



CITY OF SEATTLE

2012 State Legislative Agenda Final Report – Sine Die

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Introduction

Below we have summarized the results of the 2012 regular and special sessions. Please contact OIR if you have any questions or would like more information about any of the issues discussed below.

Before we begin, OIR would like to extend our appreciation to members of the Seattle delegation for the hard work, time, and energy they put into this past legislative session. Given the difficult issues and dire budget challenges facing the state, the Seattle delegation did an excellent job of preserving what remains of our state's safety net, while also advancing many of the City's top priorities and pursuing their own important legislative objectives.

We would also like to extend our appreciation to the Mayor, City Council, City Attorney, and all the Department staff who put hundreds of hours into our legislative work in Olympia. This past session, the Mayor, Council, and City Attorney had over 60 lobby meetings in Olympia, 25 City representatives testified at public hearings, and departmental staff analyzed nearly one thousand bills.

SESSION PRIORITIES – 2012

Areas of Primary Focus

Mitigating and Adapting to the Impact of State Budget Cuts: The State faces a \$1.4 billion budget shortfall it must address. The process of closing the projected 2011-13 deficit will result in another round of deep cuts. We will work with the State to make shifts in the budget that help us adapt to the new realities we will face as a result of the ongoing budget crisis.

Seattle supports efforts to raise new revenue in order to preserve core programs and services.

Outcome

After much deliberation and multiple proposals, the final state operating budget did not make further substantive cuts to education or the human services safety net and preserves current funding for critical programs like Disability Lifeline (Housing and Essential Needs), Basic Health, and local public health. The budget does, however, temporarily cut liquor revenues for all cities and counties. In addition to the budget, the legislature passed a number of reform measures to reduce future budget obligations, including [SSB 6636](#), which requires the state's two-year budget to be in line with anticipated revenue over a four-year period or 4.5 percent growth per year, whichever is greater.

Revenue: [SB 6635](#) repeals the first mortgage tax break for out of state banks and extends tax incentives for manufacturing of fruits, vegetables, dairy, and seafood, and modifies other tax provisions. [HB 2822](#) changes the date the Department of Revenue will make deposits in the local sales and use tax account without delaying or reducing distributions to local governments. It is a simple accounting adjustment that increases the state's balance sheet by approximately \$238 million.

Protecting the Most Vulnerable: The City of Seattle will fully participate in the supplemental budget process. We aim to protect human services, public health, and other critical areas such as the Housing Trust Fund.

We support legislation to reduce the sexual exploitation of children, including efforts to address the online exploitation of children, and funding for programs that help prevent exploitation and rehabilitate its victims.

Outcome

Human Services, Health, and Housing:

- *Disability Lifeline:* There were no cuts to the Disability Lifeline Medical program, a state-operated health insurance program for people facing a short-term disability, or to on-going funding for the Housing and Essential Needs (HEN) program, which provides people with disabilities with resources to help meet their basic needs.
- *Working Connections Child Care (WCCC):* This program provides subsidized child care for low income families while parents are working or looking for employment. WCCC program eligibility was restored from 175% to 200% of the Federal Poverty Level, allowing over 1,000 working parents statewide to have access to childcare.
- *Family Caregiver Support:* This program provides services to unpaid caregivers of non-Medicaid adults, and the City allocates our area's portion of these funds to support 180 nursing home placements and 320 community residential placements. Savings from the Medicaid program were used to increase this funding by \$5 million statewide, including \$500,000 in Seattle.
- *Basic Health Plan:* This program provides affordable insurance for low-income working adults. There were no further reductions to this program.
- *Apple Health for Kids:* This program was protected with no further cuts made and an additional \$1 million was included for enrollment assistance to help reach eligible kids who are not yet participating.
- *State Food Assistance:* This program mirrors the federal Supplemental Food Assistance Program (SNAP, or food stamps) and provides state-supported food benefits to legal immigrants and refugees. This program was preserved at the funding level set in 2011, and these benefits will continue at 50% of the federal benefit amount.
- *Immigrant and Refugee Services:* The final budget preserves funding for these services.

