

CITY OF SEATTLE
2009 STATE LEGISLATIVE BULLETIN

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Number 11

This past week welcomed the first of the biennial budget proposals: The Senate Transportation Budget was released on March 25. This week the operating and capital budgets will be released, along with the House Transportation Budget. As the budget conversations ramp up, the policy committees are winding down their phase of the session, with the policy committee cutoff today, and the fiscal committee cutoff next Monday, April 6.

SESSION PRIORITIES – 2009

Housing Resources

SHB 1464 passed out of the Senate Financial Institutions, Housing & Insurance Committee on March 25 and is now in the Rules Committee. SHB 1464 makes modifications to the incentive zoning for affordable housing statute. **Seattle supports this bill.**

Regional Transportation

The Senate proposed Transportation Budget (**SB 5352**), which includes the \$2.4 billion for the Alaskan Way Viaduct, was heard in the Senate Transportation Committee on March 26. The House Transportation Budget (**HB 1314**) will be heard on March 30.

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. It may be voted out of committee as soon as Tuesday, March 31. **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 was passed out of the Senate Health & Long Term Care Committee on March 26 and referred to Senate Ways & Means.

Education

ESHB 2261 is scheduled for executive session in the Senate Committee on Early Learning & K-12 Education on March 30. 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**, passed out of the House Committee on Education Appropriations on March 24 and is now in the Rules Committee. **Seattle supports these bills.**

STATEMENT OF POLICY – 2009

Civil Rights

E2SSB 5688 would expand rights, responsibilities, and protections for registered domestic partners. It was heard in the House Judiciary Committee on March 23 and was passed out on March 26. **Seattle supports this legislation.**

SB 5952 would expand the definition of “sexual identity” as it relates to protection under the malicious harassment statute. It was passed out of the House Public Safety & Emergency Preparedness Committee on March 25. **Seattle supports this legislation.**

SHB 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 was passed out of the Senate Government Operations & Elections Committee on March 24 and is now eligible for second reading on the Senate floor. **Seattle supports this legislation.**

Climate Protection & Environment

E2SSB 5138 requires several state departments to develop an integrated climate change response strategy to better enable state and local agencies, public and private businesses, nongovernmental organizations, and individuals to prepare for, address, and adapt to the impacts of climate change. The House Ecology & Parks Committee passed this bill out on March 24. **Seattle supports this legislation.**

E2SSB 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 passed out of the House Committee on Ecology & Parks on March 27.

Energy

E2SHB 1747 was heard in the Senate Environment, Water & Energy Committee on March 24 and was passed to Ways and Means on March 25. The Senate version, **E2SSB 5854**, passed out of the House Technology, Energy & Communications Committee on March 23 and was referred to General Government Appropriations. **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.

ESSB 5840, with a striking amendment, was heard in the House Technology, Energy & Communications Committee on March 25. **Seattle signed-in supporting the proposed striking amendment.** The striker with amendments passed out of the committee on March 26. ESSB 5840 proposes changes to I-937, the Energy Independence Act. **Seattle is conducting an analysis of this legislation as currently drafted.**

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 also allows smaller cities an extra 0.1% sales tax credit if an annexation "commences" before 2010. The bill was amended and passed out of the House Finance Committee on March 27. The amended version would provide Seattle or Burien up to \$5 million if an annexation of over 18,000 people in North Highline area takes place.

Infrastructure/Finance

2SSB 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 was amended and passed out of the House Finance Committee on March 27. It now is a much larger bill that would allow supplanting of the public safety sales tax, of the mental health/chemical dependency sales tax and multi-year lifts. It allows an unincorporated utility tax in King County and reduces the property tax for ferry districts to a maximum of 7.5 cents per \$1,000 assessed value (down from 75 cents) and also allows 7.5 cents for transit. It requires cities in King County to annex unincorporated area or lose access to Transportation Improvement Board and Public Works Trust Fund grants and loans. It allows cities to impose utility taxes on water and sewer districts and clarifies the taxation of brokered natural gas. Finally it requires a performance audit of King County.

HB 1048 would repeal RCW 35.87 which requires sale of municipal property in commercial zones to first be put out to bid for use as free parking. This bill was heard and passed out of the Senate Government Operations Committee on March 25. **Seattle supports this legislation.**

Parks

ESSB 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 was heard in the House Judiciary Committee on March 23 and passed out on March 26. **Seattle supports this legislation.**

Planning & Development

2SHB 1481 passed out of the Senate Environment, Water & Energy Committee on March 26 with a striking amendment and was referred to the Senate Transportation Committee. 2SHB 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 to provide certain parking for electric vehicles; and provides tax incentives for electric vehicle infrastructure. **Seattle supports this bill.**

Sexual Assault & Domestic Violence

SHB 1505 passed out of the Senate Human Services & Corrections Committee on March 23 and was made eligible for second reading in the Rules Committee on March 26. SHB 1505 would authorize diversion for sexually exploited juveniles. **Seattle supports this bill.**

Telecommunications and Cable

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 was passed by the House Committee on Technology and Energy & Communications on March 23 and has been referred to the House Ways & Means Committee. **Seattle supports this bill.**