



SESSION WATCH 2017 WEEK 4

The third week of the legislative session was full of surprises. As a reminder, the Republicans control a 25-24 majority in the Senate. President Trump's appointment of Senator Doug Ericksen (R-Ferndale) to a temporary position on the transition team for the Environmental Protection Agency raised questions regarding how often the Senate could conduct business if Senator Ericksen was out of town much of the week. The next day, Senator Brian Dansel (R-Republic) immediately resigned his Senate seat to serve as special assistant to the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture. Dansel's resignation creates a 24-24 tie in the Senate, with the potential for Democratic Lt. Governor, Cyrus Habib to cast any tie-breaking votes.

On Friday, Senate Democrats attempted to seize the opportunity created by Dansel's resignation. Friday's Senate floor session was scheduled to be "pro forma," meaning that it is strictly procedural and typically only the majority's floor leader is present. The Democrats attended the pro forma session and attempted to change the Senate rules to force a vote this Monday on HB 1059, related to school levies. Democrats argued that it only takes a majority of the Senators present to amend the rules, not a majority of the 49-member Senate. Lt. Governor Habib ultimately ruled that a rule change does require a majority of the 49-member Senate, not just a majority of those present. At that point, Democrats attempted to suspend all rules to enable a vote on HB 1059 on Monday. But one Democratic Senator already left for the day, which meant there was no longer a quorum.

The expectation is that Senator Dansel's replacement will be sworn in early this week. Questions remain regarding whether Senator Ericksen will receive a permanent position in the Trump administration, as well as whether Senator Michael Baumgartner (R-Spokane) might receive a position.

Also on Friday, Senate Republicans released their education funding proposal. Senate Ways and Means will hear that proposal, along with HB 1059 on Monday. Additionally, the Senate Energy and Environment Committee will have a public hearing on SB 5385, Senator Hobbs's carbon tax bill, on Thursday.

I've provided information on some high priority bills below. **Don't forget to sign up for the Washington State Grange Annual "Legislative Day" on March 16th.** The Legislature is considering multiple bills regarding taxes, transportation, elections and water. This will be a great opportunity to talk directly with your legislators!

Upcoming Committee Hearings

Agriculture, Water, Trade & Economic Development (Senate) - SHR 1, - 1/31 @ 8:00am

- SB 5331 - Public Hearing - Concerning irrigation district administration.

Higher Education (House) - HHR D, JLOB - 1/31 @ 8:00am

- HB 1404 - Public Hearing - Conducting a workforce study of employment opportunities in the agriculture, environment, and natural resources economic sectors intended to provide educators with the information needed for informing students about employment opportunities in the studied fields.

Agriculture & Natural Resources (House) - HHR B, JLOB - 2/1 @ 8:00am

- HB 1132 - Exec Session - Concerning dispute resolution between seed buyers and dealers.

State Government, Elections & Information Technology (House) - HHR E, JLOB - 2/1 @ 1:30pm

- HB 1465 - Public Hearing - Exempting from public disclosure certain information regarding reports on wolf depredations.

Agriculture, Water, Trade & Economic Development (Senate) - SHR 1, - 2/2 @ 8:00am

- SB 5208 - Public Hearing - Creating the Washington rural jobs act.

Energy, Environment & Telecommunications (Senate) - SHR 1, - 2/2 @ 10:00am

- SB 5385 - Public Hearing - Creating a fossil fuel carbon pollution tax.

<u>Bill Details</u>	<u>Status</u>	<u>Sponsor</u>	<u>Priority</u>	<u>Position</u>
<u>HB 1132</u> (SB 5075)	Seed buyer & dealer disputes Concerning dispute resolution between seed buyers and dealers. Revises the state seed act with regard to dispute resolution between seed buyers and dealers.	H Ag & Nat Res	Buyers	High
<u>HB 1299</u> (SB 5196)	Cattle feedlots/odor & dust Including cattle feedlots implementing best management practices within the statutory exemption for odor or fugitive dust caused by agricultural activity. Revises the Washington clean air act to exempt cattle feedlots implementing best management practices from requirements for odor or fugitive dust caused by agricultural activity.	H Environment	Blake	High