- *Housing Trust Fund:* Nearly \$69 million in additional funding was allocated for low-income housing assistance in the capital budget package and \$25 million was included for weatherization projects. This is on top of the \$50 million allocated last year. This new funding includes approximately \$10 million for housing projects located in the City of Seattle and \$900,000 for Seattle's HomeWise Program.

Human Trafficking: Senator Kohl-Welles sponsored [ESSB 6251](#) which criminalizes the advertising of minors as a class C felony. ESSB 6251, which was signed into law, was part of a package of 11 bills on human sex trafficking that passed during the 2012 session. These bills were sponsored by a bi-partisan group of lawmakers, and together the bills hope to end child sex trafficking by addressing a variety of aspects in the law, including allowing victims to erase prostitution convictions from their record and increasing the fines for human sex trafficking and for patronizing a prostitute. The increased funds from these provisions are directed towards increased enforcement and support for victims.

Education: We support efforts to reform education on a statewide basis and to provide funding for early learning, K-12, and higher education.

Outcome

Education: There were no further cuts to early learning, K12, or higher education programs in the supplemental budget. [HB 2824](#) calls for the development of a plan for full education funding and redirects the Student Achievement Program funds to general K12 education funding. The Governor signed the bill into law. In addition, Seattle legislators secured \$2 million in the operating budget specifically to help turnaround two underperforming public schools in Seattle, to be selected by the Superintendent of Public Instruction. The funds are to be used for intensive supplemental instruction activities during the 2012-13 school year.

K-12 Reform: [ESSB 5895](#) reforms the way teachers and principals are evaluated. This new law requires school districts to revise the way they evaluate teachers and principals by using a basic rating system that must reflect student growth data, requires more focused evaluations, increases accountability and support, and creates a pilot project to help determine the best ways to include teacher performance in reduction in force and assignment decisions. The law goes into effect in June 2012.

Open Courseware: [E2SHB 2337](#) directs OSPI to identify and develop a library of openly licensed courseware for K-12 education. The law takes effect in June 2012.

Economic development: We support new local options to fund expanded transit, funding for infrastructure investment that leads to job creation, continued investments in job training, and tax incentives for the film industry.

Outcome

Jobs Now Package and Capital Budget: The legislature passed a capital budget and jobs package, [ESB 6074](#) and [ESB 5127](#), which will use general revenue bonds to invest in a set of infrastructure projects including water quality improvement, environmental cleanup, energy efficiency, parks, higher education construction, affordable housing and public school skill centers and repairs. In Seattle, the bill included funding for two storm water facilities, the Maple Leaf Reservoir, King Street Station, and \$10 million for low income housing projects located in the Seattle area.

Film Incentives: [E2SSB 5539](#) reauthorizes Washington's film tax incentive program. Under this bill, Washington Filmworks (WFW) can collect up to \$3.5m annually from Washington corporations, which are allowed to direct up to \$1m of their B&O tax liability to WFW. For every dollar a qualified film production spends in Washington State, WFW will give them up to 30% back as a rebate. The law takes effect June 2012.

Transportation Funding: [ESSB 6582](#) would have provided a number of local transportation options. Unfortunately, this bill did not pass. The bill passed the House and Senate in different forms during the regular session and went to conference, but the conference report was not adopted. It never came up for a vote during the special session. The final version of the bill, had it come up for a vote, would have included a 1% voter approved MVET for King County and councilmanic authority to impose vehicle fees of up to \$40 for all city and county TBDs (excluding Seattle's and King County's). Seattle strongly supported this bill during the regular and special sessions.

Public safety: We support continued funding for supervision of offenders who have been released into the community, including the Neighborhood Corrections Initiative, and funding for programs that help offenders transition successfully back into society.

We support legislation that provides a comprehensive statewide regulatory framework for medical marijuana.

Seattle supports strengthening DUI laws to address repeat offenders. Seattle supports changing state law so that drivers' licenses are not suspended solely for failure to pay noncriminal traffic ticket penalties.

Outcome

Community Supervision: [E2SSB 6204](#) make changes to the process and sanctions for violations of conditions of community custody to reflect fiscal constraints and to realign resources to increase the use of evidence based practices. The intent is to more swiftly sanction offenders who commit violations and to tailor sanctions to low-level and high-level violations. The Department of Corrections will adopt rules that create a structured violation process that includes sanctions, aggravating and mitigating factors, and definitions for low-level violations and high-level violations. This bill, which was requested by the Department of Corrections, was signed into law.

