



**CITY OF SEATTLE  
2013 STATE LEGISLATIVE BULLETIN**

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**Number 2**

**Week Overview**

In week two of the 2013 session, the legislature continued work sessions on the central issues of education funding, Medicaid expansion, and the budget. On Tuesday, the anniversary of Roe v. Wade brought pro-choice and pro-life advocates to Olympia, beginning the conversation on bills to both ensure and restrict reproductive health options that will likely be heard this session. In addition, City Attorney Pete Holmes came down last week for a panel discussion on I-502 and met with several legislators on a variety of topics.

**Areas of Primary Focus**

**Protecting the most vulnerable**

Budget: The legislature has continued to hold work sessions on the budget left by Governor Gregoire, as well as informational sessions on specific programs that will be considered during their budget-writing processes.

**Education**

The Senate Higher Education committee held a work session on Monday, January 21st to hear from our state universities and the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges. They reviewed the planning, performance, and outcomes of our higher education system and heard about the success of the College Bound program in getting more students to attend college.

**Transportation, Economic Development and Infrastructure**

Transportation: The Senate Transportation Committee met on Tuesday, January 22<sup>nd</sup>, to discuss local transportation issues. The Washington Association of Cities presented on the needs of their members as well as a local option funding request.

On January 23<sup>rd</sup>, the House Transportation Committee received an update from the Washington Department of Transportation on all major projects, including Highway 99 and the 520 Bridge. Both project directors gave updates on each of the respective replacements in committee.

Capital Budget: The House had a hearing on Governor Gregoire's proposed capital budget on January 21<sup>st</sup> ([HB 1089](#)). The companion Senate bill, [SB 5035](#), is scheduled for hearing on January 28<sup>th</sup>. AWC testified on behalf of cities about the need to continue to fully fund MTCA. Governor Gregoire's proposed budget swept a significant portion of MTCA, which would result in fewer toxic cleanup projects being funded. A diverse coalition is coming together to work to make sure MTCA is fully funded and used for its intended purpose.

## **Public Safety**

Mentally ill offenders unable to stand trial: There was a hearing on [HB 1114](#) on Thursday, January 24<sup>th</sup>, and OIR staff provided testimony in support of Section 4 of the bill. This bill, in part, would ensure that a state hospital evaluates defendants charged with serious nonfelony crimes who have been found to be not competent to stand trial. Currently, there are people who are being released without being evaluated. The companion bill will be heard in the Senate on January 29<sup>th</sup>.

Speed Limits: On January 22<sup>nd</sup>, the House Transportation Committee heard Representative Cindy Ryu's legislation ([HB 1045](#)) to allow cities to lower the speed limits on certain streets to 20 MPH. The City of Seattle signed in to support the bill. This bill has bi-partisan sponsorship, as does its Senate companion bill, [SB 5066](#). SB 5066 is scheduled for hearing in the Senate Transportation Committee on January 29<sup>th</sup>. Seattle supports this legislation, which would allow us to more easily and less expensively make this change to increase safety on some of our neighborhood streets.

Obtaining electronic images from traffic safety cameras: Deputy Police Chief Nick Metz joined King County Prosecuting Attorney Dan Satterberg to give public testimony in support of [HB 1047](#) in the House Public Safety committee on Wednesday, January 23<sup>rd</sup>. This legislation would allow images from traffic safety cameras to be used for prosecuting crimes, but only after a warrant has been obtained.

## **City Fiscal Health**

Budget: In her budget, the Governor made additional cuts to local shared revenues, including liquor revenues. Last year, the legislature made just a one-time cut to cities' shared revenues and profits on liquor sales, but also set those local revenues at a static level moving forward. Seattle will be working with the Association of Washington Cities to restore the ability for local revenues to grow over time with sales to address the growth in population and increased need for public safety investments.

## **Other Issues of Significant Interest**

Human Services and Health: The Community Development, Housing and Tribal Affairs committee held an in-depth work session on homelessness issues on January 22<sup>nd</sup>, and the Senate Ways and Means committee held a work session on the TANF program and Economic Services.

Energy Efficiency: [HB 1017](#) establishes minimum energy efficiency standards for battery charger systems and minimum water conservation performance standards for water closets and urinals. The bill had a public hearing last week, and is scheduled for executive action on Wednesday January 30<sup>th</sup>.

Product Stewardship: [HB 1364](#) helps standardize, facilitate and reduce barriers to battery stewardship programs which hold all battery suppliers to the same stewardship obligations. Senator Chase and Senator Kline have sponsored [SB 5252](#), which prohibits food service businesses from selling or providing food in expanded polystyrene food service products and in or with disposable plastic food service ware.

Reducing Toxins: Senator Sharon Nelson has sponsored [SB 5181](#) to revise the flame retardant provisions for residential upholstered furniture and children's products. The House companion bill is [HB 1294](#). Similar legislation came close to passing last year, and Seattle supports this legislation.

Public Records: Several bills have been released related to mitigating the costs of egregious or commercial public records requests, including [HB 1128](#), which allows local governments to seek a civil injunction when faced with financially motivated or punitive requests. HB 1128 had a public hearing on January 25<sup>th</sup>, with an executive session scheduled for next week. [HB 1037](#) would allow jurisdictions to charge a fee for records requested for commercial purposes. The first hearing on HB 1037 was on January 23<sup>rd</sup>.

Service Animals in Housing: The House Judiciary committee held a hearing on legislation to streamline the state and federal regulations related to discrimination based on disabilities, especially related to accommodating residents with service animals. This bill, [HB 1024](#), would allow the state to collect approximately \$100,000 per year in federal funding for discrimination-based inspections. HB 1024 had its first hearing on January 16<sup>th</sup>, and is scheduled for executive session consideration on January 29<sup>th</sup>.

Sick Leave: [HB 1313](#) aligns with Seattle's current law and provides minimum requirements for sick and safe leave related to employment.

### **Looking Ahead**

The pace in Olympia continues to quicken. Committee agendas are packed with bill hearings, and several committees are already starting to pass bills out. The Senate Transportation Committee will hold a public hearing on the Safe Streets bill on Tuesday. Also on Tuesday, the House Government Accountability and Oversight Committee will hold a work session on the implementation of Initiative 502. On Wednesday, the House Transportation Committee will hold a work session on county and city transportation issues and 2013 session priorities.