



**CITY OF SEATTLE
2013 STATE LEGISLATIVE BULLETIN**

February 4, 2013

Number 3

Week Overview

The marathon of the 2013 session continues! The cutoff date for policy bills to be considered in committees from their house of origin is February 22nd, and legislators are beginning to fill up their committee agendas with public hearings and executive sessions to move bills along in the process.

Areas of Primary Focus

Protecting the most vulnerable families and individuals

Budget: The legislature has continued to hold work sessions on specific programs that will be considered during their budget-writing processes, including a focus on how to best treat and assist people suffering from mental illnesses.

Affordable Housing: The House held a hearing on [HB 1563](#) on January 30th in the House Community Development, Housing, and Tribal Affairs Committee. HB 1563 would allow surplus property to more easily be used for the development of affordable housing. Seattle supports this legislation.

Education

The House Higher Education committee had a work session on January 29th on financial aid and student debt with data from Washington State Institute for Public Policy. On January 31st the committee took an in depth look at the Guaranteed Education Tuition (GET) Program and other financial aid counseling options with presenters from a variety of community colleges and four-year institutions from across the state.

Transportation, Economic Development and Infrastructure

Transportation Revenue: The House Transportation Committee held work sessions on a variety of topics, including city transportation issues and priorities. AWC presented on behalf of cities. Seattle continues to work closely with King County and other cities on a local transportation options bill, which we expect to introduced in the House relatively soon.

Capital Budget: The House had a hearing on Governor Gregoire's proposed capital budget on January 21st ([HB 1089](#)). The companion Senate bill ([SB 5035](#)) had a public hearing on January 28th in Ways & Means. 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

Gun responsibility: Rep. Jamie Pedersen introduced with bipartisan support [HB 1588](#), which would require universal background checks for all firearm transfers. The legislation has a total of 38 sponsors, and although we anticipate a public hearing in the Judiciary Committee soon, it has not yet been scheduled. Seattle supports this legislation. A number of other gun related bills have been introduced in both the House and Senate, and we anticipate others will be introduced soon.

Mentally ill offenders unable to stand trial: [HB 1114](#) would, in part, 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. HB 1114 is currently scheduled for Executive Session in the House Judiciary Committee on February 5th. The companion bill, [SB 5176](#), had a public hearing on January 29th in the Senate Human Services and Corrections Committee, and OIR staff provided testimony in support of Section 4 of the bill.

Speed Limits: On January 24th, the House Transportation Committee passed out of committee Representative Cindy Ryu's legislation ([HB 1045](#)) to allow cities to lower the speed limits on certain streets to 20 MPH. This bill has bi-partisan sponsorship, as does its Senate companion bill, [SB 5066](#). SB 5066 had a hearing in the Senate Transportation Committee on January 29th. 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: [HB 1047](#) would allow images from traffic safety cameras to be used for prosecuting crimes, but only after a warrant has been obtained. Deputy Police Chief Nick Metz joined King County Prosecuting Attorney Dan Satterberg to give public testimony in support of this bill when it was heard in the House Public Safety committee, and on January 30th, it was passed out of committee.

Human Trafficking: Bills have been introduced in both the House and Senate to help address the crime of human trafficking and to help victims. In the Senate, Jeanne Kohl-Welles has introduced bills to revise the definition of abuse to include trafficking ([SB 5223](#), which has a hearing on February 7th), to establish a committee to work on this issue ([SB 5308](#), which has a hearing on February 4th) and to establish an enhanced penalty for the use of internet advertisements in sex-trafficking ([SB 5488](#)). In the House, the Public Safety Committee held a public hearing on January 31st, on [HB 1292](#) to allow victims to vacate prostitution convictions, and [HB 1291](#), to direct current offender fees towards services for victims. Both of these bills are scheduled for Executive Session on February 7th.

City Fiscal Health

Local revenue: [HB 1368](#) would restore the growth in liquor revenues to cities and counties. As part of the final budget agreement last session, the legislature passed a bill that effectively capped the local share of liquor profits at 2011 levels. This bill would restore that growth. The bill is scheduled for a public hearing in the House Local Government Committee on Friday, February 8th. Seattle supports this legislation.

Other Issues of Significant Interest

Energy Efficiency: [HB 1017](#) establishes minimum energy efficiency standards for battery charger systems, quartz halogen lamps, and minimum water conservation performance standards for faucets. The bill had a public hearing last week and it passed out of the House Environmental Committee on January 31st. Seattle supports this legislation.

Product Stewardship: [HB 1364](#) helps standardize, facilitate and reduce barriers to battery stewardship programs which hold all battery suppliers to the same stewardship obligations. HB 1364 is scheduled for public hearing on February 7th in the House Environmental Committee. 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 foodservice 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](#), and is scheduled for public hearing on February 6th. Similar legislation came close to passing last year. Seattle supports this legislation.

Public Records: Several bills have been introduced 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 1037](#) would allow jurisdictions to charge a fee for records requested for commercial purposes, and it was heard in the House Government Operations and Elections Committee on January 23rd.

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 passed out of the House Judiciary Committee with technical amendments to more specifically indicate that it is unfair to discriminate in real estate transactions on the basis of use of a service animal.

Sick Leave: [HB 1313](#) aligns with Seattle's current law and provides minimum requirements for sick and safe leave related to employment. HB 1313 is scheduled for public hearing in the House Labor and Workforce Development Committee on February 5th.

Washington Investment Trust: Sponsored by Senator Hasegawa, [SB 5029](#) creates the Washington Investment Trust as an institution that uses capital reserves to fund projects in our state.

Looking Ahead

The session kicks into full gear next week with packed committee hearings in both the House and Senate. The Senate will hold public hearings on medical marijuana legislation and a number of the human trafficking bills. Both the House and Senate will be looking at a variety of bills related to the renewable energy and conservation requirements, and the Senate Transportation Committee will hold work sessions on the Alaskan Way Viaduct Replacement Project and SR 520.