Medical Marijuana: Although Senator Kohl-Welles sponsored legislation to provide additional clarity and regulatory authority for local jurisdictions while preserving access for patients, this bill did not pass the legislature. Seattle will continue to work with Senator Kohl-Welles, cities and other stakeholders to craft mutually agreeable language regarding the extent of local governments' regulatory authorities.

DUI Laws: [2SHB 2443](#) makes changes to alcohol and drug-related driving statutes, including expanding applications for ignition interlock licenses and imposing a monthly fee on the use and manufacture of the interlock devices, restricting the vacating of records of DUI-related convictions, and allowing for non-consent breath and blood alcohol tests. This legislation passed and was signed by the Governor.

DWLS3: [E2SSB 6284](#) reforms Washington's approach to certain traffic infractions, so that failure to pay non-moving violations no longer results in a suspended license. This compromise bill is the result of many years of work and goes into effect in June.

City fiscal health: Seattle will work with the Association of Washington Cities (AWC) to protect existing state and local shared revenues and all existing local revenue authorities. We support efforts to simplify local tax reporting, provided municipalities retain all existing authorities and local revenues remain tax neutral.

Outcome

Budget: The final operating budget temporarily cuts liquor revenues for all cities and counties by eliminating liquor excise taxes for local governments for one fiscal year. For Seattle, this equates to a cut of approximately \$1.62 million in 2012 and \$1.62 million in 2013. Additionally, the legislature passed [HB 2823](#), which redirects a variety of existing revenues in the state general fund, including \$10 million per year from the local share of liquor excise taxes. AWC testified with concerns about this legislation on behalf of cities and requested a veto of the relevant sections. The bill, however, was signed into law. In short, for the near future, this bill would have the effect of freezing the local share of liquor revenues at 2010 or 2011 levels. A proviso in the operating budget, however, creates a task force whose responsibilities include making recommendations for how to spend growth in liquor profits over time. Representative Carlyle sponsored the amendment that included this provision.

Local B&O: [SB 6176](#) had a public hearing in the Senate Ways and Means Committee but did not advance. As introduced, this legislation would have required the state to take over administration of local B&O taxes, which would have resulted in lost revenue for municipalities. Cities opposed the original legislation and worked with the Governor's office and interested legislators on B&O simplification legislation that cities could support, however, there was too little time in the session to develop the legislation. Instead, cities are working with the Governor's office, the Department of Revenue, and other interested stakeholders on improvements that do not require legislative changes.

Areas of Significant Interest

Human Services and Health

Periods of economic downturn affect people from every walk of life, but their effects are felt most keenly by the vulnerable. To the greatest extent possible, we ask the State to preserve programs that protect the most vulnerable and reduce future social costs by providing the tools needed for self-sufficiency. We have identified Maternity Support Services, public health funding, Community Health Clinics, Apple Health for kids, the programs formerly known as Disability Lifeline, the Senior Services Act, and Immigrant Services as areas of particular importance to Seattle.

As the federal government implements the HEARTH Act and HUD changes the way they allocate funds for homeless programs from a formulaic to competitive process, we support modifications in state law that will provide us with the tools we need to better compete for federal funds.

Outcome

Health-Related Funding: The final supplemental budget preserved funding for core public health funding, Maternity Support Services, family planning, the Basic Health Plan, Disability Lifeline (medical), and maintained dental services for pregnant women. It also added \$500,000 for Apple Health for Kids outreach, which will bring in a \$500,000 federal match. Public Health Seattle-King County provides about 30% of Apple Health outreach for the state. Additionally, the budget included \$1.7 million in new funding for the Tobacco Quit Line, and \$210,000 of one-time funding for the state's forensic anthropologist, located in the King County Medical Examiner's Office.

Health Care: [ESHB 2330](#) would have ensured that any health insurance plans that provide coverage for maternity care must also provide equivalent coverage for the voluntary termination of pregnancy, with the exception of a federally designated plan that does not cover this procedure under federal law. Seattle supported this legislation, but it did not pass the legislature before sine die.

