



## CITY OF SEATTLE 2014 STATE LEGISLATIVE BULLETIN

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Number 2

### Week Overview

The 2014 legislative session is underway and the first week saw activity on a variety of social and fiscal issues. New members were sworn into their respective chambers, and committees got right to work, cognizant of the 60-day deadline for the session.

On Tuesday, Governor Inslee delivered his “state of the state” address to the legislature, with Mayor Murray in attendance. The governor again urged legislators to pass a transportation package, to acknowledge the Supreme Court’s renewed order on basic education funding, and to work to integrate mental health coverage into Medicaid. He also called for passage of the DREAM Act in the Senate (following an historic first-day vote on the measure in the House that morning), the implementation of teacher COLA’s, and announced his initiative to exempt businesses making <\$50,000 in annual revenue from the state B&O tax.

Also of note this week was the issuance of the Attorney General’s opinion that local jurisdictions can ban marijuana retailers and producers licensed under Initiative 502, upholding local governments’ zoning rights. This opinion could impact a number of the many marijuana-related bills that have been introduced this session.

Finally, the Seattle Delegation held the first of weekly meetings during the session to touch base and coordinate on issues and legislation. OIR will be contacting councilmembers about opportunities to join the delegation meeting during session.

### Areas of Primary Focus

#### **Protecting the most vulnerable**

**Budget:** Both chambers held public hearings or work sessions on Governor Inslee’s supplemental budget (HB 2185/SB 6002), which is mostly comprised of maintenance-level spending changes to the 2013-15 Operating budget. Where previously neither chamber of the legislature had indicated that they would produce their own supplemental budget, now indications are that both houses will do so. Concerns continue regarding funding for McCleary, teacher COLA’s (of note: in the Senate the entire Democratic Caucus signed on as sponsors to legislation implementing teacher COLA’s), and prison capacity.

**Property Seizure & Forfeiture:** SB 6017, introduced by Senator Kohl-Welles, addresses the use of proceeds from seizure and forfeiture activities during the enforcement of child pornography and prostitution crimes. It would provide for 90% of such proceeds to go to the local seizing enforcement agency. **SB 6017 has been scheduled for a hearing on January 20<sup>th</sup>, and Seattle Police Department Captain Eric Sano will testify in support.**

**Tenant Fair Screening Act:** Introduced by Senator Frockt, SB 6291 allows prospective tenants to pay for and provide a comprehensive screening report to multiple prospective landlords, alleviating their being subject to multiple report fees from each prospective landlord. Landlords may still generate their own CSR's, but may not charge the tenant if the tenant has provided their own. This bill has not yet been scheduled for a hearing.

**Tenant Relocation Assistance:** Introduced by Senator Kohl-Welles, SB 6292 requires 90 day notice to tenants of a rental increase or change of use of their residential unit. This bill has not yet been scheduled for hearing.

**Local Homeless Housing and Assistance Surcharge:** Introduced by Rep. Sawyer, HB 2368 (SB 6313) delays the date that the document fee surcharge of \$40.00 will be implemented to July 1, 2015. This bill has a hearing on Tuesday and is scheduled for exec on Thursday.

## **Education/Early Learning**

**SB 6127/2377:** Senator Litzow and Representatives Hunter and Kagi held a press conference on Tuesday to announce the filing of their omnibus bills to address improving early care and education systems. The Senate bill was given a hearing on Friday and testimony was uniformly supportive of the bill, with only minor concerns over some aspects. These included worries that the new regulations could drive out current providers while not providing adequate incentives to bring in high-quality new providers; inadequate provision of culturally relevant programs; and fears that merging Working Connections with ECAP could lead to the exclusion of homeless families and children. But on the whole the early learning stakeholders were supportive of the legislation and it is expected to pass out of committee. It has not been scheduled for executive session at this time.

**HB 2165:** This bill would require the Department of Early Learning to develop new systems to review and address fatalities at early learning programs, licensed child care centers, or licensed child care homes. The bill received a hearing on Thursday and, after wrenching testimony from 3 families who had each lost a child, was scheduled for executive session on Jan 20<sup>th</sup>.

## **Transportation, Economic Development and Infrastructure**

**Transportation Budget:** Although the Governor is pushing hard for it, there currently still does not appear to be a path for a transportation revenue package to pass the legislature. Areas of contention include funding levels for storm water, transit and bike/ped measures, as well as a number of the reforms the MCC are requiring as part of the package. Senator King is continuing to work on another transportation package proposal for release this week.

**Transportation Mega-projects:** The Senate Transportation Committee held a work session on "Mega-projects" which was presented by Lynn Peterson, Secretary of the Department of

Transportation. Committee members heard updates on the Alaskan Way Viaduct replacement project and the I-520 bridge replacement project.

**Unmanned Aircrafts:** Rep. Morris is the prime sponsor for HB 2178. This bill prohibits the use of unmanned aircraft in airspace above private property. It was heard in House Technology and Economic Development committee and is scheduled for executive session on Jan. 24<sup>th</sup>.

**Distracted Driving:** Senator Eide is the prime sponsor of SB 6227. A “distracted driving” bill, seeks to revise current state cell phone laws to align them with federal grant criteria to maximize funding for critical safety programs. Hearing scheduled in Transportation on Jan. 21<sup>st</sup>.

