



**CITY OF SEATTLE
2013 STATE LEGISLATIVE BULLETIN**

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Week Overview

During week four of the legislative session, legislators continued to focus on central policy issues such as examining the most efficient and effective options for providing mental health care, the impact of tuition assistance programs such as College Bound, and implementation of I-502. Additionally, Governor Inslee held a press conference where, among other things, he called on the legislature to implement Medicaid expansion.

Areas of Primary Focus

Protecting the most vulnerable families and individuals

Budget: The legislature has continued to hold work sessions on specific programs that will be considered during their budget-writing processes, including a focus on how to best treat and assist people suffering from mental illnesses.

Affordable Housing: [HB 1563](#) would allow surplus property to more easily be used for the development of affordable housing. A public hearing has been scheduled for February 14th in the House Community Development, Housing, & Tribal Affairs Committee. The companion bill is [SB 5598](#). Seattle supports this legislation.

Education

Both the House and Senate continue to look at options for meeting the requirements of the McCleary decision, as well as increasing the effectiveness and accountability of Washington's schools and preparing students for the future. Work sessions included in-depth looks at the Guaranteed Education Tuition (GET) program and the success of the College Bound program in House Education Appropriations.

Additionally, [HB 1505](#) and [SB 5642](#) would assist local school districts with construction capacity by requiring the Superintendent of Public Instruction to set the minimum funding assistance percentage at 30 percent of project costs for the School Construction Assistance Program instead of the current 20 percent. HB 1505 is scheduled for a hearing on February 11th.

Transportation, Economic Development and Infrastructure

Transportation: Last week the House Transportation Committee had a work session on tolling. The session included a presentation from WSDOT that covered the current state of tolling in Washington at a high level, as well as updates on specific projects. The Senate held a work session on the Alaskan Way Viaduct Tunnel replacement project. During WSDOT's presentation, a number of Senators expressed concerns that projected toll revenues are less than previously projected.

Capital Budget: The House had a hearing on Governor Gregoire's proposed capital budget on January 28th ([HB 1089](#)). AWC testified on behalf of cities about the need to continue to fully fund MTCA. Governor Gregoire's proposed budget swept a significant portion of MTCA, which would result in fewer toxic cleanup projects being funded. A diverse coalition is working together to make sure MTCA is fully funded and used for its intended purpose. The Senate bill is [SB 5035](#).

Public Safety

Gun responsibility: Rep. Jamie Pedersen introduced with bipartisan support [HB 1588](#), which would require universal background checks for all firearm transfers. The legislation has a total of 38 sponsors and will have its first public hearing in the House Judiciary Committee on February 13th. Seattle supports this legislation. A number of other gun related bills have been introduced in both the House and Senate, and we anticipate others will be introduced soon.

Mentally ill offenders unable to stand trial: [HB 1114](#) would, in part, ensure that a state hospital evaluates defendants charged with serious nonfelony crimes who have been found to be not competent to stand trial. Currently, there are people who are being released without being evaluated. HB 1114 is currently scheduled to be voted on in the House Judiciary Committee on February 12th. The companion bill, [SB 5176](#), had a public hearing on January 29th in the Senate Human Services and Corrections Committee, and OIR staff provided testimony in support of Section 4 of the bill.

Speed Limits: On January 28th, the House Transportation Committee passed out Representative Cindy Ryu's legislation ([HB 1045](#)) to allow cities to lower the speed limits on certain streets to 20 MPH. The bill is now in the Rules Committee. This bill has bi-partisan sponsorship, as does its Senate companion bill, [SB 5066](#). SB 5066 passed out of committee unanimously on February 5th and will now head to the Senate Rules Committee. Seattle supports this legislation, which would allow us to more easily and less expensively make this change to increase safety on some of our neighborhood streets.

Obtaining electronic images from traffic safety cameras: [HB 1047](#) would allow images from traffic safety cameras to be used for prosecuting crimes, but only after a warrant has been obtained. Deputy Police Chief Nick Metz joined King County Prosecuting Attorney Dan Satterberg to give public testimony in support of this bill when it was heard in the House Public Safety committee. The bill was passed out of committee, and on February 4th, and sent to the House Rules Committee.