The federal Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act requires every state to establish two Health Benefit Exchanges, one for small businesses and one for individuals. [HB 2319](#) sets duties and restrictions for the Washington Health Benefit Exchange, including certifying participation, setting a rating system and a process for designating the essential health benefits that must be offered. The law took effect on March 23rd.

[HB 2341](#) reinforces the community benefit requirement at nonprofit hospitals by requiring these hospitals to make community health needs assessments and community benefits implementation strategies widely available to the public. The law takes effect June 2012.

Housing and Homelessness

Seattle believes that housing—its availability and affordability—is critical to the quality of life of our residents and neighborhoods. In addition, Seattle supports State efforts to assist with the implementation of the Ten-Year Plan to End Homelessness. Therefore, we support legislation that temporarily increases document recording fees in order to fund low-income housing.

Outcome

Funding Sources: The \$93.9 million in new funding for the Housing Trust Fund, weatherization, and other low-income housing projects mentioned above was split between the two capital budget bills known as the jobs package: [SB 6074](#) and [SB 5127](#). Additionally, [ESHB 2048](#) extends the sunset of a \$20 document recording fee for four years and adds a new \$10 fee to benefit housing and homeless programs until 2015. This legislation will help make up for lost revenue to state and local programs and was sponsored by Representative Kenney. Its companion bill, [SB 5952](#), was sponsored Senator Kohl-Welles. Part of the law takes effect June 2012, while the revenue begins to be collected in the fall.

Foreclosure Assistance: [ESHB 2614](#) helps homeowners in crisis by providing alternatives, remedies, and assistance. Sponsored by Representative Kenney and supported by Senator Frockt, this new law brings clarity to the short-sale process so that homeowners have the information they need if they chose this alternative to foreclosure. This bill was amended to include the provisions of the Foreclosure Fairness Act ([HB 2421](#)) making the mediation program run more smoothly and [SB 6515](#), which provides remedies for when a home is lost due to mistakes in the trustee sale. This law addresses the previous concerns of lenders, realtors and homeowner advocates. The law takes effect in June 2012.

Fair Tenant Screening: [SSB 6315](#) was sponsored by Senator Frockt and requires landlords to share their decision-making criteria and tenant screening service information with all housing applicants, as well alerting the tenant of the right to get a free copy of the report and a notice from the landlord if an adverse action is taken. Lastly, the bill creates a stakeholder group charged with examining solutions to the remaining issues related to the reports, including the costs; potential misleading information; and ability to provide corrections. The stakeholder group will present their findings to the legislature by December 2012. The law takes effect June 2012.

Transportation

We support an environmentally sustainable transportation system with stable funding for transit and options to expand transit service in the future. To address long-term funding needs, Seattle supports efforts to craft a statewide transportation package, for voter approval, that:

- Includes a significant share of funding for cities to help pay for local maintenance backlogs;
- Includes sustainable funding for transit operations;
- Results in expanded transit service in areas with the greatest demand;
- Prioritizes safety and maintenance projects, and
- Meets both the City's and the State's greenhouse gas emissions reductions targets.

We support new local options for transportation funding that could be used to help expand transit including light rail within the City, modifying the City's parking tax authority to allow for a more equitable application of the tax, and more progressive options regarding MVET.

To help better manage on-street parking and support access to local businesses, we are seeking additional tools to prevent misuse of disabled parking placards

We will support full funding for the SR 520 Replacement Project that improves safety, improves the movement of transit, bikes, and pedestrians throughout the corridor and is consistent with the Memorandum of Understanding between WSDOT and the City of Seattle.

We will support legislation that changes auto insurance regulations in order to facilitate peer-to-peer car sharing.

Outcome

Transportation Budget: [HB 2190](#) is the supplemental transportation budget, which was amended to reflect reductions in state revenues since the biennial budget was adopted, and includes new revenue associated with [EHB 2660](#). Appropriations connected with new revenues from EHB 2660 include funding for the Washington State Patrol, the ferry system, and Safe Routes to Schools, among other programs and projects. EHB 2660 will generate state revenue through a variety of fee increases on various transportation related items such as vehicle license plates, driving records, abstracts, and vehicle dealer licenses. The supplemental transportation budget took effect in March and the fee bill takes effect June 2012.

