

WEEK of Monday, February 11, 2008

Environmental Community

Hot List for the STATE HOUSE

For the sixth 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

HOUSE COMMITTEE ACTION

SHB 2797: Addressing the impacts of climate change through the growth management act (a.k.a. Local Solutions to Global Warming; Rep. Geoff Simpson, Prime Sponsor).

Appropriations: Executive Session

POSITION: *SUPPORT*

- One of the four environmental community priorities for 2008, the substitute sets in motion the important first steps to help local governments reduce their climate impact. The substitute adds a goal to the GMA of addressing climate change and provides local governments with the tools and support to manage growth in ways that reduce greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to the likely affects of climate change.
- Funding is critical to ensure local governments will have access to the tools needed to measure and reduce their climate impact before the next comprehensive plan cycle begins and to fund jurisdictions taking immediate action to address and adapt to climate change.



SHB 2798: Enacting the local farms-healthy kids act (a.k.a. Local Farms-Healthy Kids; Rep. Eric Pettigrew, Prime Sponsor).

Appropriations: Executive Session

POSITION: *SUPPORT*

- Schools spend more than \$300 million on food every year. By revising low-cost bidding restrictions, creating a Farm to School Program, and promoting local purchasing, this environmental community priority will help ensure that more of those dollars end up in the hands of Washington farmers.
- This bill will help to improve kids' nutrition and create new markets for Washington grown food. These win-win policies are supported by the farm bureau, schools, public health advocates, individual farmers and parents across the state.



HB 2880/2889: Excluding car-sharing activities from the rental car tax.

Finance: Executive Session

POSITION: *SUPPORT*

- Last summer, the Department of Revenue decided to start imposing the state and county car rental tax on car-sharing entities like Flexcar and others. This additional tax –which was not anticipated in any state budgets–results in a 10% increase in costs to car-sharing users, making it a notably more expensive choice to use per hour.
- This legislation, developed in consultation with Revenue, crafts a narrow exemption for true car-sharing organizations. Car-sharing offers several sustainability benefits, including “reducing congestion and pollution and helping to achieve growth management objectives,” as also noted in to the Governor’s September 7, 2007 letter.

SHB 2844: Regarding Urban Forestry (a.k.a. Evergreen Cities Act; Rep. Ruth Kagi, Prime Sponsor).

House Appropriations: Executive Session

POSITION: *SUPPORT*

- Trees, forests and vegetation in the places we live are one of the most cost effective ways to reduce stormwater runoff, water and air pollution. This can save the state and our cities millions of dollars in engineered stormwater management systems and make our cities great places to live, work, shop and play.
- Creates new urban forest program with model plans and ordinances, inventory, funding and increased technical assistance for cities and counties to preserve existing trees, restore urban forests on public lands and expand forest canopy in our cities, towns and suburbs.



HB 3171: Clarifying interests in certain state lands.

Appropriations: Executive Action

POSITION: *SUPPORT*

- Requires DNR to initiate judicial action to determine the legal ownership of sand, gravel, and rock resources on land located on Maury Island, which was formerly owned by the state and transferred into private ownership through a deed with a mineral reservation.

HB 3362: Providing tax incentives to encourage businesses to purchase highly energy efficient equipment.

Finance: Public Hearing and Executive Session

POSITION: *SUPPORT*

- Tax incentives for businesses that purchase the super efficient commercial appliances.
- Businesses can claim a B&O tax credit for sales taxes paid on the appliances.

POSSIBLE HOUSE FLOOR ACTION

SHB 2647: The children's safe products act.

POSITION: *SUPPORT*

- Prohibits manufacture or sale in Washington of any children's products that contain excessive amounts lead, cadmium, and phthalates, including toys, jewelry, cosmetics, and car seats intended for use by children.
- Collects information on other toxic chemicals that are present in toys and other children's products, to determine whether further action is needed.
- Requires manufacturers of children's products to disclose to consumers and governments toxic chemical content.

HB 2815: Relating to creating a framework for reducing greenhouse gas emissions in the Washington economy (a.k.a. Climate Action and Green Jobs; Rep. Hans Dunshee, Prime Sponsor).

POSITION: *SUPPORT*

- One of the four environmental community priorities for 2008, *now Governor request legislation as well.* This bill creates a structure and timeline for implementing the state's global warming pollution reduction goals, and creates a program to prepare Washington workers for new jobs in the clean energy economy. The bill ensures the state delivers on the goals the Legislature adopted last year, by providing concrete accountability for results.
- This bill is the first in the nation to link a global warming pollution reduction policy to a green jobs initiative, and it has the support of both business leaders who are investing in clean energy and labor organizations whose workers will be trained to fill the new, family-wage jobs.



HB 3096: Financing the state route number 520 bridge replacement project.

POSITION: *SUPPORT*

- The state route 520 bridge is one of the most vulnerable structures in the state and in danger of failure during either a heavy windstorm or an earthquake. HB 3096 provides for strategies for financing the SR-520 bridge.
- The substitute out of committee is a major improvement in focusing on financing tools and plans and leaving the design issues for other forums. We applaud many of the components here, including potential early tolling, potential federal authorization of I-90 tolling, and a tolling implementation committee, which would seek public input on tolling and use of revenues, incentives for using transit or carpooling, and variable tolls in the corridor.

Contributing Organizations

American Rivers ♦ Audubon Washington ♦ Climate Solutions ♦ Conservation Northwest ♦ Earth Ministries
Environment Washington ♦ Futurewise ♦ Heart of America Northwest ♦ Lutheran Public Policy Office ♦ The Nature Conservancy
NW Energy Coalition ♦ People for Puget Sound ♦ Puget Soundkeeper Alliance ♦ Sierra Club ♦ Transportation Choices Coalition
WA Citizens for Resource Conservation ♦ Washington Conservation Voters ♦ Washington Environmental Council ♦ WashPIRG ♦
Washington Toxics Coalition ♦ Washington Wildlife and Recreation Coalition