



Session Watch

Friday, February 10, 2023 (day 32 of the 120-day session)

We are one short week from the first milestone of the session - the policy committee cut-off on February 17th. All bills introduced this session must be voted out of policy committee by that day. One week later the ‘fiscal’ cutoff will happen where all bills must be out of Appropriations and Ways & Means committees.

This past week we saw several bills move forward that the Grange is supporting.

On February 7th the Riparian habitat volunteer stewardship bill – [HB 1720](#) – was heard in the House Agriculture committee. Under this proposed policy the State Conservation Commission must develop and implement a riparian grant program to fund protection and restoration of critical riparian management zones. The Commission is responsible for developing the voluntary grant program criteria to achieve optimal restoration of functioning riparian ecosystems in priority critical riparian management zones. We are supportive of this legislation and are encouraged by its movement through the process. The chair will put this bill for a vote in front of the policy committee on February 17th.

On February 9th the Senate Agriculture Committee heard [SB 5476](#) concerning Ag Overtime seasonality. The bill declares that an agricultural employer may select any 12 weeks in a calendar year as special circumstance weeks for labor demand. During each of the selected 12 weeks, the agricultural employer may employ an agricultural employee for up to 50 hours before the requirement to pay overtime under the phase-in applies. We once again supported this legislation as a fair compromise to the new ag overtime laws. This bill had over 1,000 people sign-in to support the bill and over 30 waited to testify live in support of it.

A newer bill this session that was heard this past week is [HB 1422](#). This is a good little piece of legislation that allows for and reiterates the sales and use tax exemption for certain plastic disposable materials. This proposal protects our interested industries from taxation when they utilize reusable plastic packaging. We appreciate the intent behind this bill and look forward to supporting it, should it

continue past the cutoff.

Carbon Taxation

Agriculture groups are continuing talks with Department of Ecology over the on-going cap-and-trade fuel costs are that being passed down from refinery to end-user. Fuel distributors estimate that over 40 cents on every gallon of fuel has been added to the cost in 2023. Exempted agriculture use was promised no-impact from the carbon fee increase, but that has not been the case thus far. So far farmers and fuel cooperatives have been left with very few answers of how to recoup this increased tax that was not supposed to be passed down to agriculture. Don Jenkins wrote a great summary of the issue last week in the Capital Press that can be [read here](#). Please follow along with our bill tracking to see a comprehensive list of the bills we are currently tracking and engaged in.

How to Testify on Bills this Year

Start here: <https://app.leg.wa.gov/csirenote/>

Select **House** or **Senate**

Committee: **Choose the committee where your bill is being heard.**

Meetings: **Choose the date of the hearing**

Select the bill you want from the list.

Select:

I would like to submit written testimony.

I would like to testify live during the hearing.

I would like my position noted for the legislative record.

You may check to see who else has signed in to testify.

On the next screen, fill in all the blanks and submit.

You will receive an email with a link for the hearing. At the appropriate time, join the meeting and wait to be admitted.

When you are called to speak, introduce yourself and speak for 1-2 minutes.

To prepare, write down what you want to say. Read it aloud several times. Time yourself.

To find hearings not listed below, look here: <https://app.leg.wa.gov/committeeschedules/>

Things to remember

If you do not know who your legislators are, find out here: <http://app.leg.wa.gov/districtfinder>. Find your legislators e-mail address here:

<http://app.leg.wa.gov/MemberEmail/Default.aspx?Chamber=H> Legislator phone numbers and office

addresses are available on the individual member pages. Links to the member pages can be found on the [House](#) site, the [Senate](#) site or on the [Member Roster lists](#). If you would like to send a message to your legislators regarding a specific bill, you may use the Bill Comments form. Learn more here: <https://app.leg.wa.gov/pbc/>.

Toll-Free Hotline –

1-800-562-6000 allows you to leave a message for your legislators. When leaving a message with the Hotline, please be prepared to give your name and street address. During the Legislative session, the Hotline is open from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. Monday through Friday.

