

CITY OF SEATTLE
2010 STATE LEGISLATIVE BULLETIN

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SESSION PRIORITIES – 2010

Budget Safety Net: Do No Harm

ESSB 6444, the Senate's supplemental operating budget, passed the Senate by a 25-19 vote (5 members were excused). GA-U funding is reduced, but not as much as Governor Gregoire's proposed Book 2 budget. Working Connections is fully funded, and the Senior Services Act was improved from the Senate's original proposal. Basic Health is funded. Community health center grants are also fully funded.

The House version, **HB 2824** had a public hearing and passed out of the House Ways and Means Committee. GA-U is fully funded, but Working Connections is reduced by \$49 million (same as the Governor's proposed Book 2 budget). Basic Health is funded, but depends on federal money. The Housing Trust Fund has \$92 million more than the Senate budget (budget assumes new revenue from **SHB 3177**). Community health center grants are fully funded.

SHB 3177 has passed out of committee and is now eligible to come to a floor vote. SHB 3177 would require the county auditor to administer a surcharge of sixty-two dollars for each document recorded and authorizes the State Finance Committee to issue general obligation bonds to provide funds for the Housing Trust Fund. Seattle supports this legislation.

2SHB 2782, the Security Lifeline Act, had a public hearing and passed out of the Senate Human Services and Corrections Committee. It is scheduled for a public hearing in the Senate Ways and Means Committee on March 1st. Assistant Chief Dick Reed from SPD testified in support of this legislation. HB 2782 would: facilitate easier access to existing public benefits and services; change the name of GA-U to Disability Lifeline, expedite DSHS's review of whether Disability Lifeline participants are eligible for federal SSI benefits and if so, assist them with the SSI application.

Education

2SHB 2731 had a public hearing and passed out of the Senate Early Learning and K-12 Education Committee and is scheduled for a public hearing in the Senate Ways and Means Committee on March 1st. In its current form, 2SHB 2731 creates an entitlement program of early learning for educationally at-risk children. Bea Kelleigh testified in support of this legislation.

E2SSB 6696 had a public hearing and passed out of the House Ways and Means Committee. SB 6696 is the Senate's education reform bill that would require action plans for persistently low-achieving schools and their districts to target funds and assistance to turn around the identified low-achieving schools, as well as other reforms. It now contains a provision that would enhance accountability of Seattle Public School principals.

SSB 6759 passed all House Committees and is now eligible to come to a vote by the House of Representatives. SB 6759 establishes a working group to develop a plan for implementing a voluntary program of early learning. Bea Kelleigh testified in support of this legislation on behalf of the City.

Public Safety

EHB 1679, the Jason McKissack Act, would reimburse medical expenses for certain disabled public safety personnel. The bill had a public hearing in the Senate Ways and Means Committee and must pass out of Committee by March 1st.

Revenue/Fiscal

ESSB 6130 which suspends the 2/3 vote requirement for raising revenue, was signed into law by Governor Gregoire.

SSB 6424, the Senate version of the local fiscal flexibility bill, had a public hearing in the House Finance Committee and is scheduled for executive action on March 1st. The core provision of the bill—removing the non-supplant requirements for the additional .3 public safety sales tax—remains intact.

ESHB 3179, had a public hearing in the Senate Ways and Means Committee on February 27th. It must be passed out of Committee by March 1st in order to remain alive. This bill removes the non-supplant requirements, but it also contains additional provisions that would allow cities to impose a .1 public safety sales tax if the county fails to impose the full .3 by Dec 31st. In addition, HB 3179 clarifies the recent brokered natural gas court case to allow the City to continue collecting the tax. Craig Engelking testified in support of this legislation during the Senate public hearing.

HB 3176 had a hearing in the House Finance Committee on Saturday February 13th. HB 3176 increases state revenues by closing certain tax loopholes, ending certain tax preferences, and extending the B&O tax to out of state businesses that operate in Washington.

