

CITY OF SEATTLE
2005 STATE LEGISLATIVE BULLETIN

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The Senate and House will conduct floor action until March 16 which is the cut-off for all bills moving from the house of origin to the opposite chamber. Between March 17 and April 1 the legislative committees will once again meet every day.

SESSION PRIORITIES

Transportation Solutions

SB 6012 would make transportation an authorized use for parking and business improvement areas. The bill awaits action on the Senate floor. **Seattle supports these measures.**

HB 1179 authorizing high occupancy toll (HOT) lanes as a pilot project on SR 167 passed the House by a vote of 83-13. **Seattle supports this legislation.**

State Funding

HB 2280 will be heard in the House Finance Committee on March 15. The bill is still being drafted however it is supposed to include an extension of the state sales tax credit and sales tax on rental cars that is currently being used to pay off the debt on Safeco Field. The revenue will be used to pay off the debt on Key Arena and to provide funding for the arts community countywide. Beginning in 2021 a 1% hotel/motel sales tax extension will provide permanent funding for the arts in King County. **Seattle supports this legislation.**

SHB 1903 creates the Job Development Fund. This legislation would provide a new grant mechanism for infrastructure to stimulate community and economic development. In the 2005-07 biennium \$25 million would be appropriated for this program. Beginning in the 2007-09 biennium up to \$50 million would be made available. The Community Economic Revitalization Board will administer 70% of the funds after approval of the legislature. The additional 30% would be made available for grants for important projects that might not meet the legislative timelines. **Seattle supports this legislation.**

HB 2196 would allow cities, counties and school districts to impose a new local option real estate excise tax (REET). Cities and counties would be allowed a new REET of up to 0.4% to be used for capital projects and low income housing. This authority would be imposed by the legislative body. This bill is awaiting action on the House floor. **Seattle supports the intent of this bill. However, we are opposed to any effort to single out Seattle for more restrictive uses than the other cities or counties.**

HB 5581 creates the life sciences discovery fund using revenue from the tobacco settlement case. These revenues will be used to support the Bio 21 effort and future statewide, comprehensive strategies to lead the nation in life sciences-related research & employment. This bill passed the Senate by a vote of 45-4. The companion bill, **HB 1623**, is still in the House Rules Committee. **Seattle supports this legislation.**

Session Objectives

Annexation

SHB 1153 would allow a city annexing an area to put a ballot measure to impose a utility surcharge before the voters in the proposed annexation area. The ballot measure would be on the same ballot as the annexation vote, the surcharge would be in addition to any utility tax a city imposes. The surcharge would be for a maximum of ten years. This bill passed the House by a vote of 58-35.

Civil Rights

SHB 1515 which adds sexual orientation to the state discrimination laws is tentatively scheduled for a hearing on March 22 in the Senate Financial Institutions, Housing & Consumer Protection Committee. We are working with other advocates to help move this bill forward. **Seattle supports this measure.**

Clean Cars

SSB 5397 and **SHB 1397** which would adopt California vehicle emission standards in Washington both await floor action. **Seattle supports these bills.**

Clean Indoor Air

HB 2038 would prohibit smoking in any public location and removes the local preemption on smoking issues. This bill is in the House Rules Committee. **Seattle supports this legislation.**

Firearm Safety

SHB 1687 which would restrict persons found not guilty by reason of insanity from possessing firearms passed the House by a vote of 96-0. **Seattle supports this measure.**

Weights & Measures

SB 5401 allowing cities to impose local fees to pay for a weight & measures program is in the Senate Rules Committee. **Seattle supports this legislation.**

POLICY ISSUES

Education

SB 5144 and **SJR 8202** await action on the Senate floor. **SB 5144** would allow a simple majority of the voters to authorize school levies and bonds. **SJR 8202** is a constitutional amendment which must be approved by the legislature and passed by the voters to enact the new legislation. **Seattle supports these measures.**

Energy

ESSB 5098 establishing efficiency standards for appliances and other products passed out of the Senate unanimously. The companion bill **ESHB 1062** was passed the House by a vote of 80-18. These measures will assist the City in reaching its conservation goals for both electricity and water. **Seattle supports these measures.**

SSB 5100 which sets greenhouse gas emission standards did not pass out of Ways & Means. There was not a companion bill in the House. We are hopeful the component to investigate the feasibility of a greenhouse gas cap and trade system for reducing greenhouse gas emissions will come back in another bill. **Seattle supported this measure.**

Growth Management & Land Use

SHB 2171, providing a one year timeline extension for cities and counties to adopt their critical ordinances, passed the House by a vote of 90-4. **Seattle supports this measure.**

Human Services

E2SSB 5763 an omnibus bill addressing mental health and substance abuse treatment passed out of the Senate by a vote of 37-12. This bill attempts to begin to fill the “treatment gap.” Seattle is reviewing the bill as passed.

SHB 1483 creating a “re-investing in youth” program and appropriating \$1 million passed the House by a vote of 85-0. **Seattle supports this measure.**

SHB 1314 creating a domestic violence prevention account through a \$10 fee on marriage licenses and divorce petitions passed the House by a vote of 71-25. **Seattle supports this bill.**

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