

WEEK of Monday, March 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

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

Ways & Means Committee: Possible Executive Session

POSITION: *SUPPORT*

- Washington state cannot afford to grow in the same costly, sprawling, business as usual way. This bill will help to avoid the need to invest huge sums of taxpayer dollars in unnecessary infrastructure expansions 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 lessen the state's greenhouse gas emissions. The bill has no immediate fiscal impact to the state.



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

Ways & Means Committee: Public Hearing and Possible 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.
- Successful negotiations to address concerns of business are ongoing and language is being drafted for new striker to reflect many of those concerns.



SB 6096: Concerning the taxation of the manufacturing and selling of fuel for consumption outside the waters of the United States by vessels in foreign commerce.

Ways & Means Committee: Public Hearing and Executive Session

POSITION: *SUPPORT*

- This bill closes an emerging tax loophole before it opens. Without this bill, big oil could receive an additional \$15-20 million a year in tax breaks from the state.
- The state faces an \$8 billion budget deficit and cannot afford an additional \$15-20 million a year in tax breaks to big oil.

SENATE FLOOR ACTION

SSB 5165: Implementing a transfer of development rights program.

POSITION: *SUPPORT*

- Washington is losing its farmland at a fast and alarming rate - two Clark Counties or nearly one Walla Walla County, that's how much agricultural land WA lost in the last 10 years.
- 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. It's based on the consensus of a two-year stakeholder process.

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.

POSITION: *OPPOSE*

- In a nutshell, we need to do as much energy conservation as we can and develop as many new, clean renewable energy sources as we can. This bill would allow utilities to forgo the development of new renewable resources by doing more energy conservation instead. The underlying law, however, already requires utilities to achieve *all* cost effective conservation.
- The renewable and conservation standards were designed to work together to cover long-term forecasts of increased electricity needs. Blending the renewable and conservation standards could reduce the development of new renewables by 505-570 aMW by 2025, leaving open the potential for getting at least a portion of that energy from environmentally harmful sources instead of clean renewables.

SB 5344: Requiring a rescue tug at Neah Bay.

POSITION: *SUPPORT*

- Requires oil companies and other shippers to maintain an oil spill response tug at Neah Bay.
- Will save taxpayers \$3.6 million per year beginning in 2010.

SSB 5533: Regarding the adjudication of water rights.

POSITION: *SUPPORT*

- Adjudication is a critical tool to understand how much water is actually used in a basin and the amount of water available. Unfortunately, only a small fraction of water rights in Washington have been adjudicated, leaving the state unable to adequately manage its rivers and streams.
- This bill allows Ecology to initiate limited adjudications and streamlines the adjudication process to promote efficiency and provide certainty for water users.

SB 5806: Concerning solid waste for the purposes of defining a renewable resource.

POSITION: *OPPOSE*

- This bill would allow garbage incinerators and other waste-to-energy facilities to be considered as renewable energy sources under the Clean Energy Initiative—937.
- Although technology is improving, these facilities still release toxic pollution including dioxins, contribute to global climate change, and compete with recycling and reduction programs. Proponents of new waste-to-energy technologies like gasification, pyrolysis, and plasma arc, claim they are safe, but unfortunately the same problems remain.

SSB 5840: Modifying the energy independence act.

POSITION: *OPPOSE*

- In its current form, the bill severely weakens I-937, the Clean Energy Act, by including current provisions capping development at load growth, grandfathering in existing resources to count as eligible renewables, and allowing conservation to substitute for renewable resources. Such amendments essentially eliminate all of the new renewables that would have been produced through the citizens initiative.
- The environmental community looks forward to continuing to work with stakeholders and the Prime Sponsor to further refine the scope of the bill before any Floor Action is scheduled.

SB 6083: Consolidating the Growth Management Hearings Boards.

POSITION: *OPPOSE*

- The state has three hearings boards, Eastern, Western and Central, so that the different regions of the state and their different concerns can be considered when implementing the Growth Management Act. Consolidating the Boards into a single board based in Olympia will take away this regional perspective.

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