Transportation Benefit District Rebate Program: [ESB 6215](#), sponsored by Senator Frockt, authorizes a TBD that imposes tolls, a sales tax, or a vehicle fee to establish a rebate program for the purpose of refunding taxes and fees paid by low income individuals. Seattle supported the intent of this legislation, to give us an option to help make our current TBD authority more equitable; however, the final law includes limits on the amount of the refund and eligibility criteria that may make it challenging to administer. The law takes effect June 2012.

Peer Car Sharing: [ESHB 2384](#), which was sponsored by Representative Hudgins, regulates and allows personal vehicle sharing programs, and [ESHB 2361](#), allows usage-based automobile insurance. These laws take effect June 2012.

Public Safety

In addition to the issues identified in our highest priorities, we also support the continued use of automated traffic safety cameras and legislation that improves transparency and accountability. We support legislation allowing cities to set speed limits as low as 20 miles per hour in residential and business districts.

We support a waiver of the two party consent rule pertaining to police video cameras, identical to the exemption for Digital In Car Video (DICV) and legislation that authorizes a Body Worn Camera pilot project for police officers.

We support investments in youth violence prevention and intervention, new tools to prevent and reduce gang violence, and domestic violence prevention and services.

We believe that local governments should have the ability to regulate firearms or weapons in public places to ensure the safety of their communities and local circumstances.

We support funding for Win 211, which helps the public access important information and government programs and services after disasters.

Outcome

Traffic Control Signals: [SB 5188](#) requires all traffic stoplights with traffic-safety cameras to have yellow light change intervals that are at least as long as the minimum intervals identified in the federal Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices, and the fines issued through violations detected through cameras may not exceed the penalty for a violation of the requirement to follow official traffic control devices – currently \$124. Additionally, the new law requires the City to conduct an analysis of the proposed camera locations and an annual report of the accident rates and number of infractions. The law takes effect June 2012.

City Speed Limits: In order to improve public safety on city streets, [HB 1217](#) would have made it easier for local authorities to set 20 mph speed limits on certain local, non-arterial streets. Although the bill passed the House 96-0, it did not pass out of the Senate. Seattle will continue to work to find ways to help ensure that our streets are safe for all who use them.

Body Worn Cameras: [SB 6066](#) would have extended the current audio recording exemption for dash board cameras to cameras worn by uniformed police offers. Representatives from the media testified in support of the underlying bill, but also sought amendments that would modify the relationship between privacy and public records laws. Language satisfactory to all interested parties was not able to be reached, and the bill did not move forward.

Youth and Gangs: [HB 2535](#) allows counties to operate juvenile gang courts, where juvenile offenders involved in criminal gangs may receive evidence-based services, while under continuous court supervision, designed to reduce gang-related offenses. The law takes effect June 2012. The final version of the operating budget also includes \$250,000 in funding for a gang prevention and intervention grant program. [HB 2432](#), which was supported by Seattle, many other cities, and AWC, would have created the same program with significantly more funding. However, given the difficult budget situation, this was not possible.

Education

In addition to supporting efforts to reform education, the City supports maximum possible funding for Early Learning and Basic Education. During challenging economic times, it is also critically important to support community colleges, technical colleges, and state universities as they provide access to retraining and workforce development opportunities.

Outcome

As mentioned above, there were no further substantive cuts to education programs.

Areas of On-going Concern

Economic Development

We support legislation to allow state chartered credit unions to accept public deposits above the current limit of \$100,000 for any one depositor of public funds in any one credit union. Seattle supports tax increment financing as a tool to encourage economic development and community improvement projects, and supports a set aside for low-income housing. We support reauthorization of the Alternative Public Works Act. The arts sector is an important driver of economic development in Seattle. In order to maintain current funding levels for arts, cultural and heritage programs, Seattle supports retaining all admission tax revenues generated by the University of Washington Husky football team during their temporary relocation to CenturyLink Field. Seattle supports revising Section 3 of ESSB 5834 to restore Seattle's ability to collect parking tax revenues from the baseball stadium public facility district.

Outcome

Use of Credit Unions: [SB 5913](#) increases the permissible deposit of public funds with credit unions, effective June 2012. The amount of permissible deposit is increased to the federal deposit insurance limit for credit unions, which is currently \$250,000.

