



SESSION WATCH

Monday, March 12, 2018

The 2018 Legislative Session has ended

The 2018 legislative session ended on time on March 8. The most important news might be what did not pass. Both the capital gains tax proposal and the carbon tax bill died in the last days of session. Immediately upon the death of the carbon tax bill, a coalition of tribal, labor and environmental groups filed a petition for a citizen's initiative to create a carbon fee. The fee would add an estimated 14 cents to the cost of a gallon of gasoline. The groups supporting the initiative have until July 6 to gather 260,000 signatures to qualify the measure for the November ballot.

Sadly, the bill that would have allowed the Fair Fund to increase for the first time in 20 years died. On the bright side, the bill updating the law that governs the Fair Fund passed and is headed to the Governor for signature.

A bill of concern to agriculture, E2SSB 6529 creates a pesticide safety work group which must report back to the legislature with recommendations for legislation for next year. The focus is primarily on applications made via air and airblast sprayers. The group, which is made up of legislators and state agencies, will meet over summer.

After the passage, and veto of a bill that partially exempted the legislature from the public disclosure act, the senate facilities and operations committee and the house of representatives executive rules committee were directed to convene a task force to propose standards for maintaining and disclosing public records for the legislative branch of government.

As always, the operating budget provides interesting insights into how your tax dollars are being spent.

\$3,897,000 was provided for the Department of Ecology to implement ESSB 6091, the Hirst fix, dealing with water availability. These funds are to cover the costs of watershed planning, a metering pilot project, a joint legislative task force, and preparation of a programmatic environmental impact statement. An additional \$20,000 was provided to the Department of Agriculture.

\$625,000 was provided to the Department of Ecology for water rights compliance and enforcement staff to address water use in violation of state water resources laws, including technical assistance, informal enforcement, and formal enforcement actions.

\$80,000 was provided to the department of agriculture to provide to the sheriff's departments of Ferry and Stevens counties to cooperate with the department and the department of fish and wildlife on wolf management activities.

\$525,000 was provided to the department of fish and wildlife for training for a work unit to engage and empower stakeholders in decisions about fish and wildlife, and the continued conflict transformation with the wolf advisory group, and for cost share partnerships with livestock owners and the use of range riders to reduce the potential for depredation of livestock from wolves.

\$1,690,000 was provided for the department of natural resources to increase fire response capability, including upgrading information technology systems and equipment for wildfire and forest health data, training department and fire service personnel, adding fire management staff, and replacing aviation fuel trucks and fire engines.

\$198,000 was provided to the Department of Natural Resources for weed control and to maintain public access at 17 sites.

\$28,000 was provided to the Department of Ecology do develop a program to allow outdoor burning of yard waste in apple maggot quarantine areas.

In the final days of session, several legislators announced plans to not seek re-election. This is expected. The list is bound to grow over the next several weeks.

- Senator Michael Baumgartner, Spokane
- Rep. Judy Clibborn, Mercer Island
- Rep. Larry Haler, Richland
- Rep. Ruth Kagi, Seattle
- Rep. Dan Kristiansen, Snohomish
- Rep. Melanie Stambaugh, Puyallup
- Rep. Terry Nealey, Dayton
- Rep. Liz Pike, Camas
- Rep. Jay Rodne, Snoqualmie

Below is the list of bills that passed from my Grange tracking list. If you have any questions about any bills or the legislative process, please do not hesitate to ask.

<u>Bill Details</u>	<u>Status</u>	<u>Sponsor</u>	<u>Priority</u>	<u>Position</u>
<p>Rural county jobs program</p> <p>Creates the rural county high employer demand jobs program to: (1) Meet the workforce needs of business and industry in rural counties by assisting students in earning certificates, associate degrees, or other industry-recognized credentials necessary for employment in high employer demand fields; and (2) Provide selected students scholarship funds, as determined by the opportunity scholarship board, to help them meet their eligible expenses for up to one year, when they enroll in a community or technical college program that prepares them for a high employer demand field. Requires the opportunity scholarship board to create the rural jobs program account, from which scholarship funds will be disbursed beginning no later than the fall term of the 2020 academic year, if by that date, state matching funds have been received. Creates the rural jobs program match transfer account.</p> <p>E2SHB 2177</p>	Del to Gov	Chapman	Medium	Support
<p>Automatic voter registration</p> <p>Establishes the automatic voter registration act of 2018. Requires the department of licensing to implement an automatic voter registration system so a person who is eligible to vote and is applying for or renewing an enhanced driver's license or identicaid may register to vote or update voter registration at the time of registration or renewal, by an automated process. Prohibits, unless required by law, the department of licensing from: (1) Sharing information used to verify identity with a federal agency or contractual obligation existing as of July 1, 2019; and (2) Collecting records or documentation used to certify eligibility to vote once the certification process has been completed and recorded. Requires the state health benefit exchange to: (1) Provide directly to the secretary of state's office information required to register to vote or transfer a</p> <p>E2SHB 2595</p>	Del to Gov	Hudgins	Medium	Oppose

registration for certain consenting persons; and (2) Study the feasibility of implementing automatic voter registration. Requires the office of the secretary of state to conduct a study and prepare recommendations for creating: (1) An automatic voter registration process for residents who recently completed the naturalization process; and (2) For an automatic pending voter registration process at birth. Exempts the following from public inspection and copying under the public records act: Information maintained in the pending voter registration database.

