



Session Watch

Monday, March 3, 2025 (day 50 of the 120-day Session)

Happy March! You will notice the bill list is much smaller this week as lawmakers have cleared two cutoffs that eliminate bill consideration along the way. This weeding out process narrows bill tracking lists down until March 12th when only the “second half” bills will remain.

Lawmakers have entered week 8 of the session with day 50 of the 105-day session kicking off this week. Last week, Fiscal and Transportation committees monopolized the agenda, conducting several public sessions to review countless bills and casting votes during prolonged gatherings that spilled into late hours. February 28, a Friday, signaled the session’s second pivotal deadline: the final chance for House fiscal committees and Senate Ways & Means and Transportation panels to deliver reports in their “house of origin”. With that hurdle cleared, lawmakers will pivot to the House and Senate floors, dedicating extended time to huddling with peers, hashing out policies, and deciding on legislation in chamber-wide votes. As discussed in earlier versions of this report, the next big milestone looms on March 12, when bills must secure approval and transfer to the opposing chamber to stay in play—except for budget-critical bills (NTIB), which can dodge these limits and race through to bolster support for state spending plans. This is known as “house of origin” cutoff that lawmakers will be working towards for the next 10 days.

Budget Negotiations

Last Thursday, Governor Bob Ferguson outlined a bold strategy to shrink state expenditures by roughly \$4 billion over two years. A major feature mandates most state workers to take one unpaid day off monthly starting in July, a tactic expected to conserve \$300 million. Key personnel, such as State Patrol officers and staff at correctional facilities and medical centers, would be spared. The blueprint also involves shedding 1,000 full-time roles through gradual turnover and slashing agency budgets for travel, gear, and routine costs. Ferguson’s team is also rethinking earlier financial pledges, arguing that some past investments may no longer fit the state’s strained economic reality. This approach seeks to tackle a forecasted \$15 billion shortfall over the coming four years.

Ferguson’s focus leans heavily on trimming expenses, postponing or scaling back state offerings—while safeguarding vital services like Medicaid, public schools, and homeless support. Among the cuts: \$90 million gained by shuttering vacant wards at Western State psychiatric facility in Lakewood, \$4 million from closing a section of the Special Commitment Center on McNeil Island for sex offenders, and another \$4 million by canceling a now-obsolete lease on a Department of Health storage site from the pandemic days.

State workers’ unions have slammed the proposal, urging higher levies on the wealthiest citizens to protect jobs. Ferguson, though prioritizing reductions, hasn’t closed the door on tax hikes and will weigh options after a revenue update in March. Democrats in the legislature fear a cuts-heavy plan could wound at-risk groups and advocate for new taxes, while Republicans and business leaders are cautiously cheering the governor’s proposals

Revenue Proposals

Governor Ferguson considers additional taxation a last-ditch measure and remains wary of a wealth tax pitched by his predecessor. Legislative Democrats, by contrast, are eager to pursue new revenue streams. During the course of this session, we have seen proposals like taxing tobacco, self-storage businesses, and gun and ammo purchases.

A wealth tax is another proposal we heard from the governor, which is a tax on investments like stocks and bonds. The version floated by ex-Governor Inslee—a 1% charge on personal fortunes topping \$100 million—might yield \$10 billion in four years, though it’d face courtroom battles and setup delays. Democrats have also suggested a corporate payroll tax, akin to Seattle’s JumpStart model, hitting firms with workers earning over \$175,000 annually with a roughly 2% rate. The problem with budgeting off of a wealth tax estimate is that wealth taxes are very easy to avoid. We remember when Washington State enacted its capital gains wealth tax and Amazon CEO Jeff Bezos was going to be subjected to a \$1.2 Billion tax, he simply moved his official residence to Florida and avoided the taxes last year.

As we go throughout the session you can follow along the [daily schedule of the legislature](#) and see the [Senate Floor Calendar](#) and the [House Floor Calendar](#).

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

Washington State Grange Legislative Advisory Committee Meetings Set:

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

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

WASHINGTON STATE GRANGE BILL TRACKING REPORT

High Priority Bills

Bill #	Abbrev. Title	Short Description	Status	Sponsor	Position
SSB 5252	Assembly halls/property tax	Removing the acreage limit on the property tax exemption for nonprofit public assembly halls and meeting places.	S Rules 2	Shewmake	Support

Other Bills

Bill #	Abbrev. Title	Short Description	Status	Sponsor	Position
SHB 1132	Bulk firearm purchases	Enhancing public safety by limiting bulk purchases and transfers of firearms and ammunition.	H Rules R	Farivar	Oppose
SHB 1141 (SB 5468)	Ag. cannabis workers	Concerning collective bargaining for agricultural cannabis workers.	H Rules R	Ortiz-Self	
2SHB 1150 (2SSB 5284)	Solid waste management	Improving Washington's solid waste management outcomes.	H Rules R	Berry	
HB 1152	Firearm storage	Enhancing public safety by establishing secure storage requirements for firearms in vehicles and residences.	H Rules R	Doglio	Oppose
2SHB 1163 (SB 5140)	Firearm purchase	Enhancing requirements relating to the purchase, transfer, and possession of firearms.	H Rules R	Berry	Oppose
HB 1173 (SB 5447)	High-hazard facility wages	Concerning wages for journeypersons in high-hazard facilities.	H Rules R	Bronoske	
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	
2SHB 1218	Competency eval. & restor.	Concerning persons referred for competency evaluation and restoration services.	H Rules R	Farivar	
HB 1320	Business & occupation tax	Modifying business and occupation tax rates to fund programs and services to benefit Washingtonians.	H Finance	Street	
HB 1334	Property tax revenue growth	Modifying the annual regular property tax revenue growth limit.	H Finance	Pollet	

2SHB 1409	Clean fuels program	Concerning the clean fuels program.	H Rules R	Fitzgibbon	
SHB 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 Approps	Stuebe	
2SHB 1912	Agricultural fuel/CCA ex.	Concerning the exemption for fuels used for agricultural purposes in the climate commitment act.	H Rules R	Dent	
HB 1921 (SB 5726)	Transportation revenue	Establishing new sources of transportation revenue based on motor vehicle use of public roadways.	H Transportation	Fey	Oppose
SSB 5023 (HB 1561)	Domestic workers	Providing labor market protection for domestic workers.	S Rules 2	Saldana	
SSB 5033	Biosolids/PFAS chemicals	Concerning sampling or testing of biosolids for PFAS chemicals.	S Rules 2	Wilson	
SSB 5041	Unemp ins/strikes & lockouts	Concerning unemployment insurance benefits for striking or lockout workers.	S Rules 2	Riccelli	
SSB 5055	Agritourism	Promoting agritourism in Washington.	S Rules 2	Warnick	Support
SSB 5074	Seed contract payment	Concerning the payment of turfgrass seed contracts.	S 2nd Reading	Boehnke	Support
2SSB 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 Rules 2	Valdez	Oppose
SB 5140 (2SHB 1163)	Firearm purchase	Enhancing requirements relating to the purchase, transfer, and possession of firearms.	S Law & Justice	Lias	Oppose
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	
2SSB 5284 (2SHB 1150)	Solid waste management	Improving Washington's solid waste management outcomes.	S Rules 2	Lovelett	
SB 5343	NE WA wolf-livestock account	Concerning the northeast Washington wolf-livestock management account.	H Approps	Short	

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