



Session Watch

Monday, February 3, 2025 (day 22 of the 120-day Session)

Three full weeks of session have been completed as we enter day 22 of the first half of the new biennium. The operating budget request deadline came and went last week as lawmakers made last-minute decisions on spending requests for new, on-going and requested projects. As we work through the month of February, we will see several more budget deadlines approaching. This week constituents and lawmakers are scrambling to get Transportation Budget requests before the Friday deadline followed by Capital Budget requests being due by February 21st. These three budgets are the most important, and only required, portion of the legislation session.

This last week saw action on many bills such as sales and use taxes on equipment, small gas engines, riparian initiatives, cow flatulence and budget items. It will be great for me to put more faces to names and get into deeper discussions this week as the Washington State Grange holds our 2025 legislative day on February 4th! I look forward to this event each year as we convene at the capital in Olympia.

The following highlighted bills and bill lists include policies that directly affect our industry and potential pieces of policy of interest and indirect effect. Please reach out to me with any bills or policy initiatives you have heard about and may have more interest in.

Bills of Interest

Assembly Hall Property Tax Exemption: SB 5252 – Senator Shewmake has authored a bill at the request of Grange member Russ Weston in the 42nd Legislative District. This bill would remove the acreage restriction on tax exemptions for assembly halls like our Granges. This bill was heard in committee with favorable support and is scheduled to be voted out of committee on February 6th.

Ag Overtime Exemption

HB 1597 allows agricultural employers to choose 12 weeks each year during which they can employ workers for up to 50 hours per week before overtime

pay kicks in. Sponsored by Reps. Dent and Springer, this bipartisan legislation is backed by two lawmakers who have a past of working in earnest on this issue. Although the bill has been around for a few years with limited success, it is expected to receive a committee hearing. However, its future beyond that will depend on end-of-session negotiations, and given the current majorities in both chambers, the outcome may not be favorable. The bill has not yet been scheduled for a committee hearing.

Collective Bargaining for Cannabis Workers

HB 1141 would mandate recognition of collective bargaining for certain agricultural workers. While this bill may appear limited in scope, it could potentially set precedent for all of agriculture, not just cannabis workers. I told the group I feel this bill is a trojan horse and we should continue to be vocal about it. Policy with such broad impact should undergo thorough vetting on a larger scale to address the needs of the entire industry. success and workability.

Low Carbon Fuel Standard

HB 1409- This bill was authored by House Majority Leader Fitzgibbon and deals with the low carbon fuel standard bill negotiated with the agriculture community. Agreements were made between industry and lawmakers to pass the bill. This bill alters those requirements and makes what seem to be unnecessary changes to the policy that was agreed upon last year. No vote has been taken on the bill thus far.

Guns, Guns, Guns

Over half a dozen gun bills have made their way through the process this year. Some good, some bad. But lawmakers are grappling with a legislature hyper-ready to reform gun laws in some capacity. Please refer to the bill tracking section to see what firearm bills are currently being considered.

Wolves, Wolves, Wolves

As the session moves along the amount of wolf bills will be paired down to a more manageable number. Right now the various pieces of legislation stem from herd management to

landowner rights to terminate wolves, and everything in between. The bill list will illustrate the intensity of the wolf issue this year and the urgency around the issue. Wolves will be talked about at the legislative zoom calls every other week and you can follow along with their progress on the bill list and upcoming events section.

Washington State Grange Legislative Advisory Committee Meetings Set:

Monday, February 17 at 6pm
Monday, March 3 at 6pm
Monday, March 17 at 6pm
Monday, April 7 at 6pm
Monday, April 21 at 6pm

Please feel free to join us while we discuss current legislative activities in the 2025 Legislature.

Join Zoom Meeting: <https://zoom.us/j/98036971581>
Meeting ID: 980 3697 1581
One tap mobile +12532158782,,98036971581# US (Tacoma)
Dial by your location +1 253 215 8782 US (Tacoma)
Meeting ID: 980 3697 1581

How to Testify on Bills this Year

As a reminder you can easily participate in the lawmaking process by contacting your elected state

representatives through the online legislative tools.

