

WEEK of Monday, February 23, 2009

Environmental Community

Hot List for the STATE SENATE

For the seventh year in a row, the environmental community will be sending legislators and key stakeholders its weekly Environmental Community "Hot List" detailing positions on no more than ten of the highest priority issues for the upcoming week. Separate Hot Lists will be prepared for the House and Senate and distributed each Monday via email and in hard copy to your office. At the end of the document, you will find a list of environmental community organizations that contributed to the Hot List. We hope you find this communication helpful. Please feel free to contact me at clifford@wcvoters.org or 206-369-2235, if you have any questions.

Respectfully,

Clifford R. Traisman, State Lobbyist, Washington Conservation Voters & Washington Environmental Council

SENATE COMMITTEE ACTION

SB 5384: Regarding high-performance public buildings.

Environment, Water and Energy Committee: Possible Executive Session

POSITION: *OPPOSE*

- This bill is a HUGE environmental rollback and weakens Washington's first-in-the-nation green buildings law, which was a 2005 Environmental Priority. The law currently requires most public buildings to be built to the widely-used and highly-respected LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) standard. The bill adds Green Globes as an allowable standard. The bill is opposed by the leading green builders organization, the Cascadia Region Green Building Council.
- The Green Globes standard is a less rigorous and transparent program than LEED. In addition, the bill would raise state costs for program implementation by requiring additional staff training around another standard. In 2005, the timber industry and environmental community were able to agree upon language which recognized Washington wood products, which led to the bill moving forward. This bill undermines that agreement.

SB 5418: Regarding electric vehicles.

Environment, Energy and Water Committee: Possible Executive Session

POSITION: *SUPPORT*

- House version of the bill passed unanimously with every Member of the Technology Committee supporting the legislation.
- Legislation will attract a new industry to Washington state that will bring resources to create infrastructure for Electric Vehicles, new jobs (really), spur economic development, and reduce emissions.

SSB 5518: Reducing the amount of petroleum pollution in stormwater (a.k.a. Invest in Clean Water, Sen. Pridemore, Prime Sponsor).

Ways and Means Committee: Hearing and Possible Executive Session.

POSITION: *SUPPORT*

- One of four environmental priorities for 2009, this bill would provide a solution to part of the State's budget crisis by raising \$100 million in new funds that can be used for water quality infrastructure and to offset over \$35 million originally allocated for stormwater projects in the Governor's proposed budget.
- This bill is carefully crafted as a fee (not a tax) on petroleum products that contribute to stormwater pollution. This polluter-pays approach would provide new money for jobs and would relieve financial pressure on cash-strapped local governments which are obligated under federal law to fund stormwater mitigation projects.



SSB 5687: Reducing greenhouse gas emissions through land use and transportation requirements (a.k.a. Transit Oriented Communities, Sen. Marr, Prime Sponsor).

Ways & Means Committee: Possible Public Hearing

POSITION: *SUPPORT*

- Washington state cannot afford to continue sprawling in a low density pattern. It is too costly for taxpayers to expand urban services to pave over the state's rural and resource lands.
- The Transit-Oriented Communities bill incorporates climate change consideration into land use and transportation planning, helping to increase transportation choices, reduce traffic congestion, save taxpayer dollars, and significantly reduce the state's greenhouse gas emissions. The bill has no immediate fiscal impact to the state.



PSSB 5726: Clarifying the integration of the shoreline management act policies with the growth management act.

Environment, Water & Energy Committee: Executive Session

POSITION: *SUPPORT THE AGENCIES' SUBSTITUTE*

- This bill would eliminate the confusion caused by a Supreme Court decision about how the state's shorelands are governed. The bill creates no new protections, it simply clarifies how and when existing protections apply on the state's shorelands.
- WA State Association of Counties, Association of WA Cities, WA Ports Association, environmental organizations, and Departments of Ecology and CTED support the substitute offered by the Agencies.

SB 5735: Reducing greenhouse gas emissions (a.k.a. Cap and Invest; Sen. Phil Rockefeller, Prime Sponsor)

Environment, Water and Energy Committee: Possible Executive Session

POSITION: *SUPPORT*

- This bill moves forward with action to enable Washington to achieve the emission limits enacted by the Legislature last year. Similar to the House bill, a draft Senate strike moves forward with implementing a cap on global warming pollution starting in 2012, and convenes a group to consider the "trade" component.
- Negotiations with many reasonable business interests are ongoing. A new University of Oregon study issued this past week estimated the costs of unmitigated climate change to Washington State at \$3.8 billion/year by 2020, including costs related to human health impacts and harm to the agriculture and forestry industries. It is important to continue moving forward this year toward meeting our climate goals, and this bill is the foundation of the state's overall strategy.



SB 5854: Reducing climate pollution in the built environment (a.k.a. Efficiency First, Sen. Kilmer, Prime Sponsor).

Ways and Means Committee: Possible Public Hearing and Executive Session

POSITION: *SUPPORT*

- Supported by AIA Washington, many individual Architects and other businesses around the Sate, this job creator will assert Washington's regional and national clean-energy leadership by putting efficiency first by promoting super-efficient, low-energy-use buildings.
- This bill requires super efficient energy codes, disclosure of buildings' energy use scores to prospective buyers, makes our public buildings models of energy efficiency, and provides financing for energy-saving upgrades to existing buildings.



SB 6029: Eliminating certain tax incentives related to nonrenewable energy and expanding tax incentives related to renewable resources and energy efficient equipment.

Ways and Means Committee: Public Hearing

POSITION: *SUPPORT*

- The state currently provides about \$30 million a year in tax incentives to big oil and coal, and those tax breaks will continue until the Legislature ends them. Tax incentives for clean, renewable energy expire this year.
- If the Legislature does nothing, it will become the policy of the state of Washington to provide tax incentives for big oil and coal but not for renewables. This bill takes the tax incentives for oil and coal and shifts them to clean renewables.

Contributing Organizations

American Rivers ▪ Audubon Washington ▪ Climate Solutions ▪ Conservation Northwest ▪ Earth Ministry ▪ Environment Washington
Fuse ▪ Futurewise ▪ Heart of America Northwest ▪ League of Women Voters of Washington ▪ Lutheran Public Policy Office
National Wildlife Federation ▪ Nature Conservancy ▪ NW Energy Coalition ▪ People for Puget Sound ▪ Sierra Club ▪ Surfrider
Foundation ▪ Transportation Choices Coalition ▪ Washington Citizens for Resource Conservation ▪ Washington Conservation Voters
Washington Environmental Council ▪ WashPIRG ▪ Washington Toxics Coalition ▪ Washington Wildlife and Recreation Coalition