

CITY OF SEATTLE
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The cut-off for bills to move from the house of origin occurred on Tuesday, February 14. All bills that did not move out of one of the chambers and is not necessary to implement the budget should be considered dead for the year. The next policy committee cut-off is February 24. Fiscal and Transportation committee cut-off is February 27. The House budgets will come out this week.

The Senate put forward their versions of the 2006 supplemental budgets for operating, capital and transportation. The Capital and Transportation budgets primarily take care of technical corrections with some relatively small additions in funding. Below are a few of the highlights of the Senate Proposed Operating Budget.

The Operating budget fills at \$50.5 million a short fall in Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) the program. It also provides an additional \$3.4 million assuming the passage of **2ESB 6628** which prevents the use of full-family sanctions as proposed by Governor Gregoire. They state the passage of this bill is necessary to pass the budget.

The proposal includes \$3.2 million for the Immigrant Children's Health Program to add 5,700 children. While a good start this still falls far short of what the advocates had requested, leaving approximately 10,000 on the waiting list. There are an estimated 3,399 immigrant children in King County.

The proposal adds \$18.2 million to cover prescription co-pays for over 100,000 low-income elderly people using Medicaid. It also provides \$10.5 million to add another 5,000 people to the Basic Health Plan.

Session Priorities

Transportation

SHB 2871 was not voted on before the cut-off but is still being discussed since it was made exempt from the cut-off date. A striker to the bill has been made public. The striker would prohibit a Sound Transit and/or Regional Transportation Investment District (RTID) vote in 2006 or until the new regional governance commission approved the plan(s). It enacts all of the changes requested by the RTID Executive Board. It allows transit operations to be funded in the RTID plan. It creates a new nine member Regional Transportation Commission which must include the three County Executives, the rest are appointed by the Governor. The Commission is to develop an integrated regional transportation finance plan for submission to the voters, and to evaluate other regional transportation planning and coordination issues. The Commission must issue a report by November 15, 2006 to allow enacting legislation to be approved and sent to a regional vote November, 2007. The City of Seattle would have the authority to enact the Monorail Authority's taxing options for local or high capacity transit if the region and city voters first gave their approval in the regional plan. Also, new to the bill is the inclusion of the Transportation Benefit District provision for the three county area without the

limit on the amount for local projects. This would provide the local options we have been looking for but requires a vote of the people.

SSB 6599 did not pass out of the Senate before the cut-off. The bill would not prohibit a regional vote in 2006 but requires that a vote must include Sound Transit and the Regional Transportation Investment District (RTID). It includes most of the legislative changes requested by the RTID. It also includes the expansion of the Transportation Benefit District. Finally, it sets up a Governor appointed seven member Central Puget Sound Regional Transportation Governance Commission to develop a proposal to restructure a regional transportation funding and operating system into a single point of accountability. The Commission must issue a report by December 1, 2006 to allow enacting legislation to be approved and sent to a regional vote November, 2007.

SSB 6786 did not pass out of the Senate Rules Committee before the cut-off. This bill would shrink the Monorail authority to a 5 member Board. The elected members would be retained and others would be appointed by the Mayor of Seattle. The MVET would be locked at 1.4% until the debt is paid off. Portions of the authorizing statute not needed for dissolution would be repealed.

SB 6566 which would revise the commute trip reduction program was approved unanimously in the Senate and is scheduled for a hearing in the House Transportation Committee on February 22. The companion bill **HB 3089** passed out of the House unanimously and will be heard in the Senate Transportation Committee on February 21. **Seattle supports these bills.**

Housing

ESHB 2984 which gives local jurisdictions the option to implement affordable housing incentive programs passed the House by a vote of 60-38. The bill was amended on the House floor and we have concerns the bill, as amended, could make it more difficult to develop affordable housing projects. We are determining what options we have to amend the bill. **Seattle supports this legislation.**

E2SHB 2418 increasing the availability of affordable housing passed the House by a vote of 72-24. The bill was referred to the Senate Ways & Means Committee. This bill provides for additional funding for the Housing Trust Fund and Homeless Families Services Fund. **Seattle supports this measure.**

Education

The Senate Operating Budget includes \$38.9 million for student remediation assistance which is similar to the figure proposed by Governor Gregoire. It also includes \$2.4 million for UW to increase its life sciences research capacity.

