



CITY OF SEATTLE

2007 State Legislative Agenda

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SESSION PRIORITIES – 2007

Business & Occupation Apportionment Fix – Seattle estimates a loss of at least \$21 million annually to our general fund starting in 2008 due to the implementation of apportionment of local B&O taxes. We are asking the Legislature to address this issue and eliminate or reduce the anticipated loss.

Education – Seattle supports the efforts of WA Learns and the State’s responsibility to fully fund K-12 education, including closing the achievement gap between different ethnic groups and family income levels. A quality education for all students is key to the social and economic vitality of our city. Seattle specifically supports:

- A new comprehensive definition of basic education and full funding to, at a minimum, reach this basic level of education
- Additional resources for early learning programs
- Fully funded all-day kindergarten
- Maintain WASL standards and funding to attain passing scores
- Efforts to examine local governance of public schools to ensure greater fiscal accountability and student achievement
- Efforts to advance standards for culturally competent education
- Enhanced and stable funding for arts in public education

Annexation Incentives – Seattle supports legislation modeled after 2006 SB 6686 that would allow Seattle to receive a sales tax credit if it annexes all or a portion of the North Highline unincorporated area.

Civil Rights - Every person has the right to live, work, learn and play free from discrimination. We support the extension of statewide protection to all class groups recognized by the City of Seattle. We support local discretion with regard to implementing I-200 restrictions in both education and employment opportunities. We support statutory changes to provide gay and lesbian people the legal right to marry. We support practices and local control to allow for equal opportunities for all people in business, education and job opportunities. We support the restoration of voting rights to felons once they have completed their prison term or time under community supervision. Finally, we support enacting laws to protect consumers from predatory terms and tactics employed in the lending and collection of payday loans and check cashing.

Crime Guns – To help keep our communities safe, Seattle supports the ability to collect and share crime gun data among law enforcement agencies statewide, and efforts to keep guns out of the hands of criminals, including legislation to close the gun show loophole, the banning of assault weapons and measures that prevent child access to firearms.

Discovery Park Funding – Seattle supports a capital funding request of \$1 million to help purchase the 24-acre Capehart Housing site, adding it to the current 534-acre park enjoyed by people from the Puget Sound region.

Environment – Seattle supports measures to protect our natural surroundings and promote a healthy and clean environment while reducing negative effects of climate change including:

- State efforts to reach the Kyoto Protocol Agreement targets and helping local jurisdictions and communities achieve similar goals
- Efforts to increase the use of and accessibility to alternative fuels
- Measures to promote fuel efficiency and carbon emissions reductions, including tax incentives and higher fuel standards
- Efforts to clean up and protect Puget Sound

Infrastructure/Finance – Seattle believes that growth and density in the region should be focused in urban areas, which will require improvements to accommodate the expected increase. To meet this goal Seattle supports local control and flexibility in funding sources and additional tools for basic infrastructure to attract people, businesses and jobs to the city and state. This support includes:

- Streamlining Sales Tax with full mitigation for negatively affected jurisdictions
- Increasing the Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program (WWRP)
- Maintaining and improving Seattle Center as a vibrant regional attraction
- Allowing greater return on investments to the Public Works Trust Fund
- Allowing cities to participate in the New Market Tax Credit program
- Providing all jurisdictions an opportunity to access the LIFT program
- State participation in funding for commemorating the Centennial of the Alaskan Yukon Pacific Exhibition (AYPE)
- Support funding for performing arts and cultural organizations and institutions
- Identifying stable and increased State funding to local public health agencies including Public Health Seattle & King County.

Ten-Year Plan to End Homelessness – Seattle will work with the State and other local jurisdictions to assure appropriate financial participation by all levels of government for critical human services. To that end Seattle supports State efforts to implement the Ten-Year Plan to End Homelessness including:

- Measures to reduce the number of people at risk of homelessness or seeking emergency shelter, including increasing the General Assistance – Unemployable (GA-U) benefit and increasing and protecting Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) benefits and eligibility
- Measures to reduce the number of people cycling through our jails, hospitals and institutions, including increasing King County’s share of state Medicaid funding for mental health treatment services and adding mental health as a GA-U Medicaid benefit
- Creation of more affordable housing, helping to prevent homelessness by increasing the Housing Trust Fund and Washington Families Fund