Admissions Tax: [SSB 6574](#), sponsored by Senator Kohl-Welles, allows the City to continue to collect an admissions tax for Husky football games while the Huskies are temporarily relocated to Century Link for the 2012 season, preserving up to \$900,000 in revenue in 2012. Seventy-five percent of those funds are dedicated to City arts programs. The law takes effect June 2012.

Sustainability and Environmental Protection

We support a new, long-term state funding source for local stormwater management programs to help improve water quality and protect salmon. To assure state contribution for cleanup of local toxic sites, we support protection of the Local Toxics Account for its statutory purpose.

Seattle supports the Energy Independence Act (RCW 19.285) which was passed by the voters as I-937 in 2006. Seattle City Light anticipates meeting its renewable and conservation targets. We support changes to the Act that would provide great flexibility for utilities to meet their targets without undermining the initiative. Consideration should be given to clarifying definitions of eligible renewables and conservation; review of options for preapproval or certification of projects; a greater emphasis on conservation and energy efficiency; review of the geographic scope of eligible resources and technical implementation matters.

Outcome

MTCA Funding: \$31 million was transferred from the Local Toxics Control Account to the State Toxics Control Account, and unfortunately, there is not any additional funding directly appropriated to the clean-up of the Duwamish River in the current biennium of 2011-13. Early in the session it looked as though the legislature might pass a very large capital budget and those early proposals included additional funds for the Duwamish River clean-up. However, the final capital budget was significantly smaller and the additional projects did not receive additional funding.

Public Works Assistance Account: In addition to the cuts to local liquor revenues, [HB 2823](#) also temporarily reduces funding for the Public Works Assistance Account by redirecting the full solid waste collections tax to the state general fund from July 1, 2011, through June 30, 2015 and redirecting half of these funds from 2016 through 2018. The solid waste tax is typically about \$76 million per biennium, or 18% of the total PWAA. The identified list of supplemental Public Works Board projects will not be affected.

Hazardous Site Clean-Up: [E2SSB 6211](#), which would have helped accelerate the cleanup of hazardous waste sites, did not pass during the 2012 legislative session. Seattle supported the bill because it would have provide some new tools that could have been particularly helpful with the Duwamish cleanup, such as Brownfield Renewal Areas and the creation of a grant-funded trust that could help provide funding for the Duwamish and other sites over multiple biennia. We appreciate Senator Murray's efforts to sponsor a floor amendment to restore the grant funded trust provisions.

Energy Independence Act: [SSB 6414](#) creates a process to determine whether a proposed electrical generation or conservation resource project qualifies to meet requirements under the Energy Independence Act (I-937) before the project is implemented. This change, which gives public utilities the same opportunity as investor owned utilizes to pre-certify projects, removes a significant amount of uncertainty from the process, which should have the effect of allowing numerous good projects to move forward. The law takes effect June 2012.

General Government

Seattle, in concert with the AWC, seeks the ability to recover costs associated with public records requests, clarification that the Public Records Act does not require ongoing or continuing responses, and an automatic exemption for witnesses.

Outcome

Public Records: [SSB 6146](#) would have provided a mechanism to recover a portion of the costs associated with filling public records requests for batches of ten or more records made for commercial or profit making purposes. The bill had a public hearing and passed out of the Senate Government Operations, Tribal Relations, and Elections Committee, but it did not advance.

Race & Social Justice

We support efforts to promote racial justice in economic opportunity, criminal justice, education, health, environmental protection and in government policies, programs and procedures. We support efforts to protect the rights of and services provided to immigrants. Seattle supports marriage equality.

Outcome

Marriage Equality: [ESSB 6239](#) legalizes marriage for all Washingtonians as a civil contract between two persons who are at least 18 years old and who are otherwise capable.

Additionally, Seattle worked to preserve funding for programs for low income and immigrant families, to continue the document recording fee for housing and homelessness programs, to provide funding for public transit, to help end human trafficking of minors, and to ensure that drivers' licenses are not revoked because of the inability to pay a ticket for a nonmoving violation. These bills and budget items are discussed in more detail throughout the report.