Transportation

E2SHB 1591 had a public hearing in the Senate Transportation Committee. HB 1591 provides greater flexibility for Transportation Benefit Districts, primarily by allowing the

sales tax to be collected up to 30 years thereby allowing it to be bonded against. Seattle supports this legislation.

ESHB 1775 would allow the City to regulate limousines. It had a public hearing in the Senate Transportation Committee. Denise Movius testified in support of this legislation.

SSB 6570, which would allow certain private transportation providers to use designated transit only lanes, had a public hearing in the House Transportation Committee. The bill, although improved from the original version, is still problematic. Charles Bookman from SDOT testified on behalf of the City. He expressed the City's concerns with the bill and asked that certain problematic sections be revised.

Water Stewardship

HB 3181 and **SB 6851** would provide state funding for stormwater clean up, primarily through a competitive grant program. The revenue would come from an increase in the Hazardous Substance Tax and would raise an estimated \$250 M a year. Under the current proposal, most of the revenue would initially go to help address the general fund deficit, but would be phased out over time, with all of the money going to stormwater by 2015. After passing the House Capital Budget Committee, HB 3181 was re-referred to the House Finance Committee, where it was heard Friday morning the 26th. The Senate Ways and Means Committee heard SB 6851 the afternoon of the 22nd. The proposed Senate revenue package, which will help address the general fund gap, does not include the MTCA funds. The House has not released their revenue package, but the House capital budget assumes passage of the bill. Seattle supports this legislation.

ONGOING PRIORITIES – 2010

Race and Social Justice/Civil Rights

SSB 6338 concerns transitional housing. Seattle opposed the bill because it would have exempted individuals living in transitional housing from the protections afforded by the Residential Landlord Tenant Act. Residents of transitional housing are often a marginalized and vulnerable population. This proposed legislation would have had a disproportionately negative impact on the poor and low-income, the recently institutionalized, single parent families, and racial and ethnic minorities. The bill passed the Senate by a 48-0 vote, but died in the House Human Services Committee.

Economic Development

2ESHB 2912 was referred to the Senate Ways and Means Committee and awaits a public hearing. As it passed the House, it requires the dedicated accounts to fund the arts, affordable housing, tourism promotion, youth athletic facilities, regional centers, performing arts centers, and health and human services provided by nonprofit agencies.

Energy

ESSB 6656 would have implemented a pilot program for energy conservation services. It had a public hearing but failed to make it out of the House Technology, Energy and Communications Committee before cutoff. Seattle supported this legislation.

ESHB 2925 affects Seattle City Light's impact fee agreement with Pend Oreille County regarding City Light's hydroelectric generation facility. It had a public hearing and passed out of the Senate Government and Operations Committee.

Hazardous and Solid Waste

ESSB 5543 would establish a product stewardship recycling act for mercury-containing lights and ban the sale of bulk mercury. It had public hearings and passed all relevant House Committees and is now ready for a vote by the full House of Representatives. Seattle supports this legislation.

Planning & Development

SSB 6459 had a public hearing and passed out of the House Judiciary Committee. SSB 6459 establishes limitations on local government's authority to conduct mandatory rental inspection programs and provides local governments the authority to conduct civil administrative search warrant authority. Karen White from Department of Planning and Development testified as to the City's concerns with the bill in its current form. The House Judiciary Committee improved the bill, but significant concerns remain.

Public Health

HB 2388 was heard in the House Finance Committee on January 22. HB 2388 would provide funding for public health activities by imposing sales and use taxes on sales of candy to be deposited in a new public health improvement account. A minimum of \$100,000 would be distributed to each qualifying local health jurisdiction and the remaining funds in the account will be distributed to each qualifying local health jurisdiction on a per capita basis. Seattle supports this legislation.

Sustainable Farming and Healthy Food

SSB 6343 would establish the Washington Food Policy Forum. It passed all relevant House Committees and is now ready for a vote by the full House of Representatives. SSB 6343 would establish a Washington Food Policy Forum to advance the following six food system goals: support local food; increase healthy food in schools; reduce hunger; develop health & nutrition programs; and protect resources needed for sustained local food production. Seattle supports this legislation.