

**CITY OF SEATTLE**  
**2006 STATE LEGISLATIVE BULLETIN**

**JANUARY 23, 2006**

**NUMBER 2**

Today marks the 15<sup>th</sup> day of session which means one-quarter of the legislative session is complete. To date approximately 4,000 bills have been introduced during the biennium, 1,500 of them in 2006. The first cut-off day for legislation to be passed out of the policy committees is Friday, February 3. The cut-off for fiscal and transportation committees is Tuesday, February 7.

## **Session Priorities**

### **Transportation**

**HB 2491, HB 2871, 2955 and SB 6599**, which all propose to change transportation governance in the Puget Sound region, were heard this past week in the two Transportation Committees (see attached comparison).

**SB 6733**, which would help to ensure that the Monorail winds up its affairs and removes the motor vehicle excise tax imposed on drivers in Seattle, was referred to the Senate Transportation Committee. **Seattle supports this legislation.**

**SB 6566** which would revise the commute trip reduction program was heard in the Senate Transportation Committee on January 17. **Seattle supports this legislation.**

### **Housing**

**HB 2673** was heard in the House Economic Development, Agriculture & Trade Committee. This bill sets up a six project pilot to determine the feasibility of a tax increment financing program using local and state sales and excise taxes and property taxes. **Seattle supports this legislation.**

**HB 2984**, which would allow cities to implement a new affordable housing incentive called inclusionary zoning, will be heard in the House Local Government Committee on January 26. **Seattle supports this legislation.**

**HB 2650** creating programs to end homelessness and **HB 2649** creating an affordable housing for all program were heard in the Housing Housing Committee. The Low-Income Housing Alliance and the Seattle Housing Authority have concerns with these bills. We generally agree with their concerns which include being too prescriptive and ensuring any new funds go toward support services. We will work with the sponsors and interested parties on developing language we can support.

### **Education**

**HB 2964** creates the department of early learning to coordinate and consolidate early learning and child care programs. This is one early action Governor Gregoire is taking in connection with her Washington Learns task force. This bill will be heard in the House Children & Family Services Committee on January 23. **Seattle supports this legislation.**

**HB 2923** removes the requirement of passing the WA Assessment of Student Learning (WASL) for graduation and sets up a weighted formula using five components to determine graduation. **HB 2998** requires the State Board of Education to prepare a certification process to be used instead of the WASL as a graduation requirement. Both bills will be heard in the House Education Committee on January 23.

**HJR 4205**, authorizing a vote of the people to amend the state Constitution to allow a simple majority to approve school levies is awaiting a vote on the House floor. **Seattle supports this legislation.**

### **Civil Rights**

**ESHB 2661**, expanding the state discrimination laws to include sexual orientation, passed out of the House State Government Committee and passed the House by a vote of 60-37. The bill will be heard in the Senate Financial Institutions, Housing & Consumer Protection Committee on January 24. **Seattle supports this measure.**

## **Session Objectives**

### **Firearm Safety and Crime Guns**

**SB 5343** which regulates the sale of firearms at gun shows and events will be heard in the Senate Judiciary Committee on January 24. This bill would require background checks at gun shows and events. **Seattle supports this measure.**

### **Streamline Sales Tax**

**SB 6594**, conforming Washington's tax structure to the streamlined sales and use tax agreement, passed out of the Senate Ways & Means Committee and may be heard on the Senate floor as early as January 25. The bill was amended to provide 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**

**SB 6365** would increase the registration fees for weights and measuring devices. The hearing in Senate Agriculture & Rural Economic Development Committee will be continued into the week of January 23. The companion bill, **HB 2559**, will be heard in the Economic Development, Agriculture & Trade Committee on January 25. **Seattle supports this legislation.**

## **Policy Issues**

### **Economic Development**

**HB 2818** and **SB 6558** propose to 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. **HB 2818** will be heard in the House Economic Development, Agriculture & Trade on January 24. **SB 6558** will be heard in the Senate Labor, Commerce, Research & Development on January 26. **Seattle supports these bills.**