HB 1327	Presidential electors	H State Government	Shea	High	Changing provisions relating to presidential electors. Revises presidential elector provisions.
HB 1372	Greenhouse gas framework	H Environment	Farrell	High	Updating the framework for reducing greenhouse gas emissions in Washington based upon best available climate science. Changes the responsibilities of the state with regard to the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions.
HB 1404 (SB 5285)	Workforce study/ag., etc.	H Hi Ed	Tarleton	High	Conducting a workforce study of employment opportunities in the agriculture, environment, and natural resources economic sectors intended to provide educators with the information needed for informing students about employment opportunities in the studied fields. Requires the workforce training and education coordinating board to conduct a workforce assessment for the agriculture, natural resources, and environment sectors to assess the available data on current and projected employment levels and hiring demand for skilled mid-level workers in those sectors.
HB 1465	Wolf depredation/public recs	H State Government	Short	High	Exempting from public disclosure certain information regarding reports on wolf depredations. Exempts the following from public disclosure under the public records act: (1) Private information regarding damage prevention cooperative agreements and nonlethal preventative measures deployed to minimize wolf interactions with pets and livestock; and (2) Information regarding a reported depredation by wolves on pets or livestock.
HB 1469 (SB 5333)	Presidential primary	H State Government	Hudgins	High	Modifying presidential primary provisions. Updates the presidential primary process to provide an earlier default date and the flexibility needed to promote a regional presidential primary.
SB 5010	Water rights relinquishment	S Ag/Water/Trade&	Warnick	High	Promoting water conservation by protecting certain water rights from relinquishment. Prohibits the relinquishment of certain water rights if the right is used for irrigation or agricultural purposes and is not exercised to the full extent of the right due to the implementation of water conservation or water use efficiency measures.

	Groundwater supply avail.	S Ag/Water/Trade	McCoy	High
	Concerning groundwater supply availability in areas with ground and surface water interaction.			
SB 5024	Addresses the protection of water resources in comprehensive land use plans and development regulations, evidence of water supply availability when issuing building permits and approving subdivisions, and requiring the water supply serving a building or subdivision must be both physically available and legally available, meaning that the appropriation of the supply will not impair senior water rights.			
	Ballot measure committees	S State Government	Fain	High
SB 5151	Authorizing the county auditor or his or her designee to appoint committees to prepare arguments advocating voters' approval and rejection of certain measures. Authorizes the county auditor to appoint committees to prepare arguments advocating voters' approval and rejection of certain measures.			
	Rural jobs	S Ag/Water/Trade	Warnick	High
SB 5208 (HB 1422)	Creating the Washington rural jobs act. Establishes the Washington rural jobs act. Requires the department of commerce to accept applications for approval as a rural growth fund. Allows a nonrefundable tax credit, for taxpayers that made a credit-eligible capital contribution to the rural growth fund and were issued a tax credit certificate, and allows the credit to be claimed against the following: Business and occupation taxes; insurance premium taxes; and retaliatory taxes. Provides a July 1, 2023, contingent expiration date.			
	Irrigation district admin.	S Ag/Water/Trade&	Takko	High
SB 5331	Concerning irrigation district administration. Modifies provisions relating to irrigation district administration.			
	Carbon pollution tax	S Energy, Enviro	Hobbs	High
SB 5385	Creating a fossil fuel carbon pollution tax. Imposes a fossil fuel carbon pollution tax, at the time of the first taxable event and upon the first taxable person within the state, on the carbon content of fossil fuels extracted, manufactured, or introduced into the state equal to fifteen dollars per metric ton of carbon dioxide. Requires the department of revenue to: (1) Calculate the carbon content of fossil fuels, in consultation with the department of ecology; and (2) If practical, integrate the administration and collection of the fossil fuel carbon pollution taxes with the administration and collection of other taxes imposed on the taxpayer. Exempts certain fossil fuels from the tax. Creates the carbon pollution revenues account. Requires at least fifty percent of the funds transferred to the multimodal transportation account from the carbon pollution revenues account to be expended to assist certain school district programs.			