ESHB 2998 is the compromise bill relating to the WA Assessment of Student Learning (WASL) test. This bill requires a study to explore options for students to demonstrate that they have met learning standards. It also requires a review and statistical analysis of those that do not meet the WASL standards to try to identify similar characteristics and possible barriers to meeting the standards. This bill passed the House by a vote of 80-18. The companion bill **SB 6618** was approved unanimously in the Senate.

SHB 2964 which would create a department of early learning department passed the House by a vote of 79-19 and was heard in the Senate Early Learning, K-12 & Higher Education

Committee on February 16. Funding for this effort was proposed in the Senate budget. This is an early initiative of Governor Gregoire's Washington Learns task force. **Seattle supports this legislation.**

Session Objectives

Capital Budget

The Senate Capital Budget provides \$2 million for the Seattle Aquarium. This is the same as the Governor's proposal. Discovery Park did not receive any new funding.

Environmental Health

SSB 6428 provides no-cost options for individuals and small governments and small business to recycle their computers and televisions. ESHB 6428 passed out of the Senate by a vote of 41-8 and was heard in the House Natural Resources, Ecology & Parks Committee on February 16. **Seattle supports this legislation.**

SHB 1731 would require mercury components to be removed from cars that are no longer useful and are being scrapped. This bill did not pass out of the House before the cut-off. **Seattle supported this legislation.**

2ESHB 1488 prohibiting the sale of products that contain flame retardants known as polybrominated diphenyl ethers (PBDEs) passed out of the House unanimously. This would ban the use of PBDEs in products unless there is no alternative. **Seattle supports this legislation.**

Human Services – TANF

2SSB 6628 and **SHB 2970** preserve the WorkFirst child safety net program. The purpose of these bills is to ensure that children whose parents are out of compliance with WorkFirst requirements continue to receive benefits. SHB 2970 did not pass out of the House Appropriations Committee. 2SSB 6628 did not pass out of the Senate. However, it is called out in the Senate budget and therefore is "necessary to implement the budget." **Seattle supports these measures.**

Streamline Sales Tax

SSB 6594, conforming Washington's tax structure to the streamlined sales and use tax agreement, was heard in the House Finance Committee on February 15. The bill includes full mitigation to cities that are adversely affected by the shift in the distribution of sales tax from a point of purchase system to point of delivery. **Seattle supports this legislation.**

Weights and Measures Fees

SSB 6365 would increase the annual registration fees for weights and measuring devices. The bill was heard in the House Economic Development, Agriculture & Trade Committee on February 17. **Seattle testified in support of this legislation.**

Policy Issues

Air Quality and Climate Protection

SHB 2738 and **SSB 6508** develop minimum renewable fuel content requirements and fuel quality standards in an alternative fuels market. SHB 2738 passed the House by a vote of 70-

28 and SSB 6508 passed the Senate by a vote of 27-20. Both were scheduled for hearings on February 16. Concerns about the bills going too far, too soon are being raised. Some are suggesting this only be required for the State fleets. **Seattle supports these bills.**

Domestic Violence

ESHB 2848 which protects confidentiality of domestic violence victims passed the House unanimously. This bill provides that confidential information cannot be shared unless permission is given by the victim, unless there is a clear risk of danger. **Seattle supports this legislation.**

SHB 2395 which addresses the impact of domestic violence on children passed the House unanimously. This would require DSHS to consider domestic violence when investigating child abuse or neglect issues. protocols **Seattle supports this legislation.**

SHB 2394 which includes financial literacy in work activity provisions passed the House unanimously. Its companion **SSB 6305** passed the Senate unanimously. The WorkFirst program requires participants to develop an individual responsibility plan (IRP) to map out a strategy for self-sufficiency. **Seattle supports these measures.**

