

CITY OF SEATTLE
2010 STATE LEGISLATIVE BULLETIN

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SESSION PRIORITIES – 2010

Budget Safety Net: Do No Harm

The budget deficit grew to \$2.8 billion due to the combination of an increase in the caseload and a recent court decision that decreased revenue collections. Governor Gregoire is set to announce a proposed revenue package this week. The Senate passed **SB 6130** which suspends the 2/3 vote requirement for raising revenue and the bill subsequently had a public hearing and passed out of the House Finance Committee.

2SHB 2782, the Security Lifeline Act, passed the House 55-41. 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. Chief Metz from SPD drew the connection between the safety net and public safety, and testified that this was a "crime prevention bill."

Education

2SHB 2731 passed the House 67-28. HB 2731 will implement a program of early learning for educationally at-risk children within the overall program of basic education under Article IX of the state Constitution. The bill specifies preschool for educationally at risk 3 and 4 year olds. Seattle supports this legislation.

E2SSB 6696 passed out of the Senate 41-5. 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. Seattle is currently evaluating this legislation.

SSB 6759 passed out of the Senate 47-0 and is scheduled for a hearing in the House Committee on Early Learning and Children's Services on February 18th. SB 6759 asserts that a voluntary program of early learning should be included in basic education and the Legislature intends to begin the program by creating a working group to identify and recommend a plan for implementation. Seattle supports this legislation.

Public Safety

HB 2780 did not pass out of the House Transportation Committee. HB 2780 would have heavily restricted the use of automated safety cameras and limit fines generated by automated safety cameras to \$25. In Seattle, automated safety cameras have resulted in reduced red light running, fewer persons injured at controlled intersections, and

reduced vehicle speeds in school zones. Councilmember Licata testified in opposition to this bill on behalf of the City.

SSB 5838, the vulnerable roadway user bill, is out of Rules and awaits a vote by the Senate.

Revenue/Fiscal

SSB 6424, the Senate version of the local fiscal flexibility bill, passed out of Ways and Means and is now out of Rules. It could come to a vote by the full Senate at any moment.

SHB 3179, the House version of the local fiscal flexibility bill, passed out of House Finance and Rules, and now awaits a vote by the full House.

ESSB 6130 suspends the 2/3 vote requirement of the Legislature for tax increases. It passed the Senate 26-22, had a hearing in and passed out of the House Finance Committee. It is now in House Rules.

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 passed the House by a 56-38 vote. 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.

SHB 1775, the bill that would allow the City to regulate limousines, passed out of the House Transportation Committee and is now in the Rules Committee.

SHB 2855 passed out of the House Transportation Committee and the Rules Committee and is now eligible for a vote by the full House of Representatives. HB 2855 temporarily authorizes transit agencies to raise revenue by imposing a \$20 annual vehicle license fee by a vote of the governing body without first forming a Transportation Benefit District (TBD). The substitute version of the bill would allow the transit agency to go to the voters for another \$30.

SSB 6570, which would allow certain private transportation providers to use designated transit only lanes, passed the Senate 46-1. The bill, although improved from the original version, is still problematic. The City is concerned that this legislation would be difficult to enforce and could impair transit operations in transit only lanes.

SSB 6366 passed out of Rules and is now eligible to come to floor vote in the Senate. The City opposes this bill because it would give WSDOT total control over local permitting and appeals related to major transportation projects.

Water Stewardship

HB 3181 and **SB 6851** have been introduced in the House & Senate, respectively. These bills would increase the Hazardous Substance Tax created by initiative in 1998 and raise approximately \$250M a year. Twenty percent of the money would go to local stormwater projects this year and 70 percent would go into the general fund for the upcoming biennium. The legislation proposes to, over time, reduce the percentage of money going to the general fund and increase the percentage to stormwater management until one hundred percent of the funds are dedicated to stormwater. Seattle supports this legislation.

ONGOING PRIORITIES – 2010

Race & Social Justice

SHB 1666 passed out of the Community & Economic Development Committee and was referred to the House Finance Committee. SHB 1666 would authorize counties above a specified population threshold to create cultural access authorities with the ability to impose a voter-approved sales and use tax of up to 0.1 percent to fund cultural access projects. Seattle supports this legislation.

Economic Development

HB 2912 passed the Rules Committee and is now eligible for a vote by the full House. The Senate version, **SB 6661** is still in the Senate Economic Development, Trade & Innovation Committee. HB 2912/SB 6661 allows Seattle to retain restaurant tax revenue collected within the city limits for Seattle Center. Seattle supports this legislation.

Energy

ESSB 6656 would implement a pilot program for energy conservation services. The amended version passed the Senate 44-2. The original bill would have authorized municipalities to establish conservation utilities to finance residential energy efficiencies. The amendments limit the authorization to a pilot project for municipalities in Puget Sound Energy's territory until 2015. It limits the superior lien position behind existing loans. Additionally, the cost recovery language was removed. The House companion, **HB 2853**, did not pass out of its policy committee prior to the policy cutoff and is considered "dead" for the session. Seattle is currently evaluating the amendments.

SHB 2925 passed out of the Rules Committee and is eligible to come to a vote in the full House. **SB 6480**, the Senate version, failed to pass out of committee. These bills affect Seattle City Light's impact fee agreement with Pend Oreille County regarding City Light's hydroelectric generation facility.

SSB 6672 was amended and passed out of the Environment, Water & Energy Committee on February 5. It is still in the Rules Committee. The House version, **HB 3034**, did not pass out of its policy committee by the cutoff and is considered "dead" for

the session. SB 6672 would make modifications to I-937, the Energy Independence Act. Seattle is currently evaluating the amendments to this legislation.

Hazardous and Solid Waste

2SSB 5279 passed out of the Ways and Means Committee and is now in Rules. SSB 5279 would provide for the safe collection and disposal of unwanted drugs from residential sources through a producer-provided and funded product stewardship program. Seattle supports this legislation.

SHB 2914 passed out of the Ways and Means Committee and is now in Rules. HB 2914 would establish a product stewardship recycling act for mercury-containing lights and ban the sale of bulk mercury. The Senate version, **ESSB 5543** passed the Senate with amendments by a 37-9 vote. Seattle is evaluating the amendments.

Housing & Homelessness

SSB 6817 passed out of the Financial Institutions, Housing & Insurance Committee on February 5 and was referred to Ways & Means. The House version, **HB 3177** had a public hearing in the House Capital Budget Committee and is scheduled for executive action on February 17th. SB 6817 and HB 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.

HB 2905 passed out of the Local Government & Housing Committee on February 1 and was referred to Ways & Means. HB 2905 is a planning bill to address the issue of requiring a discharge plan (including housing) prior to releasing people from institutions, whether they are in residential treatment, mental health hospitals, or criminal justice facilities. Seattle supports this legislation.

Law & Criminal Justice

HJR 4220 passed the House of Representatives by a vote of 80-17. This proposed constitutional amendment would give judges discretion to deny bail to a person charged with a crime if only the pretrial detention of the person will reasonably assure public safety.

Planning & Development

SB 6459 passed out of the Senate Financial Institutions, Insurance & Housing Committee on February 5 and was referred to Ways & Means. SB 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. Seattle opposes this legislation.

Public Health

HB 2388 was heard in the House Finance Committee on January 22. HB 2388 would provide funding of 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 the Senate 45-3. SB 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.