<u>SHB 2664</u>	Telecomm. authority/ports	Del to Gov	Dye	Medium	Support
	Extending existing telecommunications authority to all ports in Washington state in order to facilitate public-private partnerships in wholesale telecommunications services and infrastructure.				
<u>2SHB 2671</u>	Ag industry behavioral hlth	Del to Gov	Wilcox	Medium	Support
	Requires the department of health to: (1) Establish a pilot program to support behavioral health improvement and suicide prevention efforts for members of the agricultural industry workforce; (2) Contract with an entity that has behavioral health and suicide prevention expertise to develop a free resource for workers in the agricultural industry; and (3) Use an entity that has an existing telephonic and web-based resource, including entities that have prepared similar resources for other states. Requires the state office of rural health to convene a task force on behavioral health and suicide prevention in the agricultural industry and requires the task force to review the following issues: (1) Data related to the behavioral health status of persons associated with the agricultural industry, including suicide rates, substance use rates, and availability and use of behavioral health services; (2) Factors unique to the agricultural industry that affect the behavioral health of persons working in the industry; (3) Components that should be addressed in the pilot program, including consideration of components that relate to similar programs funded or partially funded by the federal office of rural health policy; and (4) Options to improve the behavioral health status of and reduce suicide risk among agricultural workers and their families, including individual focused and community focused strategies.				
<u>ESSB 6002</u>	Voting rights act	Del to Gov	Saldana	Medium	Concerns
	Establishes the Washington voting rights act of 2018 to promote equal voting opportunity in certain political subdivisions and establish a cause of action to redress lack of voter opportunity.				
<u>SB 6180</u>	Planting and harvest dates	Del to Gov	Hobbs	Medium	Support
	States that the planting and harvesting seasons are January 1st through December 31st of each year, with regard to the exemption for agricultural transporters. This allows trucks hauling farm inputs or products to be exempt from hours of service year round. Within 150 miles of the farm.				
<u>SB 6278</u>	Seed certification fee use	Del to Gov	Warnick	Low	Support
	Revises the Washington state seed act to authorize the fees, that are collected for the certification of seed, to be used for services involving breeder seed, foundation seed, registered seed, and certified seed.				
<u>SSB 6318</u>	Intrastate food safety	Del to Gov	Takko	Low	Support
	Establishes the food safety and security act. Protects the public from adulteration, misbranding, and false advertisement of food in intrastate commerce; and promotes uniformity with federal law, governmental transparency, and regulatory fairness. Clarifies existing law by creating a new intrastate food safety and security chapter from existing intrastate food safety laws and moving certain provisions in the intrastate commerce in food, drugs, and cosmetics act to the titles of the agencies that administer the provisions.				
	Federal produce safety rule	Del to Gov	Honeyford		

SB 6319

Establishes the produce safety rule implementation act to assist state produce farmers in implementation of the produce safety rule adopted by the United States food and drug administration pursuant to the federal food, drug, and cosmetic act. Authorizes the department of agriculture to: (1) Take actions necessary to cooperate in implementation of the produce safety rule, including entering into cooperative agreements with the United States food and drug administration, conducting compliance verification activities, enforcing regulatory compliance, and accepting federal funding to carry out the activities; (2) Cooperate with the United States food and drug administration in implementation of the produce safety rule only to the extent that the department receives federal funding for the activities; and (3) Establish a voluntary program for farms exempt or partially exempt from the produce safety rule to verify that the farms comply with the rule. Exempts the following from disclosure under the public records act: Information obtained from the federal government or others under contract with the federal government or records obtained by the department of agriculture. Creates a produce safety account in the agricultural local fund.

Fairs, youth shows, & expos

Del to Gov

Warnick

High

Support

SB 6368

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.

**E2SSB
6529**

Pesticide application safety

Del to Gov

Saldana

High

Oppose

Creates the pesticide application safety work group to develop recommendations for improving the safety of pesticide applications. Expires December 31, 2018.

Legislative Department

Heather Hansen, Legislative Lobbyist

legislative@wa-grange.org

(360) 943-9911