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

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/>

Upcoming Events

Technology, Economic Development, & Veterans (House) - HHR C and Virtual JLOB - 2/4 @ 10:30am

• [HB 1625](#) - Public Hearing - Supporting back country search and rescue organizations and volunteers through the creation of the back country search and rescue grant program. (Remote Testimony Available).

Agriculture & Natural Resources (House) - HHR B and Virtual JLOB - 2/5 @ 8:00am

• [HB 1311](#) - Public Hearing - Concerning the implementation of the recommendations of the department of fish and wildlife regarding the gray wolf. (Remote Testimony Available).

• [HB 1442](#) - Public Hearing - Providing flexibility for the department of fish and wildlife to collaborate with local governments to manage gray wolves. (Remote Testimony Available).

Environment & Energy (House) - HHR B and Virtual JLOB - 2/6 @ 8:00am

• [HB 1630](#) - Public Hearing - Concerning livestock methane emissions. (Remote Testimony Available). (Oppose)

Agriculture & Natural Resources (Senate) - SHR 1 and Virtual J.A. Cherberg - 2/6 @ 1:30pm

• [SB 5384](#) - Public Hearing - Conducting a review of Washington's riparian programs. (Remote Testimony Available).

• [SB 5385](#) - Public Hearing - Amending the definition of timberland for purposes of determining the real property excise tax for a governmental entity. (Remote Testimony Available).

Local Government (Senate) - SHR 3 and Virtual JACB - 2/6 @ 1:30pm

• [SB 5055](#) - Exec Session - Promoting agritourism in Washington. (Support)

Ways & Means (Senate) - SHR 4 and Virtual JACB - 2/6 @ 4:00pm

- [SB 5252](#) - Exec Session - Removing the acreage limit on the property tax exemption for nonprofit public assembly halls and meeting places. (Support/High)

Health Care & Wellness (House) - HHR A and Virtual JLOB - 2/7 @ 8:00am

- [HB 1603](#) - Public Hearing - Requiring guaranteed issue of medicare supplemental coverage to an individual who voluntarily disenrolls from a medicare advantage plan and enrolls in medicare parts A and B. (Remote Testimony Available).

Labor & Commerce (Senate) - SHR 1 and Virtual J.A. Cherberg - 2/7 @ 8:00am

- [SB 5041](#) - Exec Session - Concerning unemployment insurance benefits for striking or lockout workers.
- [SB 5023](#) - Exec Session - Providing labor market protections for domestic workers.

Environment, Energy & Technology (Senate) - SHR 1 and Virtual J.A. Cherberg - 2/7 @ 10:30am

- [SB 5033](#) - Public Hearing - Concerning sampling or testing of biosolids for PFAS chemicals. (Remote Testimony Available).
- [SB 5174](#) - Exec Session - Concerning wood burning devices. (Oppose)

WASHINGTON STATE GRANGE BILL TRACKING REPORT

High Priority Bills

Bill #	Abbrev. Title	Short Description	Status	Sponsor	Position
SB 5252	Assembly halls/property tax	Removing the acreage limit on the property tax exemption for nonprofit public assembly halls and meeting places.	S Ways & Means	Shewmake	Support