## **Public Safety**

**Marijuana:** The number of marijuana-related bills introduced this session is growing at a rapid pace. The following is a recap on the primary ones OIR is following:

**HB 2149:** The first bill out of the gate attempting to incorporate the LCB’s workgroup recommendations, this bill prime sponsored by Rep. Cody received a raucous hearing on Wednesday morning. Testimony was quite varied, with the bulk focusing on the impacts to the medical marijuana community – which was itself not in agreement on the impacts and detriments of the legislation. However, all sides did seem to agree that there was a need to find a way to accommodate the medical marijuana community’s needs, whether that was continuing to allow home grows, raising the number of plants allowed, or separating MMJ products from recreational ones. One amendment was added which postponed the closure of MMJ dispensaries to 2015. The City Attorney sent a letter to the committee supporting HB 2149, but citing some recommendations for improvement, including possibly allowing limited “group grows”, and providing a portion of retail excise tax revenues to local jurisdictions. This bill has not been scheduled for executive session.

**SB 5887/SB 6178:** Sponsored by Senator Rivers and Senator Kohl-Welles, respectively. Both of these bills are attempts to align the medical marijuana and recreational marijuana systems. Both include many of the recommendations of the LCB work group, with differences in possession amounts, creation of a MMJ registry with DOH, rules on qualifying medical conditions, and taxation. Both bills are scheduled to be heard together in the Senate Healthcare committee on Jan 21<sup>st</sup>. Expectations are that a final bill will be a merger of these two bills and HB 2149 (above).

**HB 2198:** Sponsored by Rep. Carlyle, this bill creates a sales and use tax exemption for medical marijuana when purchased at licensed retail outlets. Hearing was held Wednesday, Jan 15<sup>th</sup>.

**HB 2144:** Rep. Condotta is prime sponsor. This bill establishes a dedicated local jurisdiction MJ Fund and requiring 30% of collected MJ revenue be distributed to local jurisdictions. This bill has not yet been scheduled for a hearing in Government Accountability & Oversight.

**SB 5955:** Senator Hasegawa is prime sponsor. This legislation creates a publicly owned trust to act as a depository for in-state marijuana producers, processors and retailers. A hearing was held on Jan 16<sup>th</sup>, in the Financial Institutions committee.

**Gun Initiatives:** Prior to the legislative session, advocates on both sides of the gun regulation issue collected signatures and qualified competing initiatives to the Legislature. Initiative 591 (rejecting background checks outside of a national standard) and Initiative 594 (establishing more stringent background check requirements) are both tentatively scheduled for a hearing on January 28<sup>th</sup>. OIR will be working with SPD to arrange testimony from officers.

**Knockout Game:** Senator Padden is the prime sponsor for SB 6011. Also known as the “knockout game” bill, this bill increases penalties for random assaults, in response to a national phenomenon whereby attackers assault and “knockout” random victims; the assault being videotaped and then uploaded to the internet. The bill was heard in Senate Law and Justice on January 15<sup>th</sup>. OIR, on Councilmember Harrell’s request, will work with sponsor to consider amending the bill to include the videotapers as accessories.

### **Other Issues of Significant Interest**

**Fish Consumption:** A work session was held on Jan. 16<sup>th</sup> in the Senate Energy, Environment and Telecommunications Committee on fish consumption, to discuss the impending new standards for wastewater discharge that are expected from the Department of Ecology in spring 2014. OIR will continue to monitor these discussions.

**Oil Train and Tanker Safety:** Rep. Farrell is the prime sponsor for HB 2347. This legislation addresses concerns regarding the shipment of oil by train or tanker and establishes risk reduction and spill prevention measures, and ensures public access to information on risks and shipments through their communities. In addition, on Wednesday, January 22<sup>nd</sup>, the House Environment committee is holding a work session on oil transportation safety to review current state laws and programs.

**Disabled Parking Placards:** Rep. Hunt is the prime sponsor for HB 2463. This bill changes regulations governing disabled parking permits and applications. This legislation may result in increased limitations in available free parking for persons with disabilities. OIR will continue to coordinate with the Seattle Commission for People with Disabilities on this legislation. No hearing scheduled to date.

**Paint Stewardship:** Rep. Goodman is the prime sponsor of HB 1579, which creates an architectural paint recovery program to be enforced by the department of ecology. It also requires paint manufacturers to assume responsibility for development and implementation of a cost-effective paint stewardship program and creates the paint product stewardship account.

**Volunteer Medical Professionals:** Introduced by Rep. Tarleton, HB 2351 will allow out-of-state licensed medical professionals to volunteer for 30 days within Washington State. Robert Nellams, Seattle Center Director, will be testifying in support of the bill at the hearing scheduled for Monday January 20<sup>th</sup>.

### **Looking Ahead**

As is tradition, advocates from legislators’ districts from throughout Washington State will be in Olympia on Monday for the Martin Luther King holiday to talk about the importance of the human services safety net and other essential programs for their communities. OIR also looks forward to Council Lobby day on January 30<sup>th</sup>.