Economic Development

HB 2818 would form a WA motion picture competitiveness program to provide incentives for this industry to film in the state. The program will be funded by private contributions in exchange for state tax credits. This bill is awaiting a vote on the House floor. **Seattle supports this legislation.**

Elections and General Government

SB 6221 which would provide cities and counties the option of implementing a program, after a public vote, to allow publicly financed campaigns for local offices passed the Senate by a vote of 27-22. It will be heard in the House State Government Committee on February 22. **HB 1436** which does not contain the public vote provision did not pass out of the House before the cut-off. **Seattle supports HB 1436.**

Energy

3ESHB 2939, the energy freedom program, passed the House by a vote of 68-30. This bill sets up a 13-member board which will allocate \$100 million of grants and loans to be used for projects and research and development of new and renewable bio-fuel sources. This could allow for the local production of bio-fuels and renewables. **Seattle supports this legislation.**

ESHB 1010 which requires utilities to develop integrated resource plans (IRP) was heard in the Senate Water, Energy & Environment Committee on February 15. A number of issues were raised about some of the definitions of renewable (such as fuel cells), the unclear definition of hydropower, a requirement of forecasting through an outdated "end-uses" model. Seattle has concerns about the current draft of the bill, but changes are likely to occur.

ESHB 1020 which establishes a siting process for transmissions corridors passed out of the Senate Water, Energy & Environment Committee. The bill passed with amendments which address concerns raised by cities, including only those corridors designated by the federal government as a corridor of national significance, the lines are above 115kV and the applicant must compensate the city for staff participation.

Growth Management, Land Use and Annexation

SHB 2325 which encourages the development of affordable housing passed out of the House. This purpose of this bill has to do with requiring how jurisdictions deal with “odd shaped lots.” This bill is very prescriptive and basically overrides our zoning codes. **Seattle opposes this legislation.**

SHB 3017 and **SSB 6701** reaffirm Washington State’s eminent domain laws. Neither bill passed out of the chamber of origin before cut-off.

Human Services

SHB 2002 will allow up to 50 foster care youth to continue receiving benefits if they stay in school up to age twenty-one. This bill passed the House by a vote of 97-1 and was heard in the Senate Human Services & Corrections Committee last week. **Seattle supports this legislation.** We believe all eligible kids should be able to access these benefits.

SHB 2376 which prohibits the department of social and health services from imposing medical premiums on children in households with income at or below two hundred percent of the federal poverty level passed out of the House by a vote of 74-24. This bill simply codifies current departmental practices. **Seattle supports this legislation.**

Key Arena

HB 3233 and **SB 6849** would provide the King County Council authority to impose (or continue) a number of taxes that would be used for arts and heritage organizations in King County and to improve or build a facility for the Sonics and improve the existing Mariners facility. The taxes include a two percent lodging tax, sales tax credit of 0.017, two percent car rental tax and a restaurant sales tax of 0.5 percent. All of these taxes are currently in place and set to expire once bonds for Safeco Field and Qwest Field are paid off. There was a work session in the House Finance Committee on February 9. The Senate Way & Means Committee will hear this issue on February 23.

Public Safety

HB 3205 clarifies the authority to apprehend conditionally released persons such as the violent sex offenders who will receive 24-hour supervision while residing at the new facility located at 1st & Spokane. This legislation would give law enforcement the authority to detain a person who is violating their conditions of release by either taking them to the county jail or back to the secure facility. This bill was heard in the Senate Human Services & Corrections Committee on February 20. **Seattle supports this legislation.**

ESHB 1849 modifies requirements for security guard training. The original purpose of this bill was to ensure better and more consistent training is provided for private security guards. It was changed on the floor and now directs the Department of Licensing to study the post assignment of training of security guards. **Seattle supported the original measure, we are reviewing the engrossed bill.**

Water Stewardship

SHB 2884 concerning the use of reclaimed water passed the house by a vote of 78-19. It will be heard in the Senate Water, Energy & Environment Committee on February 21. The purpose is to update the rules which were last updated in 1997. **Seattle supports this legislation.**

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