



Session Watch

Friday, February 19, 2021 (day 39 of the 120-day session)

Week 6 Recap

By the February 15 policy committee cutoff, 463 bills had passed, 216 in the House and 247 in the Senate. Before session began, leadership asked members to limit bill introductions and focus on priorities due to the virtual session. This week the focus was on moving bills through fiscal committees. Fiscal committee cutoff is Monday, Feb. 22. That will shrink the list again as more bill side.

Many gun bills died in policy committee cutoff, but many are still alive. Tax and carbon bills are exempt from cutoffs, so they all remain alive.

As legislators work on preparing budgets for the next biennium, I want to share numbers from some past budgets. In 2013, the state budget was \$32 billion. In 2021, the budget is \$54.4 billion. That is a 69.5% increase in eight years. In terms of per person spending, it has grown from \$4633 in 2013, to \$7022 per Washingtonian in 2021. That is a leap of 51.6%. In the last biennium alone, state spending increased 20%. Even with the COVID pandemic, state revenue is expected to grow by more than 7% this year.

The Senate version of a new capital gains income tax, SSB 5096, passed the Ways & Means Committee this week. It was amended to be slightly less onerous. The new version lowers the tax rate to 7% and increases the threshold earnings must exceed before the tax kicks in to \$250,000. The exemption for “family-owned small businesses” was broadened but is still limited to family members who materially participated in the business for at least five of the past eight years. In other words, if a family member has not been actively involved for over 5 years but still owns a portion of the business, that portion would be taxed at an additional 7% if sold in addition to federal capital gains tax. Twenty-two pro-business amendments to the bill were proposed. All except the bill sponsors striking amendment failed. An “emergency” clause, prohibiting a citizen’s referendum was added to the bill. The “emergency” is questionable since the funds will not be collected for another 2 years.

Other property exempt from the new tax includes:

- all real estate.
- assets held in a retirement account.
- livestock related to farming or ranching that has been held for over 12 months (only if more than 50% of the taxpayer’s gross income if from farming or ranching).
- agricultural land if the taxpayer has had material participation in the farm or ranch for 10 years prior to sale.
- certain types of property used in a trade or business such as machinery and equipment that have been immediately expensed.
- timber and timberland.

How to Testify on Bills this Year

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

Select House or Senate

Committee: Choose the committee where you 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

Transportation (House) - Virtual, - 2/19 @ 1:30pm

1. 2SHB 1091 - Exec Session - Reducing greenhouse gas emissions by reducing the carbon intensity of transportation fuel. (Concerns/Medium)

Ways & Means (Senate) - Virtual, - 2/22 @ 9:30am

2. SB 5159 - Exec Session - Concerning payments in lieu of real property taxes by the department of the fish and wildlife. (Support/Medium)
3. SSB 5253 - Exec Session - Implementing the recommendations of the pollinator health task force. (Neutral/Medium)
4. SSB 5317 - Exec Session - Concerning pesticide registration and pesticide licensing fees. (Neutral/High)
5. SSB 5325 - Exec Session - Concerning telemedicine. (Support/Medium)
6. SSB 5362 - Exec Session - Ensuring the funding of agricultural fairs. (Support/Medium)
SSB 5383 - Exec Session - Authorizing a public utility district to provide retail telecommunications services in unserved areas under certain conditions.

High Priority Bills

<u>Bill Details</u>	<u>Status</u>	<u>Sponsor</u>	<u>Position</u>
SHB 1117 Comp. planning/salmon Promoting salmon recovery through revisions to the state's comprehensive planning framework.	H Approps	Lekanoff	Oppose
HB 1135 (SB 5165) Transp. budget 2021-2023 Making transportation appropriations for the 2021-2023 fiscal biennium.	H Transportation	Fey	Concerns
HB 1285 (SB 5281) Fruit & vegetable businesses Modifying the business and occupation tax exemption for certain fruit and vegetable businesses.	H Finance	Ormsby	Oppose
SHB 1336 Public telecomm. service Creating and expanding unrestricted authority for public entities to provide telecommunications services to end users.	H 2nd Reading	Hansen	Support

HB 1465	Estate tax Making the estate tax more progressive by exempting small estates, reducing estate taxes on medium estates, increasing the estate tax on larger estates, and addressing equity in homeownership and homelessness.	H Finance	Orwall	Concerns
2SSB 5045	Meat & poultry inspection Establishing a state meat and poultry inspection program.	S Rules 2	Warnick	Support
SSB 5096	Capital gains tax Concerning an excise tax on gains from the sale or exchange of certain capital assets.	S Rules 2	Robinson	Oppose
SB 5165 (HB 1135)	Transp. budget 2021-2023 Making transportation appropriations for the 2021-2023 fiscal biennium.	S Transportation	Hobbs	Concerns
SSB 5172 (HB 1217)	Overtime claim retroactivity Concerning the retroactivity of overtime claims in exceptional cases.	S Rules 2	King	Support
SSB 5317	Pesticide registration Concerning pesticide registration and pesticide licensing fees.	S Ways & Means	Warnick	Neutral
SB 5373	Carbon pollution Concerning carbon pollution.	S Environment, E	Lovelett	Concerns