Transportation – Seattle supports legislation and funding that assists the City with maintenance of our entire transportation system, from mega projects like the SR 520 and Alaskan Way Viaduct & Seawall Replacement, to installing sidewalks in the city and increasing transit options. This includes:

- The ability to move forward on the preferred alternative (Tunnel) for the Alaskan Way Viaduct & Seawall Replacement Project
- State supported mitigation for the SR 99 and SR 520 Replacement Projects
- Provide funding for local transportation options, particularly those that encourage fuel efficiency and carbon reduction
- Planning and funding for improving transit connections to Colman Dock and for other strategies that reduce ferry trips by single occupancy vehicles and providing accommodation of foot passenger only ferries at terminal
- State funding to support the replacement of the South Park Bridge.

Water Trust Transfer – Seattle seeks legislation to allow a transfer of water rights to conform to the agreement between the City and Muckleshoot Tribe, which protects our pristine water supply.

STATEMENT OF POLICY - 2007

The policy statements below represent ongoing priorities for the City of Seattle and its residents. The City urges the State Legislature to initiate and support legislation that advances the following principles:

Climate Protection and Air Quality

We believe all levels of government should seek to implement practices and policies that provide for strong climate protection. We support efforts to mitigate greenhouse gas emissions. We support maintaining and improving existing air quality programs to protect against adverse effects on humans and the environment.

Domestic Violence Protections

We are committed to ending domestic violence for our residents. We support legislative efforts to provide victims of domestic violence with the services, financial assistance and other resources they need to support their safety and leave abusive relationships.

Economic Development

We support state efforts to provide local governments with financing tools and remove needless regulatory barriers in order to attract and retain businesses. We also support incentives that promote increased job and apprenticeship opportunities, wage progression and retention for workers. We support efforts to enhance our tourism industry. We support outreach efforts aimed at increasing the participation of Women and Minority Owned Businesses (WMBE) in state and local contracting.

Elections and General Government

We support legislation allowing a local campaign-matching program for campaign donations in exchange for limits on campaign spending. We believe the State of Washington should pay for all elections related to state government and state offices.

We support local governance structures that allow flexibility among jurisdictions to meet requirements, such as open public meetings, in a way that reflects the organizational structure of the jurisdiction and does not interfere with public access.

Energy

We support continued state assistance for low-income consumers of energy and efforts to improve the State's green power program. We support the development of a long-term energy strategy that includes planning for adequate energy capacity and supply. We also support measures which assist in our continued ability to meet our zero greenhouse gas emissions goal. We support the inclusion of low-impact hydroelectric power as a renewable energy in any legislation related to renewable energy portfolio standards.

Growth Management, Land Use and Annexation

We support the Growth Management Act (GMA) as the primary means of planning for growth. We support the further integration and streamlining of state land use and related statutes while preserving environmental protections. We support better integration of land use and

transportation. We support minimum urban densities that take into consideration the circumstances of cities and address the regional need to meet longer-term growth.

We support efforts to protect and provide local government tools to implement “growth pays for growth” policies. We support state funding to assist jurisdictions in meeting planning requirements and infrastructure needs of the Growth Management Act and the Shoreline Management Act. In addition, we support funding to help support the infrastructure and operating needs of cities where growth is being concentrated or where annexations occur.

Hazardous and Solid Waste

We support cleaning up hazardous waste sites through maintenance of the Local Toxics Control Account, as well as additional state assistance to local governments for the handling, treatment, storage and disposal of hazardous materials. We support measures to reduce toxins entering the waste stream, such as mercury switches in junk cars and PDBEs.

We support development of common industry standards for recycled products, funding for recycling facilities and legislative initiatives to increase waste reduction and recycling. We oppose measures that place undue burdens on local jurisdictions regarding the reporting of recycling information.

Health Care

We support efforts to ensure all persons have accessible, affordable and culturally competent health care. We believe all persons in Washington State should have access to affordable prescription drug coverage, alcohol and substance abuse treatment, comprehensive mental health and dental health services. We support identifying enhanced and stable funding for drug and alcohol treatment programs.