Human Trafficking: Bills have been introduced in both the House and Senate to help address the crime of human trafficking and to help victims. In the Senate, Jeanne Kohl-Welles has introduced bills to revise the definition of abuse to include trafficking ([SB 5223](#), which had a hearing on February 7th), to establish a committee to work on this issue ([SB 5308](#), which had a hearing on February 4th), and to establish an enhanced penalty for the use of internet advertisements in sex-trafficking ([SB 5488](#), which will be heard on February 13th). In the House, the Public Safety Committee held a public hearing on January 31st on [HB 1292](#), to allow victims to vacate prostitution convictions, and on [HB 1291](#), to direct current offender fees towards services for victims. Both bills are currently scheduled for a vote in committee on February 14th.

City Fiscal Health

Local revenue: [HB 1368](#) would restore the growth in liquor revenues to cities and counties. As part of the final budget agreement last session, the legislature passed a bill that effectively capped the local share of liquor profits at 2011 levels. The bill was heard in the House Local Government Committee on Friday, February 8th. Seattle supports this legislation. In the Senate, the Trade and Economic Development Committee will hold public hearings on legislation that would have the state take over significant portions of the local B&O tax administration. Seattle opposes this legislation.

Other Issues of Significant Interest

Energy Efficiency: [HB 1017](#) establishes minimum energy efficiency standards for battery charger systems, quartz halogen lamps, and minimum water conservation performance standards for faucets. The bill had a public hearing last week and it passed out of the House Environmental Committee on January 31st. HB 1017 is now awaiting consideration in the House Appropriations Subcommittee on General Government. Seattle supports this legislation.

Product Stewardship: [HB 1364](#) and companion bill [SB 5457](#) would help standardize, facilitate and reduce barriers to battery stewardship programs and hold all battery suppliers to the same stewardship obligations. HB 1364 had its first public hearing on February 7th in the House Environmental Committee, and SB 5457 is scheduled for a committee hearing on February 13th. Seattle supports these bills. [HB 1579](#) and companion bill [SB 5424](#) require paint manufacturers to assume responsibility for the development and implementation of a cost-effective paint stewardship program. SB 5424, which has bipartisan sponsorship, is scheduled for a committee hearing on February 13th. Senator Chase and Senator Kline have sponsored [SB 5252](#), which prohibits food service businesses from selling or providing food in expanded polystyrene food service products and in or with disposable plastic foodservice ware.

Reducing Toxins: Senator Sharon Nelson has sponsored [SB 5181](#) to revise the flame retardant provisions for residential upholstered furniture and children's products. SB 5181 is scheduled for its first public hearing on February 13th in the Senate Energy, Environment, & Telecommunications Committee. The House companion bill is [HB 1294](#), which had a public hearing on February 6th. Seattle supports this legislation.

Public Records: Several bills have been introduced related to mitigating the costs of egregious or commercial public records requests, including [HB 1128](#), which allows local governments to seek a civil injunction when faced with financially motivated or punitive requests. [HB 1037](#) would allow jurisdictions to charge a fee for records requested for commercial purposes, and it was heard in the House Government Operations and Elections Committee on January 23rd.

Service Animals in Housing: The House Judiciary committee held a hearing on legislation to streamline the state and federal regulations related to discrimination based on disabilities, especially related to accommodating residents with service animals. This bill, [HB 1024](#), would allow the state to collect approximately \$100,000 per year in federal funding for discrimination-based inspections. HB 1024 passed out of the House Judiciary Committee with technical amendments to more specifically indicate that it is unfair to discriminate in real estate transactions on the basis of use of a service animal. HB 1024 is now awaiting consideration in the House Appropriations Subcommittee on General Government.

Sick Leave: [HB 1313](#) aligns with Seattle's current law and provides minimum requirements for sick and safe leave related to employment. HB 1313 had its first public hearing in the House Labor and Workforce Development Committee on February 5th.

Medical Marijuana: [SB 5528](#) provides arrest protection to patients who are in compliance with the law on medical cannabis use and who present their valid documentation, although there is no requirement that patients register. It also cleans up the current law by removing references to the vetoed provisions of SB 5073. The bill was heard on February 4th in the Senate Health Care Committee. Seattle supports this legislation.

Washington Investment Trust: Sponsored by Senator Hasegawa, [SB 5029](#) creates the Washington Investment Trust as an institution that uses capital reserves to fund projects in our state. SB 5029 is scheduled for public hearing on February 14th in the Senate Financial Institutions, Housing, & Insurance Committee. Seattle supports this legislation.

Looking Ahead

Next week, the Association of Washington Cities will be holding their board meeting and conference, and Governor Inslee and legislative leaders will be addressing the attendees. There are important public hearings on gun responsibility, towing rates, local B&O taxes, and the full range of other issues. Policy committees are working to hear bills and pass them out before the February 22nd cutoff date.