Medium Priority Bills

<u>Bill Details</u>	<u>Status</u>	<u>Sponsor</u>	<u>Position</u>	
2SHB 1091 (SB 5231)	Transportation fuel/carbon Reducing greenhouse gas emissions by reducing the carbon intensity of transportation fuel.	H Transportation	Fitzgibbon	Concerns
SHB 1099	Comprehensive planning Improving the state's climate response through updates to the state's comprehensive planning framework.	H Approps	Duerr	Concerns
HB 1102	Intrastate meat inspection Establishing an intrastate meat inspection program.	H R Dev, Ag&NR	Walsh	Support
SHB 1196 (SSB 5325)	Audio-only telemedicine Concerning audio-only telemedicine.	H 2nd Reading	Riccelli	Support
EHB 1199	DNR lease termination Providing compensation to department of natural resources lessees whose leases are terminated for reasons other than default.	S Ag/Water/Natura	Corry	Support

SHB 1355	Noxious weeds Concerning noxious weeds.	H Exec Action	Dent	Support
HB 1380	Custom farming, etc./tax Restoring the business and occupation and public utility tax exemption for custom farming and hauling farm products.	H Finance	Dufault	Support
HB 1496	High valued assets tax Creating a more progressive tax system in Washington by enacting an excise tax on sales and extraordinary profits of high valued assets.	H Finance	Senn	Concerns
SB 5126	Climate commitment act Concerning the Washington climate commitment act.	S Environment, E	Carlyle	Oppose
SSB 5141	Env. justice task force recs Implementing the recommendations of the environmental justice task force.	S Ways & Means	Salda	Concerns
SB 5159	WDFW payments/property tax Concerning payments in lieu of real property taxes by the department of the fish and wildlife.	S Ways & Means	Warnick	Support
SSB 5253	Pollinator health Implementing the recommendations of the pollinator health task force.	S Ways & Means	Liias	Neutral
SSB 5325 (SHB 1196)	Telemedicine Concerning audio-only telemedicine.	S Ways & Means	Muzzall	Support
SSB 5362	Agricultural fair funding Ensuring the funding of agricultural fairs.	S Ways & Means	McCune	Support
SB 5439	Broadband/state highways Facilitating the coordinated installation of broadband along state highways.	S Transportation	Salda	Support
Low Priority Bills				
<u>Bill Details</u>		<u>Status</u>	<u>Sponsor</u>	<u>Position</u>
HB 1185	Discounted hunting licenses Providing discounted hunting licenses to seniors.	H Approps	Sutherland	Support
SHB 1263	Rural infrastructure Concerning rural infrastructure.	H Cap Budget	Abbarno	Support
SHB 1395	Equity in farming Ensuring equity in farming.	H Approps	Morgan	Support

SHB 1431	Fishing & shell fishing/youth Encouraging youth participation in fishing and shell fishing.	H Approps	Rule	Neutral
HB 1544	Ag., food, nat. resource ed. Concerning agriculture, food, and natural resource education.	H Education	Klippert	Support
SB 5063	Invasive species council exp Concerning the expiration date of the invasive species council.	S Rules 2	Honeyford	Support
SB 5300	Feeding of garbage to swine Prohibiting the feeding of garbage to swine.	S 2nd RdConsCal	Van De Wege	Support
SB 5359	Motor vehicle sales tax Dedicating the state sales tax on motor vehicles to transportation improvements.	S Ways & Means	Braun	Support
Other Bills				
<u>Bill Details</u>		<u>Status</u>	<u>Sponsor</u>	<u>Position</u>
2SHB 1050	Fluorinated gases Reducing greenhouse gas emissions from fluorinated gases.	H 2nd Reading	Fitzgibbon	
HB 1080 (SB 5083)	Capital budget 2021-2023 Concerning the capital budget.	H Cap Budget	Tharinger	
HB 1094 (SB 5092)	Operating budget 2021-2023 Making 2021-2023 fiscal biennium operating appropriations.	H Approps	Ormsby	
HB 1204 (SB 5256)	Transp. electrification Concerning the electrification of transportation.	H Transportation	Macri	
SHB 1283	Criminal mischief/weapons Including the open carry or display of weapons within the offense of criminal mischief.	H Rules R	Senn	
SHB 1340	Pandemic task force Concerning creation of the statewide pandemic preparation and response task force.	H Approps	Lovick	
SSB 5038	Open carry of weapons Prohibiting the open carry of certain weapons at public demonstrations and the state capitol.	S Rules 2	Kuderer	

[SSB 5383](#)

PUD telecomm. services

S Ways & Means

Wellman

Authorizing a public utility district to provide retail telecommunications services in unserved areas under certain conditions.

Operating budget

S Ways & Means

Wilson

[SB 5451](#)

Making 2021-2023 fiscal biennium operating appropriations and 2019-2021 fiscal biennium second supplemental operating appropriations.

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