Hazardous and Solid Waste

We support development of common industry standards for recycled products, funding for recycling facilities, promotion of product stewardship, and legislative initiatives to reduce waste and increase recycling. We support product stewardship for surplus pharmaceuticals, carpet, paint, mercury-containing lighting and additions to the products covered by E-Cycle Washington as well as framework legislation to ensure manufacturers' responsibility for waste products. To help promote waste reduction, we are also seeking elimination of the requirement that phone companies publish and distribute telephone directories and support efforts to create a statewide opt out system for commercial telephone directories.

Outcome

Product Stewardship: The legislature considered a number of bills to protect our environment through product stewardship. Legislation to create programs to recycle carpet ([SB 6341](#)) and rechargeable batteries ([HB 2450](#)) failed to pass the legislature, as did [SB 6180](#), to reduce the size of printed voters' guides by omitting the full language of ballot measures, and [HB 2404](#), to create a statewide plastic bag ban program that would be similar to Seattle's model. [SB 5234](#), which would have created a statewide program to collect and dispose unwanted medicines, was considered again during the 2012 session, but also passed failed to pass. [2SSB 6120](#), to limit toxics in children's products, unfortunately died after much deliberation during the final days of the regular session. The House revived the bill during the special session and passed [EHB 2821](#), but the bill did not pass the Senate before sine die.

Law & Criminal Justice

We also support safeguards for protected groups from harassment and violence through misuse of the Public Records Act.

We also support efforts that would allow courts of limited jurisdiction to order convicted defendants to pay restitution.

Outcome

[SSB 6251](#) would have broadened agencies authority to enjoin the inspection and copying of public records, established a process for the requestor to revise their request, and created an opportunity for judicial review. The bill had a public hearing and passed out of the Senate Government Operations, Tribal Relations, and Elections Committee, but it did not advance.

Planning & Development

Seattle believes in the right to impose fees to fund necessary facilities and services related to the impacts of development and to require appropriate infrastructure such as open space and sidewalks associated with new development. We support the expansion of incentive zoning to include provisions that encourage new open space, preserving current open space, creating multi-modal transportation infrastructure, and preserving landmark structures.

We support efforts to clarify that local jurisdictions may regulate land use and development to protect public health, safety and welfare through development regulations.

Seattle supports efforts to update the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) so that it works more efficiently and promotes growth within urban growth areas, while still affording the same levels of environmental protection.

Outcome

SEPA Modernization: [SB 6406](#) includes, among other policies, provisions to modernize and streamline the SEPA process and promote responsible development while still protecting the environment. This modernization of SEPA will update provisions for which projects are subject to environmental review, will recognize the environmental benefits of growth management planning through infill development, and will focus environmental review and protection on larger-area planning efforts to facilitate future development that is consistent with those plans. This new law also includes provisions on Phase II storm water permits and hydraulic permit fees, along with the SEPA modernization provisions. The bill was signed into law, but the Governor vetoed two sections which could have caused confusion regarding local governments' fee authority.

Other Legislation

Design Build Professionals' Liability: [EHSB 1559](#) addresses indemnification agreements involving design professionals. Seattle, along with AWC and other governmental entities, opposed this legislation because it protects the design professional instead of those harmed, shifts liability from design professionals onto governments, and will interfere with cities' ability to negotiate contracts with design professional. The bill was improved with amendments, but cities still had concerns with the final legislation, which takes effect in June 2012.

Towing: [HB 2372](#) would have directed the Department of Licensing to set maximum towing rates across the state. The bill, which was sponsored by Representative Pollet, passed the House in a form Seattle supported, but failed to pass the Senate.

Sick Leave: Neither [SB 6229](#) or [HB 2508](#) passed. These companion bills proposed using a model that is similar to Seattle's sick leave legislation to establish minimum standards for sick and safe leave from employment.

Aerospace Training: [HB 2156](#) will direct more skilled labor into the aerospace workforce by improving alignment between aerospace industry needs and training programs, evaluating existing training programs, and requiring budget recommendations to improve existing or create new training programs. It also adds Renton Technical College to the list of training centers that offer aerospace training. The legislature also passed [SB 5982](#) to create the joint center for aerospace technology innovation under the joint authority of the University of Washington and Washington State University. The center will enhance the education of engineering students and work with the aerospace industry to identify research needs. The laws take effect June 2012.