

WEEK of Monday, February 2, 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 5073: Improving budget transparency by consolidating accounts into the state general fund.

Ways & Means Committee: Public Hearing

POSITION: *OPPOSE*

- This bill would eliminate Water Quality Account and transfer the balance to the state general fund.
- The Water Quality Account was established decades ago to provide \$90 million per biennium for water quality projects to protect our communities and public health. Abolishing the account would eliminate stable funding for critical infrastructure projects such as sewage treatment plants.

SB 5137: Regarding energy resources.

SB 5280: Recognizing conservation achieved in excess of biennial conservation targets as an eligible renewable resource under chapter 19.285 RCW, the energy independence act.

SB 5345: Regarding renewable energy.

SB 5505: Providing a consistent definition for renewable or alternative energy resources.

[S-____]: Relating to renewable energy (regarding I-937, sponsored by Senator Marr).

Environment, Water & Energy Committee: Public Hearing

POSITION: *OPPOSE ALL FIVE BILLS*

- Washington state will reap many benefits from Initiative 937, including new jobs, savings on energy bills, protection against future price shocks, income to rural landowners, new property tax revenues, and reduced greenhouse gas emissions.
- Any changes to the law should be narrow in scope, address actual implementation barriers, and preserve voters' intent to increase development of clean and affordable energy. These bills all include amendments that will weaken the law and decrease the amount of renewable energy and climate pollution reduction we expect from this key policy.

SSB 5165: Implementing a transfer of development rights program.

Government Operations & Elections Committee: Public Hearing & Possible Executive Session

POSITION: *SUPPORT*

- SSB 5165 is based on the consensus of a two-year stakeholder process focused on enhancing the transfer of development rights tool as a market-based mechanism to preserve working farm and forest lands.
- The state loses an average of 23,720 acres of farmland to development annually. This bill creates a voluntary tool to better focus growth in the central Puget Sound's urban areas while permanently protecting the region's rural and resource land from encroaching development.

SB 5279: Providing safe collection and disposal of unwanted drugs from residential sources.

Health & Long-Term Care Committee: Public Hearing

POSITION: *SUPPORT*

- Reduces risks of accidental poisonings, drug diversion, and contamination of surface and ground water by requiring drug producers to provide residents with a secure and convenient statewide program for disposing unwanted and left-over prescriptions and over-the-counter medicines.
- Budget-neutral to the State. A fee paid by drug producers recovers agency oversight costs.

SB 5282: Regarding the use of bisphenol A.

Health & Long-Term Care Committee: Public Hearing

POSITION: *SUPPORT*

- The Safe Baby Bottle bill protects children's health by banning the toxic chemical—bisphenol A (BPA)—in baby bottles, sippy cups and other food containers kids use.
- Safer alternatives to this chemical are widely available and already in use. Wal-Mart, Toys 'R' Us, Whole Foods, and Safeway Stores have announced that they will stop stocking BPA containing products for babies. Nalgene, Camelbak, and Playtex and others have announced that they will stop making products with BPA.

SB 5377: Concerning funding for infrastructure that supports dense, affordable development in transit-oriented areas.

Government Operations & Elections Committee: Public Hearing & Possible Executive Session

POSITION: *SUPPORT*

- SB 5377 creates a state fund for basic infrastructure that supports increased capacity for dense, affordable residential development in neighborhoods near transit centers. The fund is financed if and when REET collections exceed the fiscal growth factor to provide jurisdictions with low interest loans.
- In addition to environmental organizations, the Associated General Contractors of Washington, Washington Realtors, American Planning Association, PSRC's Prosperity Partnership, Washington Low Income Housing Alliance, Puget Sound Partnership and the Cascade Land Conservancy are supporting this bill.

SB 5504: Concerning reclaimed water permitting.

Environment, Water, & Energy Committee: Public Hearing

POSITION: *SUPPORT*

- This bill requires the Department of Ecology and the Department of Health to work together to develop comprehensive rules for using treated wastewater from homes, agricultural, or industrial activities for specific purposes.
- Although the rulemaking process may raise additional questions, we support the directive to Ecology and DOH to draft rules that authorize the use of sufficiently treated water to increase flows in streams, recharge aquifers, and reduce water demand.

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

Environment, Water & Energy Committee: Public Hearing

POSITION: *SUPPORT*

- One of the four environmental priorities for 2009, this bill would raise \$100 million for clean water by imposing a fee on petroleum products that contribute to stormwater pollution.
- This polluter-pays fee on oil companies will provide money for new jobs, relieve financial pressure on local governments, and promote new economic stimulus.



SB 5647: Establishing a pilot local water management program in one qualified jurisdiction.

Environment, Water, & Energy Committee: Public Hearing

POSITION: *SUPPORT*

- Water is a limited and publicly owned resource that is asked to meet many demands. Water policies must fairly balance multiple needs for critical fish habitat, agriculture, industry, and use in our homes.
- This bill establishes a pilot project for collaborative water management in the Walla Walla basin to enhance instream flows for fish while also providing flexibility and certainty to water users.

SB 5735: Reducing greenhouse gas emissions (a.k.a. Cap and Invest; Sen. Rockefeller, Prime Sponsor).
Environment, Water & Energy Committee: Public Hearing

POSITION: *SUPPORT*

- One of the four environmental priorities for 2009, this bill implements the limits on global warming pollution established by the Legislature in 2008 by authorizing Washington's involvement in the pollution reduction program created by the Western Climate Initiative.
- Last year, the businesses and residents of Washington State spent over \$16 billion on oil imports – far more than our deficit. Cap and Invest is a commitment to keep energy dollars in-state, creating more – and better – jobs than importing dirty energy.



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