Homeland Security and Emergency Management

We support efforts to protect the public from terrorist threats and believe funding should be based on threat and risk assessments, both foreign and domestic. It is also critical that the State support efforts to prepare our communities for natural disasters. We support legislation protecting information regarding emergency preparedness and critical infrastructure. Finally, we support efforts to balance the need to effectively combat terrorism while protecting civil liberties and freedoms.

Housing

We support efforts to provide affordable and safe housing for all income levels. We also support the development of discharge planning policies that assist people leaving institutions, including jails, prisons, hospitals, foster care, substance abuse programs and mental health facilities, to obtain stable housing. We support measures which address the issues of condo conversions.

We support legislation to allow courts to issue civil administrative warrants for conducting housing, property and health inspections in order to enforce the City’s codes. We oppose efforts to diminish current authority to access property for public safety and other business purposes.

Human Services

We strongly support maintaining and enhancing state funding for critical programs, and preserving the human services safety net to support our vulnerable populations and maintain healthy communities. We support opportunities for self-sufficiency, poverty relief and upward mobility.

Libraries

We support the current governance structure of libraries that provides for an independent library board. We also support open access to library materials and information on paper and in electronic form.

Parks

We support changes to the Conservation Futures statute to ensure cities receive an appropriate share of the revenues. We support efforts to increase funding for parks, recreation and open space programs.

Public Safety

We strive to ensure all people, including undocumented immigrants, feel safe and protected in their homes, businesses and on our streets. We support holding offenders accountable while striving to relieve demands on the adult and juvenile justice systems through prevention and early intervention programs, day reporting programs and increased access to alcohol, substance abuse and mental health treatment.

We support state requirements imposed on nightclubs serving alcohol and providing live music to install sprinkler systems as a matter of public safety. We support implementation of this state requirement by December of 2009 in order to enable business owners to renovate their establishments. We encourage the State Legislature to consider making financial resources available in the form of loans to assist small businesses. We also support extending a state tax exemption to those that incur the cost of installing sprinkler systems.

We support examining the enhancement of auto theft sentencing including a review of penalties for juveniles and adults, creating a statewide penalty for possession of auto theft tools, funding for auto theft enforcement and investigation and raising sufficient revenue to cover enforcement costs.

We support review and implementation of measures to better protect and assist minors accused of engaging in the act of prostitution. We encourage the state to explore enhanced strategies to prosecute those charged with patronizing a juvenile prostitute.

Revenue

We strongly support maintaining and enhancing local taxing and fee authority and local revenue options. This includes support for exploring an increase in local utility business taxing authority. We are opposed to unfunded mandates. Seattle also supports enactment of comprehensive reform of the Washington State tax system to provide revenue stability for cities and counties and a more progressive state tax structure.

Telecommunications and Cable

Seattle is committed to ensuring all our residents are provided affordable, equitable access to advanced telecom and cable services, through competition and consumer protection. Seattle supports local franchising authority to assure local control of our rights of way, ability to guarantee the highest consumer protection standards, protection of local revenue, build-out requirements in all communities and sufficient public, educational and government access channels. We oppose legislation that diminishes these priorities. We also oppose legislation that would diminish cities existing authority to construct and operate a municipal broadband network serving the public.

Transportation

We support efforts to reduce the ongoing transportation problems throughout the city, region and state, particularly when there is a safety risk. We support legislative efforts to improve pedestrian safety and examine strategies to enhance local enforcement of traffic laws. In addition, we support state funding for a regionally administered driver education program to heighten awareness about traffic safety. We support efforts to maintain the effectiveness of HOV lanes and oppose measures that would degrade the passenger-carrying capacity of these lanes. We support program funding for Safe Routes to School, bicycle, pedestrian and transit-friendly development investments.

Tribal Governments

We respect and uphold the unique sovereign status of tribes. We understand their treaty rights, the importance of their efforts to create a sufficient tax base and their reliance on specific sources of revenue to operate programs for the benefit of their people.

Water Stewardship

We support the efficient use of water and environmental stewardship, including funding for salmon recovery. We support legislative efforts to address a variety of water issues, including in-stream flows, protection of municipal water rights, disputes over water rights and implementation of watershed planning. We support improvements in water quality through effective storm water management programs that set goals which are achievable and not cost-prohibitive. We support maintaining current funding for priority environmental programs related to water quality.