

WEEK of Monday, January 21, 2008

Environmental Community

Hot List for the STATE SENATE

For the sixth year in a row, the environmental community will be sending legislators and key stakeholders its weekly Environmental Community “Hot List” detailing positions on no more than ten of the highest priority issues for the upcoming week. Separate Hot Lists will be prepared for the House and Senate and distributed each Monday via email and in hard copy to your office. At the end of the document, you will find a list of environmental community organizations that contributed to the Hot List. We hope you find this communication helpful. Please feel free to contact me at clifford@wcvoters.org or 206-369-2235, if you have any questions.

Respectfully,

Clifford R. Traisman, State Lobbyist, Washington Conservation Voters & Washington Environmental Council

SENATE COMMITTEE ACTION

SB 6198: Authorizing the withdrawal of groundwater for fire prevention purposes.

Water, Energy and Telecommunications: Public Hearing

POSITION: *OPPOSE*

- Eliminates critical water resource protections in the guise of fire prevention by allowing unlimited groundwater withdrawals for “the application of water to trees or other vegetation in order to prevent or address hazardous fire conditions.”
- This bill lacks safeguards to prevent abuse, and would allow users to suck up to 5,000 gallons of water per day during the dry summer months when aquifers levels are most at risk.

SB 6307: Regarding Marine Managed Areas

Water, Energy and Telecommunications: Public Hearing

POSITION: *SUPPORT*

- Develops a coordinated plan for the state’s several state aquatic protection area programs, under the aegis of the Puget Sound Partnership.
- Calls for strategic network of marine managed areas to help achieve the Partnership’s goal to recover Puget Sound to health by 2020.

SB 6355: Concerning the imposition of tolls.

Transportation: Possible Executive Session

POSITION: *SUPPORT -- IF AMENDED*

- SB 6355 would set statewide direction for tolling policy. The definition of toll facility needs to be clarified to represent a broader definition that includes the transportation corridor, and ideally, the larger system.
- The 10% cap on spending of toll revenues for transit and choices must be removed so that the legislature can make specific spending decisions on a case-by-case basis. Amendments should also add “management” to the set of tolling purposes and add consistency with the state’s adopted greenhouse gas reduction goals.

SB 6395: Protecting orca whales from the impacts of vessels.

Natural Resource, Ocean, and Recreation Committee: Public Hearing

POSITION: *SUPPORT*

- This bill requires all vessels to maintain at least 300 feet from orca whales.
- Allows for enforcement of key element of whale recovery plan.

SB 6469: Regarding Urban Forestry (a.k.a. Evergreen Cities Act; Sen. Ed Murray, Prime Sponsor)
Senate Natural Resources, Oceans and Recreation: Possible Public Hearing

POSITION: *SUPPORT*

- Creates new urban forest program with standards, funding and increased technical assistance for cities and counties to preserve existing trees, restore urban forests on public lands and expand forest canopy in our cities, towns and suburbs.
- Trees, forests and vegetation in the places we live are one of the most cost effective ways to reduce stormwater runoff, water and air pollution and make our cities great places to live, work, shop and play.



SB 6483: Enacting the local farms-healthy kids and communities act. (a.k.a. Local Farms-Healthy Kids; Sen. Brian Hatfield, Prime Sponsor)

Agriculture and Rural Economic Development: Public Hearing and Possible Executive Session

POSITION: *SUPPORT*

- This bill will expand markets for Washington farmers and increase children's access to nutritious, locally-grown fruits and vegetables.
- By easing up on low-cost bidding restrictions, creating a Farm to School Program, and establishing new policies to get Washington-grown food to those who need it most, this environmental community priority will help support farmers, preserve farmland, and improve the health of Washington's kids.



SB 6516: Regarding greenhouse gases emissions and providing for green collar jobs (a.k.a. Climate Action and Green Jobs; Sen. Craig Pridemore, Prime Sponsor)

Water, Energy and Telecommunications: Public Hearing

POSITION: *SUPPORT*

- One of the four environmental community priorities for 2008, **now Governor request legislation as well.** This bill creates a structure and timeline for implementing the state's global warming pollution reduction goals, and creates a program to prepare Washington workers for new jobs in the clean energy economy.
- Last year, the Legislature adopted goals to reduce the state's global warming pollution, increase clean energy jobs, and reduce fossil fuel dependence. This bill ensures that the state delivers on those goals by providing concrete accountability for results.



SB 6580: Addressing the impacts of climate change through the growth management act (a.k.a. Local Solutions to Global Warming; Sen. Chris Marr, Prime Sponsor)

Government Operations & Elections: Public Hearing

POSITION: *SUPPORT*

- One of the four environmental community priorities for 2008, this bill adds a goal to the GMA of addressing climate change and provides local governments with the necessary tools and support to manage growth in ways that reduce climate emissions and adapts to the likely affects of climate change.
- Promising negotiations are underway with stakeholders on a substitute bill that ensures cities and counties will be able to inventory, measure and mitigate climate emissions in time for the next comprehensive planning cycle in 2011.



SB 6593: Providing for groundwater monitoring and assessments

Water, Energy and Telecommunications: Public Hearing

POSITION: *SUPPORT*

- Requires the department of ecology to better monitor groundwater levels in order to better determine existing resources and trends.
- Groundwater monitoring provides critical information necessary to balance competing water resource needs and shape long term policies to address the affects of climate change on our water resources.

Contributing Organizations

American Rivers ♦ Audubon Washington ♦ Climate Solutions ♦ Conservation Northwest ♦ Earth Ministries
Environment Washington ♦ Futurewise ♦ Heart of America Northwest ♦ Lutheran Public Policy Office ♦ Nature Conservancy
NW Energy Coalition ♦ People for Puget Sound ♦ Puget Soundkeeper Alliance ♦ Sierra Club ♦ Transportation Choices Coalition
WA Citizens for Resource Conservation ♦ Washington Conservation Voters ♦ Washington Environmental Council ♦ WashPIRG ♦
Washington Toxics Coalition ♦ Washington Wildlife and Recreation Coalition