## **Elections and General Government**

**HB 1436** which would provide cities and counties the option of implementing a program to allow publicly financed campaigns for local offices passed out of the House State Government Committee. The companion bill, **SB 6221**, is still in the Senate Government Operations Committee. **Seattle testified in support of both bills.**

## **Energy**

**HB 2609**, which would modify utility tax provisions, was introduced and referred to the House Technology, Energy & Communications Committee. This bill could potentially raise the tax paid by Seattle City Light customers by 40%. **Seattle opposes this bill.**

**SB 6209** would impose new requirements for turning on municipal gas, water or electricity. Some requirements include having the customer come to City Hall with identification prior to beginning the service. The purpose is to prevent one person listing another person on the bill without their knowledge. This likely would increase the costs of providing these services. This bill was heard in the Senate Water, Energy & Environment Committee on January 18. **Seattle has concerns about this measure.**

## **Hazardous and Solid Waste**

**HB 2662** and **SB 6428** which would create an electronic product recycling program both had hearings last week. Products covered are computer monitors, desktop, laptop and portable computers, as well as televisions. **Seattle supports these measures.**

## **Health Care**

**HB 2517** and **SB 6536** would establish minimum health care standards for large employers in WA State. The bills were heard on January 19 in the House Commerce & Labor Committee and Senate Labor, Commerce, Research & Development Committee. **Seattle supports these bills.**

## **Human Services**

**HB 2002** which authorizes limited continuing foster care and support services up to age twenty-one had a hearing last week. This bill would allow those in foster care to receive support if they are continuing to pursue a high school degree or post high school (academic or vocational) degree. This bill passed out of the Children & Family Services Committee and moves to the Rules Committee. Its companion, **SB 6324**, will be heard in the Senate Human Services & Corrections Committee on January 24. **Seattle supports this measure.**

## **Growth Management, Land Use & Annexation**

**SB 6569** and **HB 2815** clarify best available science requirements to protect critical areas. **SB 6569** will be heard in the Senate Government Operations & Elections Committee on January 24. **HB 2815** will be heard in the House Local Government Committee on January 26.

**HB 3017** and **SB 6701** would reaffirm existing law regarding eminent domain and add new law that would require governments to allow prior owners of land acquired through eminent domain to repurchase the land at market value if the government determines that the land is no longer needed. **SB 6388** appears to tighten the restrictions on the use of eminent domain. This is part of a larger review of many parts of the Growth Management Act. We are currently reviewing these measures.

**HB 2667** would allow the continuation of the county roads levy for up to ten years in areas annexed by cities provided an interlocal agreement and other considerations are met. This bill will be heard in the House Local Government Committee on January 23. **Seattle supports this legislation.**

### **Public Safety**

**HB 2563** and **SB 6540** change the process for approval of liquor licenses. The Liquor Control Board (LCB) proposed limiting notification requirements and that consideration be given to “schools, churches and public institutions of higher education.” Currently they are to consider “schools, churches and public institutions.” Seattle testified with concerns about the LCB not having to take into consideration the proximity of a park, library, community or transit center when they review an application. The LCB withdrew the limitation and will continue to consider public institutions. Therefore Seattle will continue to receive information regarding liquor licenses.

**SB 6214** modifies requirements for security guard training. The purpose of this bill is to ensure better and more consistent training is provided for private security guards. **Seattle supports this measure.**

### **Revenue**

**HJR 4214** would propose to amend the Constitution, with a vote of the people, to limit the assessments of real property values to inflation or one percent per year, whichever is less. The House Finance Committee will hear this issue on January 24. **Seattle opposes this legislation.**

### **Transportation**

**HB 2821** which proposes to open HOV lanes during non-peak hours will be heard in the House Transportation Committee on January 23. The proposal would define peak hours as 6-9 AM and 3-7 PM Monday through Friday. **Seattle opposes this legislation.**

City of Seattle Office of Intergovernmental Relations – Olympia  
David Foster, david.foster@seattle.gov  
Rose Feliciano, rose.feliciano@seattle.gov