Other Bills

Bill #	Abbrev. Title	Short Description	Status	Sponsor	Position
HB 1071 (SB 5058)	Recycling rates	Implementing strategies to achieve higher recycling rates within Washington's existing solid waste management system.	H Env & Energy	Fey	
HB 1118	Firearm rights restoration	Concerning restoration of the right to possess a firearm.	H Civil R & Judi	Simmons	Support
SHB 1132	Bulk firearm purchases	Enhancing public safety by limiting bulk purchases and transfers of firearms and ammunition.	H CRJDPS	Farivar	Oppose
SHB 1141 (SB 5468)	Ag. cannabis workers	Concerning collective bargaining for agricultural cannabis workers.	H Rules R	Ortiz-Self	
SHB 1149 (SB 5376)	Cruelty to animals	Preventing cruelty to animals.	H Rules R	Hackney	
HB 1150 (SB 5284)	Solid waste management	Improving Washington's solid waste management outcomes.	H Env & Energy	Berry	
HB 1152	Firearm storage	Enhancing public safety by establishing secure storage requirements for firearms in vehicles and residences.	H CRJDP	Doglio	Oppose
SHB 1163 (SB 5140)	Firearm purchase	Enhancing requirements relating to the purchase, transfer, and possession of firearms.	H CRJDPS	Berry	Oppose
HB 1173 (SB 5447)	High-hazard facility wages	Concerning wages for journeypersons in high-hazard facilities.	H Rules R	Bronoske	

HB 1181	Labor standards	Concerning labor standards and the Washington minimum wage act.	H Labor & Workpl	Mena	
HB 1184	Overtime exemption	Creating a narrow exemption from overtime provisions for certain nonprofits and small businesses.	H Labor & Workpl	Schmidt	
HB 1197 (SB 5166)	Operating budget, supp.	Making 2023-2025 fiscal biennium second supplemental operating appropriations.	H Approps	Ormsby	
HB 1198 (SB 5167)	Operating budget	Making 2025-2027 fiscal biennium operating appropriations.	H Approps	Ormsby	
HB 1218	Competency eval. & restor.	Concerning persons referred for competency evaluation and restoration services.	H Civil R & Judi	Farivar	
HB 1311	Gray wolves	Concerning the implementation of the recommendations of the department of fish and wildlife regarding the gray wolf.	H Ag&Nr	Engell	
HB 1320	Business & occupation tax	Modifying business and occupation tax rates to fund programs and services to benefit Washingtonians.	H Finance	Street	
HB 1409	Clean fuels program	Concerning the clean fuels program.	H Env & Energy	Fitzgibbon	
HB 1442 (SB 5354)	Gray wolf management	Providing flexibility for the department of fish and wildlife to collaborate with local governments to manage gray wolves.	H Ag&Nr	Abell	
HB 1588 (SB 5474)	Organic, etc. agriculture	Expanding opportunities for organic, regenerative, climate-smart, and sustainable producers.	H Ag&Nr	Bernbaum	
HB 1597 (SB 5487)	Agricultural overtime	Authorizing agricultural employers to select 12 weeks a year to employ workers for up to 50 hours a week before overtime applies.	H Labor & Workpl	Dent	Support
HB 1603	Medicare supp. coverage	Requiring guaranteed issue of medicare supplemental coverage to an individual who voluntarily disenrolls from a medicare advantage plan and enrolls in medicare parts A and B.	H HC/Wellness	Berg	
HB 1625 (SB 5631)	Back country search & rescue	Supporting back country search and rescue organizations and volunteers through the creation of the back country search and rescue grant program.	H Tech, Econ Dev	Stuebe	
HB 1630	Livestock methane emissions	Concerning livestock methane emissions.	H Env & Energy	Parshley	Oppose
HB 1779	Ag. employers/overtime	Authorizing agricultural employers to select 26 weeks a year to employ workers for up to 50 hours a week before overtime applies.	H Labor & Workpla	Dufault	
SB 5023 (HB 1561)	Domestic workers	Providing labor market protections for domestic workers.	S Labor & Comm	Saldana	
SB 5033	Biosolids/PFAS chemicals	Concerning sampling or testing of biosolids for PFAS chemicals.	S Environment, En	Wilson	