Upcoming Events

Agriculture, Water, Natural Resources & Parks (Senate) - SHR 3 and Virtual JACB - 2/13 @ 1:30pm

- [SB 5508](#) - Public Hearing - Promoting local agriculture through greenhouses. (Remote Testimony Available). (Support/Low)

Ways & Means (Senate) - SHR 4 and Virtual JACB - 2/13 @ 4:00pm

- [SSB 5093](#) - Public Hearing - Improving climate resilience through updates to the state's integrated climate response strategy. (Remote Testimony Available). (Neutral/Low)

Labor & Workplace Standards (House) - HHR D and Virtual JLOB - 2/14 @ 10:30am

- [HB 1095](#) - Exec Session - Creating a wage replacement program for certain Washington workers excluded from unemployment insurance. (Neutral/Medium)

Environment, Energy & Technology (Senate) - SHR 1 and Virtual J.A. Cherberg - 2/14 @ 1:30pm

- [SB 5579](#) - Public Hearing - Expanding the department of ecology's authority to refrain from enforcing chapter 70A.60 RCW to mitigate the effects of supply chain problems or other similar disruptions. (Remote Testimony Available). (Concerns/Medium)

Ways & Means (Senate) - SHR 4 and Virtual JACB - 2/14 @ 4:00pm

- [SB 5341](#) - Exec Session - Creating a location-based branding and promotion program for Washington food and agricultural products. (Support/Medium)

Agriculture and Natural Resources (House) - HHR B and Virtual JLOB - 2/15 @ 8:00am

- [HB 1740](#) - Exec Session - Concerning eligibility, enrollment, and compensation of small forestland owners volunteering for participation in the forestry riparian easement program. (Support/Medium)

Local Government (House) - HHR E and Virtual JLOB - 2/15 @ 8:00am

- [HB 1645](#) - Public Hearing - Concerning meetings of county legislative authorities. (Remote Testimony Available).

Agriculture, Water, Natural Resources & Parks (Senate) - SHR 3 and Virtual JACB - 2/16 @ 1:30pm

- [SB 5484](#) - Exec Session - Supporting Washington's food production system by providing technical assistance in support of improved voluntary environmental stewardship. (Support/Medium)
- [SB 5508](#) - Exec Session - Promoting local agriculture through greenhouses. (Support/Low)

- [SB 5622](#) - Exec Session - Concerning the transfer of alternate water rights and water rights for municipal water supply purposes. (Neutral/Low)
- [SB 5667](#) - Exec Session - Concerning eligibility, enrollment, and compensation of small forestland owners volunteering for participation in the forestry riparian easement program. (Support/Medium)

Agriculture and Natural Resources (House) - HHR B and Virtual JLOB - 2/17 @ 10:30am

- [HB 1285](#) - Exec Session - Modifying the scope of locations to which a water right established as a family farm permit may be transferred. (Concerns/Medium)
- [HB 1490](#) - Exec Session - Concerning direct sales of milk. (Support/Low)
- [HB 1720](#) - Exec Session - Concerning the protection and restoration of riparian areas through the establishment of a fully voluntary, regionally focused riparian grant program designed to improve the ecological functions of critical riparian management zones. (Support/Medium)

Local Government (House) - HHR E and Virtual JLOB - 2/17 @ 10:30am

- [HB 1645](#) - Exec Session - Concerning meetings of county legislative authorities.

High Priority Bills

Bill #	Abbrev. Title	Short Description	Status	Sponsor	Position
SHB 1019	Pesticide advisory board	Creating the pesticide advisory board.	H Rules R	Dent	Support
HB 1215 (SB 5266)	Riparian areas	Concerning the protection and restoration of riparian areas.	H Ag&Nr	Chapman	Concerns
SB 5251 (HB 1058)	Commercial driver's licenses	Streamlining the licensing process for a commercial driver's license by allowing the department to waive requirements for applicants that previously surrendered the license, allowing the license to be renewed online, and modifying the license test fees.	S Rules 2	Valdez	Support
SB 5476 (HB 1523)	Agricultural overtime	Authorizing agricultural employers to select 12 weeks a year to employ workers for up to 50 hours a week before overtime applies.	S Labor & Comm	King	Support

