

**CITY OF SEATTLE**  
**2005 STATE LEGISLATIVE BULLETIN**

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**SESSION PRIORITIES**

**Transportation Solutions**

The House and Senate Transportation Committees held work sessions to discuss the transportation needs in the Puget Sound Region. Members of the Regional Transportation Investment District (RTID) and the three King County sub-area transportation groups participated. The House is working on a new regional proposal that would be governed by a board appointed by the three county executives. The yet to be seen proposal would allow greater project flexibility, would decrease the sales tax which could only be used for “at-risk” projects, single counties could form an improvements district and a priority list compiled by the Puget Sound Regional Council would be used for the project lists.

The bill allowing local funding options for transportation needs in cities and counties has been dropped and we are waiting on a bill number. This bill would allow cities and counties to choose from the following options: vehicle license fee, gross weight fee, street utility and local option gas tax.

**State Funding – Capital Budget**

**SB 5036** authorizes funding for projects recommended by the public works board. Seattle has three storm sewer projects on the funding list totaling almost \$5.7 million. This bill was heard in the Senate Ways & Means Committee. The companion bill **HB 1049** was already approved by the House and assigned to the Senate Ways & Means Committee. **Seattle supports this legislation.**

**SESSION OBJECTIVES**

**Civil Rights**

**HB 1515** which would add sexual orientation to the state discrimination laws passed the House by a vote of 61 - 37. **Seattle supports this measure.**

**HB 1586** and **SB 5575** which would permit colleges and universities to use race, color, ethnicity, or national origin in admission and transfer processes without using quotas both had hearings this week in the Education Committees. Angela Tarah and Jeremy Sher of Seattle’s Human Rights Commission testified in support. There was not a large contingent of folks opposing the bills at the hearings. **Seattle supports these bills.**

**Clean Cars**

**SB 5397** which would adopt California vehicle emission standards in Washington was heard in the Water, Energy & Environment Committee. There was an interesting discussion on the merits of adopting the standards. Its companion, **HB 1397**, will be heard on February 17 in House Transportation Committee. **Seattle supports these bills.**

## **Consumer Protection**

**SB 5692** is the companion to **HB 1251** which requires a number of steps to disclose information by businesses that provide tax refund anticipation loans however neither is as specific as Seattle's ordinance. It would also preempt local jurisdictions from strengthening the proposed state law. **Seattle is opposed to the preemption language in this legislation.** **SB 5796** also relates to refund anticipation loans and is more in line with the Seattle ordinance. **SB 5692** and **SB 5796** will be heard on February 15 in the Senate Financial Institutions, Housing & Consumer Protection Committee.

## **Public Disclosure**

**HB 1758**, brought forward by the Attorney General, would alter the public disclosure act including changing the attorney client exemption, prohibits denial of records due to "overbroad" requests, and changes rules around maintaining public records. This bill was heard in the House State Government Operations & Accountability Committee. This bill was written in response to the ruling in the Hangartner case this past spring. Roger Wynne from the City Attorney's Office testified stating and clarifying the notion that the Hangartner case did not change the current PDA. **Seattle opposes this legislation.**

## **Weights & Measures**

**SB 5401** allowing cities to impose local fees to pay for a weight & measures program was heard in the Senate Labor, Commerce, Research & Development Committee. The companion bill, **HB 1440**, will be heard in the House Economic Development, Agriculture & Trade Committee on February 18. **Seattle supports these measures.**

## **POLICY ISSUES**

### **Elections and General Government**

**HB 1748** and **SB 5746** require the state to share a portion of the primary and general election costs in even numbered years. **HB 1748** will be heard in the House State Government Operations & Accountability Committee on February 18. **SB 5746** will be heard in the Senate Government Operations & Elections Committee on February 14. **Seattle supports these bills.**

### **Energy**

**ESHB 1062** which would establish efficiency standards for certain appliances (such as sprayer valves and commercial washers) passed the House by a vote of 80 – 18 and will be assigned to the Senate Water, Energy & Environment Committee. This is part of Governor Locke's climate protection package. **Seattle supports this legislation**

### **Human Services**

**HB 1810** which would require all counties to develop Ten-Year Plans to End Homelessness was heard in the House Housing Committee. A recording fee of \$10 would be collected to be used for projects related to the Plan. The Department of Community Trade & Economic Development (CTED) would oversee all the plans. Seattle is supportive of this measure however we do have some concerns which we are working with the sponsor to address. Specifically, we are interested in having a better connection between the Department of Social and Health Services and the Department of Corrections in managing homeless populations.

**SB 5763** which is an omnibus bill to provide mental health and substance abuse services had a hearing in the Senate Human Services Committee. This 200-page bill is a comprehensive overhaul of the current system and would do much to fill the treatment gap. In part this bill changes provisions related to the involuntary treatment act, it would create two pilot projects (one rural, one urban) and attempts to

address the treatment systems within the criminal justice system. This bill covers both children and adults. Finally, it also would allow counties to raise the sales tax 1/10 of 1% (councilmanic) to expand services. **Seattle supports efforts to fill the treatment gap.** It is unclear if this bill will be the vehicle or the more modest Locke proposal that deals with substance abuse for adults.

### **Parks**

**HB 1631** which would require conservation futures levy money to be equally distributed among jurisdictions in a county was heard in the House Local Government Committee. The bill would also allow these funds to be used for operating and maintenance costs.

### **Solid Waste**

**HB 1731** which would require the removal of mercury switches from cars before they are destroyed will be heard in the Natural Resources, Ecology & Parks Committee on February 15. **HB 1488** and **SB 5515** would prohibit the sales of products containing polybrominated diphenyl ethers (PBDE). HB 1488 and 5515 will both be heard on February 17. Both the mercury switches and PBDEs have significant disposal and landfill issues. We are currently reviewing how this will impact the City.

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