SB 5041	Unemp ins/strikes & lockouts	Concerning unemployment insurance benefits for striking or lockout workers.	S Labor & Comm	Riccelli	
SB 5055	Agritourism	Promoting agritourism in Washington.	S Loc Gov	Warnick	Support
SB 5056	WSP firearms records system	Concerning Washington state patrol providing firearm background checks when state record systems are unavailable.	S Law & Justice	Wagoner	Support
SB 5057	Agricultural real estate	Concerning ownership of agricultural real estate.	S Law & Justice	Wagoner	Support
SB 5058 (HB 1071)	Recycling rates	Implementing strategies to achieve higher recycling rates within Washington's existing solid waste management system.	S Environment, E	Chapman	
SB 5074	Turfgrass seed contracts	Concerning the payment of turfgrass seed contracts.	S Ag & Natural R	Boehnke	Support
SB 5078	Agricultural real estate	Concerning ownership of agricultural real estate.	S Law & Justice	Boehnke	Support
SB 5092	Farm machinery sales tax	Providing a sales and use tax exemption for qualifying farm machinery and equipment.	S Ag & Natural R	Boehnke	Support
SSB 5098	Weapons in certain areas	Restricting the possession of weapons on the premises of state or local public buildings, parks or playground facilities where children are likely to be present, and county fairs and county fair facilities.	S Ways & Means	Valdez	Oppose
SSB 5099	Firearms dealers	Protecting the public from gun violence by establishing additional requirements for the business operations of licensed firearms dealers.	S Ways & Means	Lovick	
SB 5117	Agriculture impacts	Protecting agriculture.	S Ag & Natural R	Muzzall	Support
SB 5140 (SHB 1163)	Firearm purchase	Enhancing requirements relating to the purchase, transfer, and possession of firearms.	S Law & Justice	Liias	Oppose
SSB 5165	Deer and elk damage	Concerning compensation in frontier counties for deer and elk damage.	S Rules 2	Short	Support
SB 5166 (HB 1197)	Operating budget, supp.	Making 2023-2025 fiscal biennium second supplemental operating appropriations.	S Ways & Means	Robinson	
SB 5167 (HB 1198)	Operating budget	Making 2025-2027 fiscal biennium operating appropriations.	S Ways & Means	Robinson	
SB 5171	Wolf predation	Concerning livestock damage due to wolf predation.	S Ag & Natural R	Short	Support
SB 5174	Wood burning devices	Concerning wood burning devices.	S Environment, E	Shewmake	Oppose
SB 5284 (HB 1150)	Solid waste management	Improving Washington's solid waste management outcomes.	S Environment, E	Lovelett	
SB 5343	NE WA wolf-livestock account	Concerning the northeast Washington wolf-livestock management account.	S Rules 2	Short	

SB 5350	Firearm background checks	Concerning background check system for firearms transfers.	S Law & Justice	Fortunato	
SB 5354 (HB 1442)	Gray wolf management	Providing flexibility for the department of fish and wildlife to collaborate with local governments to manage gray wolves.	S Ag & Natural R	Short	
SB 5384	Riparian programs review	Conducting a review of Washington's riparian programs.	S Ag & Natural R	Dozier	
SB 5385 (HB 1641)	Definition of timberland	Amending the definition of timberland for purposes of determining the real property excise tax for a governmental entity.	S Ag & Natural R	Chapman	
SB 5443	Fund-raising events	Concerning requirements for fund-raising events of bona fide charitable or nonprofit organizations.	S Business, Fin	Cortes	Support
SB 5447 (HB 1173)	High-hazard facility wages	Concerning wages for journeypersons in high-hazard facilities.	S Labor & Comm	Saldana	
SB 5474 (HB 1588)	Organic, etc. agriculture	Expanding opportunities for organic, regenerative, climate-smart, and sustainable producers.	S Ag & Natural Re	Lias	
SB 5485	Livestock identification	Concerning livestock identification.	S Ag & Natural Re	Warnick	Support
SB 5487 (HB 1597)	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
SB 5630	Farm fuel users	Continuing to provide payments to support farm fuel users and transporters for exempt fuel under the Washington climate commitment act.	S Environment, En	Dozier	
SB 5631 (HB 1625)	Back country search & rescue	Supporting back country search and rescue organizations and volunteers through the creation of the back country search and rescue grant program.	S State Gov/Trib	Goehner	
SB 5633	Subdivision of land	Concerning the subdivision of land.	S Loc Gov	Lovelett	

Legislative Department

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