Medium Priority Bills

Bill #	Abbrev. Title	Short Description	Status	Sponsor	Position
HB 1058 (SB 5251)	Commercial driver's licenses	Streamlining the licensing process for a commercial driver's license by allowing the department to waive requirements for applicants that previously surrendered the license, allowing the license to be renewed online, and modifying the license test fees.	H Passed 3rd	Paul	Support
HB 1095 (SSB 5109)	Wage replacement	Creating a wage replacement program for certain Washington workers	H Labor & Workpl	Walen	Neutral

		excluded from unemployment insurance.			
HB 1285	Family farm permit transfers	Modifying the scope of locations to which a water right established as a family farm permit may be transferred.	H Ag&Nr	Goehner	Concerns
HB 1603	Agricultural products promo.	Creating a location-based promotion program for Washington food and agricultural products.	H Ag&Nr	Morgan	Support
HB 1720	Riparian grant program	Concerning the protection and restoration of riparian areas through the establishment of a fully voluntary, regionally focused riparian grant program designed to improve the ecological functions of critical riparian management zones.	H Ag&Nr	Chapman	Support
HB 1740 (SB 5667)	Forestry riparian easements	Concerning eligibility, enrollment, and compensation of small forestland owners volunteering for participation in the forestry riparian easement program.	H Ag&Nr	Orcutt	Support
SSB 5109 (HB 1095)	Wage replacement	Creating a wage replacement program for certain Washington workers excluded from unemployment insurance.	S Ways & Means	Saldana	Neutral
SSB 5143	Pesticide registration comm.	Changing the name of and adding a member to the commission on pesticide registration.	S Rules 2	Torres	Support
SSB 5156	Farm internship program	Expanding the farm internship program.	H Labor & Workpla	Torres	Support
SB 5330	Pesticide application	Concerning the Washington pesticide application act.	S Rules 2	Torres	Support
SB 5341	WA food & ag. products	Creating a location-based branding and promotion program for Washington food and agricultural products.	S Ways & Means	Muzzall	Support
SB 5484	Food/environmental steward.	Supporting Washington's food production system by providing technical assistance in support of	S Ag/Water/Natur	Shewmake	Support

		improved voluntary environmental stewardship.			
SB 5579	Hydrofluorocarbons/supply	Expanding the department of ecology's authority to refrain from enforcing chapter 70A.60 RCW to mitigate the effects of supply chain problems or other similar disruptions.	S Environment, E	Braun	Concerns
SB 5628	Water right transfers	Preserving water rights for farmland and economic development.	S Ag/Water/Natura	Torres	Support
SB 5667 (HB 1740)	Forestry riparian easements	Concerning eligibility, enrollment, and compensation of small forestland owners volunteering for participation in the forestry riparian easement program.	S Ag/Water/Natur	Muzzall	Support

Low Priority Bills

Bill #	Abbrev. Title	Short Description	Status	Sponsor	Position
SHB 1170 (SSB 5093)	Climate response strategy	Improving climate resilience through updates to the state's integrated climate response strategy.	H Exec Action	Street	Neutral
SHB 1181 (SB 5203)	Climate change/planning	Improving the state's response to climate change by updating the state's planning framework.	H Exec Action	Duerr	Neutral
HB 1490	Direct sales of milk	Concerning direct sales of milk.	H Ag&Nr	Orcutt	Support
HB 1604	Custom farming/B&O tax	Providing a retroactive business and occupation tax exemption for custom farming.	H Finance	Corry	Support
SSB 5093 (SHB 1170)	Climate response strategy	Improving climate resilience through updates to the state's integrated climate response strategy.	S Ways & Means	Rolfes	Neutral
SSB 5150	Beef levied assessment	Concerning the beef commission's levied assessment.	S Rules 2	Shewmake	Support
SB 5203 (SHB 1181)	Climate change/planning	Improving the state's response to climate change by updating the state's planning framework.	S Loc Gov, Land	Lovelett	Neutral
SB 5266 (HB 1215)	Riparian areas	Concerning the protection and restoration of riparian areas.	S Ag/Water/Natur	Shewmake	Concerns
SB 5277 (HB 1573)	Dairy, etc. tax preferences	Extending tax preferences for dairy, fruit and vegetable, and seafood processors.	S Ways & Means	Wilson	Support
SB 5457	Small cities/GMA	Implementing growth management task force legislative recommendations regarding small cities.	S Rules 2	Short	Neutral

SB 5508	Greenhouses	Promoting local agriculture through greenhouses.	S Ag/Water/Natura	Short	Support
SB 5622	Municipal water supply	Concerning the transfer of alternate water rights and water rights for municipal water supply purposes.	S Ag/Water/Natur	Torres	Neutral

Other Bills

Bill #	Abbrev. Title	Short Description	Status	Sponsor	Position
HB 1645 (SB 5067)	County legislative meetings	Concerning meetings of county legislative authorities.	H Local Govt	Barnard	
SB 5067 (HB 1645)	County legislative meetings	Concerning meetings of county legislative authorities.	H Local Govt	Dozier	

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