



# SESSION WATCH

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Monday, January 22, 2018 (day 15 of the 60-day session)

## Hirst Bill a Priority

The late nights started early this year as the legislature held an evening session this week to pass a fix to the Hirst decision. SB 6190 will allow rural wells to be drilled, see more in the Grange News. The legislature also passed the biennial capital budget nearly seven months into the biennium. The capital budget included \$2 million for health and safety grants for fairgrounds. With that herculean task finally behind them It's time to look ahead.

## Fair Funding – Your Support is Needed

The coming week is chock full of hearings on bills affecting agriculture. Two bills affecting fairs will be heard. HB 2725 is the Department of Agriculture's bill which updates the laws that govern how the fair fund is managed. The intent is not to change anything, but simply to update the language and bring it in line with current practices. On Wednesday, SB 6386 will be heard. This bill would allow the fair fund to increase by using some of the sales tax revenue generated on fairgrounds. No taxes would be increased. **All who support fairs are encouraged to come testify and tell how fairs benefit kids and communities.**

## Suicide Bill for Farmers and Ranchers

On a more somber note, Rep. JT Wilcox is sponsoring a bill to address the issue of suicide of farmers and ranchers. Suicide rates among farmers are higher than most other job categories. The issues faced by farmers are also unique. The intent of the bill is to make help more readily available. **Grange members who are familiar with this tragedy are encouraged to come testify.**

## Pesticides

Four pesticide pre-notification and use reporting bills have been introduced so far, this session. In the Senate we have bill numbers 6063, 6322 and 6529. In the House 2878, which is identical to 6322. 6925 will be heard next week. Among other things, it requires a 4-

day prenotification before applying pesticides via air, air blast or fumigation. Because of the difficulty of controlling mildew, blight and other diseases, that would make it difficult to grow apples, cherries, potatoes, wine grapes, hops and blueberries in the state of Washington.

## Consumer Access Bill

On a positive note for rural Washington, a bill enhancing consumer access, affordability, and quality of broadband will be heard on Tuesday. The bill has been worked and revised. The new version will be available at Tuesday's hearing.

## Grange Legislative Day

Don't forget to sign up for the Washington State Grange Annual "Legislative Day" on February 6th. Look for the sign-up sheet either on our website or in the January Grange News. This will be a great opportunity to talk directly with your legislators!

## 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 Hearings of Interest

### Agriculture & Natural Resources (House) - HHR B, JLOB - 1/23 @ 10:00am

- HB 2681 - Public Hearing - Implementing the federal produce safety rule.
- HB 2725 - Public Hearing - Updating laws concerning agricultural fairs, youth shows, and exhibitions.

### Energy, Environment & Technology (Senate) - SHR 1, - 1/24 @ 8:00am

- SB 6083 - Public Hearing - Maintaining public health, safety, and environmental standards.
- SB 5935 - Public Hearing - Enhancing consumer access, affordability, and quality of broadband and advanced telecommunications services. (Hearing is on the Proposed Substitute).

### Health Care & Wellness (House) - HHR A, JLOB - 1/24 @ 1:30pm

- HB 2671 - Public Hearing - Improving the behavioral health of people in the agricultural industry.

### Environment (House) - HHR B, JLOB - 1/25 @ 8:00am

- HB 2524 - Public Hearing - Concerning soil samples in classifying agricultural and forestland.

### Agriculture, Water, Natural Resources & Parks (Senate) - SHR 3, - 1/25 @ 1:30pm

- SB 6319 - Public Hearing - Implementing the federal produce safety rule.
- SB 6386 - Public Hearing - Ensuring the funding of fairs.
- SB 6278 - Exec Session - Concerning the use of seed certification fees.

### Labor & Commerce (Senate) - SHR 4, - 1/25 @ 1:30pm

- SB 6529 - Public Hearing - Protecting agricultural workers and community members from pesticides.

## Selected Bills of Interest

### Elections & Voting

<u>Bill Details</u>	<u>Status</u>	<u>Sponsor</u>	<u>Priority</u>	<u>Position</u>
<a href="#">SB 6249</a> (HB 2680)	<b>Voter registration deadlines</b>	S State Govt/Trib	Zeiger	High
Modifies voter registration provisions regarding timelines in which to register, registering in person, the statewide voter registration database, and changes in residence.				

### Fairs

<u>Bill Details</u>	<u>Status</u>	<u>Sponsor</u>	<u>Priority</u>	<u>Position</u>
<a href="#">HB 2725</a> (SB 6368)	<b>Fairs, youth shows, &amp; expos</b>	H Ag & Nat Res	Blake	High
Modifies provisions regarding agricultural fairs, youth shows, and exhibitions on the following: (1) The state fair fund; (2) Categories of agricultural fairs that may be eligible for state allocations; (3) Eligibility requirements for those allocations; (4) Reimbursements for incurred operating expenses; and (5) Terms of the members of the fairs commission.				
<a href="#">HB 2765</a> (SB 6386)	<b>Ag. fair funding/sales taxes</b>	H Approps	Blake	High
Requires the money received as the result of the imposition of the state retail sales tax on sales occurring during events held at fairgrounds where agricultural fairs occur, to be deposited into the fair fund. Requires the department of revenue to notify the state treasurer when the collected money for a fiscal year is three million dollars.				

**Fairs, youth shows, & expos** S Rules 2 Warnick High Support  
[SB 6368](#)  
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**Ag. fair funding/sales taxes** S Ag/Water/Natur Warnick High Support  
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## Uncategorized Bills

<u>Bill Details</u>	<u>Status</u>	<u>Sponsor</u>	<u>Priority</u>	<u>Position</u>
<a href="#">SHB 2177</a> <b>Rural county jobs program</b> Creating a rural county jobs program.	H Appropriations	Chapman	Medium	Support
<a href="#">HB 2499</a> <b>Seeds and plants/sales tax</b> Provides a sales and use tax exemption for seeds and plants used to grow food and food ingredients.	H Finance	Caldier	Medium	Support
<a href="#">HB 2524</a> <b>Soil samples</b> Concerning soil samples in classifying agricultural and forestland. Requires the department of commerce, in consultation with the department of agriculture, to adopt guidelines establishing a procedure for a person to remove a local jurisdiction's designation of agricultural lands or forestlands where soil surveys indicate that the composition of the soil is not suitable to support activities or crops in accordance with the local jurisdiction's designation.	H Environment	Pike		
<a href="#">HB 2640</a> <b>Apiarist liability</b> Limiting liability for registered apiarists. Provides immunity from liability, to a person who owns or operates an apiary, is a registered apiarist, abides by all applicable ordinances, and operates the apiary as required, for civil damages that occur in connection with the keeping and maintaining of bees, bee equipment, queen breeding equipment, apiaries, and appliances.	H Judiciary	Buys	Medium	Support

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