" to include fire protection. This legislation will be heard in the House Finance Committee on March 24.

**HB 2252** would take existing taxes, the 2 percent car rental tax, the 0.5 percent restaurant tax, the 2 percent state shared hotel-motel tax, and 75 percent of the 1 percent car rental tax and re-prioritize their use as the Safeco and Qwest bonds are paid off. The funding would shift uses requiring money in the account to be used for regional centers (outside Seattle), art and heritage programs, low income housing (as described in HB 1490 related to transit oriented development), community development, and human services. It would not provide any help for Seattle Center. This bill was heard in the Senate Ways & Means Committee on March 18.

**Seattle has not taken a position on this bill.**

**SB 6116** would take the 2 percent car rental tax, the 0.5 percent restaurant tax, the 2 percent state shared hotel-motel tax, and 75 percent of the 1 percent car rental tax and re-prioritize their use as the Safeco and Qwest bonds are paid off. The King County Council could use the existing taxes for arts and heritage programs, tourism promotion, youth sports activities, regional centers, publicly owned stadiums, community development, and low-income housing. This bill was heard in the Senate Ways & Means Committee on March 18. **Seattle testified in support and asked for an amendment to give some oversight and fiscal authority over a portion of the revenue.**

**SB 6118** would remove the current two percent sales tax credit imposed within Seattle on hotel rooms and provide a new two percent hotel tax imposed by Seattle. This would raise the

current hotel rate to 17.6 percent. **Seattle testified that the new tax would not be imposed as currently written.**

### **Parks**

**SB 5967** would prohibit any city, town, county, or district from discriminating against any person on the basis of sex in the operation, conduct, or administration of community athletics programs for youth or adults. It is scheduled for a public hearing in the House Committee on Judiciary on March 23. **Seattle supports this legislation.**

### **Planning & Development**

**SHB 1481** was heard in the Senate Environment, Water & Energy Committee on March 18. SHB 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 in counties with a population of over 500,000 to provide certain parking for electric vehicles; and provides tax incentives for electric vehicle infrastructure. **Seattle testified in support of this legislation with concerns.**

### **Sexual Assault & Domestic Violence**

SHB 1505 was heard in the Senate Human Services & Corrections Committee on March 19 and was passed out on March 20. SHB 1505 would authorize diversion for sexually exploited juveniles. **Seattle testified in support of this bill.**

### **Telecommunications and Cable**

**E2SHB 1698** designates the Department of Information Services (DIS) as the single eligible entity for the purposes of the Broadband Data Improvement Act and authorizes the DIS to continue the work of the 2008 High Speed Internet Strategy Work Group and implement high-speed internet strategies, subject to available state or federal funding. The bill received a public hearing in the Senate Committee on Economic Development and Trade & Innovation on March 19. **Seattle supports this legislation.**

**E2SHB 1701** authorizes DIS to implement a high-speed internet strategy for the state, subject to available funding and designates DIS as an eligible entity for purposes of the federal Broadband Data Improvement Act. 1701 received a hearing in the Senate Committee on Economic Development and Trade & Innovation on March 19. **Seattle supports this legislation.**

**E2SSB 5916** provides that the authority for overseeing broadband adoption and deployment efforts in the state is vested in DIS. It also authorizes DIS to oversee implementation of federally funded or mandated broadband programs and to adopt rules to administer the programs, and provides parameters for mapping of high-speed internet service and infrastructure. It received a public hearing on March 19 in the House Committee on Technology and Energy & Communications. **Seattle supports this bill.**