



Washington State  
Association of Counties  
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# LEGISLATIVE BULLETIN

Serving Washington's Counties



Washington Association of  
County Officials  
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**February 23, 2001**

<http://www.wacounties.org>

**Bulletin #7**

## **This Could be Terminal!!**

Don't delay! Now is the time to call and move your favorite bill. All House bills must be out of the policy committees by Tuesday or they are dead for the Session. Senate bills must be out of the policy committees by Wednesday the 28<sup>th</sup>.

### **TRANSPORTATION GRINDS ON**

This week the House Transportation Committee continued its hearings on the Blue Ribbon Commission on Transportation (BRCT) bills. While the business community continues to say that the reform measures must pass before any funding measure, it is clear these bills will not be reaching the Governor's desk for some time.

On Thursday, testimony focused on bills dealing with accountability, revenue options, fund distributions and regional financing. WSAC and AWC testified jointly. In addressing the new mandates on local government, both associations stressed the need for null and void clauses. (It should be noted that I-601 prohibition on unfunded mandates is not limited to general fund programs.) In recent days, a number of counties have completed their review of the BRCT bills. Some counties report that the cost of meeting requirements in the bills is well beyond their current financial capacity.

The revenue options bill drew protests from various industries, urging the Legislators to "tax the guy behind the tree". Even the trucking industry, that had previously supported increased taxes to fund freight mobility improvements, apparently changed their position to oppose new taxes.

On the accountability measures, WSAC has been forthcoming on reporting performance through CRAB to the new Accountability Commission. The concern lies with the specific benchmarks or performance targets and the establishment of a new baseline in order to receive state funding. For instance, the fact that the county system includes a large number of gravel roads means that using the WSDOT Maintenance Accountability Program (MAP) to measure counties by just won't work. The Legislation would cut off state funding to counties that do not meet the new state benchmarks. Meanwhile, one conservative group began running radio ads this week urging the Legislature to not provide funds for transportation until the entire state and local system is reformed.

The regional funding issue remains shrouded in the fog of war. Some proponents swear it is only intended to fund local projects. Other proponents argue that it is key to financing major state systems projects in the Puget Sound core. In the next week or so some Legislators are promising specific proposals. Others, including at least one of the Transportation Chairs, say that they would prefer to focus on a statewide package this year and revisit the regional issue next year.

Meanwhile, the Senate Transportation Committee will begin next Monday to unveil amended proposals on the Blue Ribbon Transportation package. The new bills have yet to be released.

WSAC continues to believe there will be a transportation package this year. It is difficult to foresee how the Legislature's growing concern over the General Fund budget crisis, the drought and energy prices will change the dynamic. On the one hand, it should focus attention on the need for a strong economy supported by an adequate transportation system. On the other hand, leadership will be fighting several fires at once. Some Legislators will question the need to raise taxes to expand transportation but not to preserve human services and other state and local programs.

For questions or comments, please contact Jackie White (WSAC staff).

**BUDGET HOLE TAKES SHAPE AS LAWMAKERS AWAIT REVENUE FORECAST**

This week lawmakers formally received the bad news on rising costs on state entitlement programs. The total cost increase for the 99-01 Supplemental and the 01-03 Biennial Budgets totals \$293 million. As reported in last week's Bulletin, rising costs for health care for the poor, aged and disabled account for much of the problem (\$173 million). Only \$27 million of this health care problem is because of increases in the number of people eligible for DSHS coverage. Most of the problem is the increase in the cost of caring for elderly and disabled individuals – either because of new medical technology or because people are surviving to greater ages or with greater degrees of disability.

The next largest component of the problem is \$74 million for formula driven increases in K-12 for enrollment, better qualified teachers, and changes in the federal figures for the Seattle CPI, which drives the K-12 salary increase under I-732. In addition, the state shares the local problem of rising liability costs. Details of the problem are set out below:

	<u>99-01</u>	<u>01-03</u>	<u>Total</u>
Medical Assistance	41	132	173
Other DSHS Entitlement	--	11	11
K-12	14	60	74
Tort Liability Fund	--	<u>35</u>	<u>35</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>238</b>	<b>293</b>

In December, the Governor had balanced his budget with a combination of cuts in social service programs and fund shifts permitted by the new "two way street" provisions added to the I-601 spending limit last session. The Governor also proposed that public employees not covered by I-732, would receive lower pay increases. Since then, lawmakers have heard from angry social service advocates, public employees, and spending limit advocates. We hope they have also heard from you. We continue to hear that lawmakers will try to cut I-695 funding for counties and cities to help solve the budget problem. The temptation to take this course may grow when the state revenue forecast is updated on March 16.

**LEOFF 1 MEDICAL AND LONG-TERM CARE (HB 1072, SB 5191)**

The Senate Ways & Means Committee heard **SB 5191** this week and the testimony from counties, cities and fire districts was similar to the hearing in Appropriations last week. LeRoy Allison, Grant County Commissioner and WSAC Vice President, testified that insurance premiums had increased over 23% last year in the county and that the cost of LEOFF 1 members was the highest premium they paid. WSAC staff reminded the committee that one county had a former deputy in a nursing home for 15 years and that with the impacts of recent initiatives limiting local revenues, counties needed help in paying this liability. The committee was also told that if the estimated annual costs of \$35-40 million was appropriated each year the total unrestricted reserves would still be over one billion dollars.

WSAC sent a fax to all members this week asking them to contact legislators on the Ways & Means and Appropriations committees in support of the bills. If pressure is maintained by local governments there is a good chance these bills will advance.

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## TAXATION, BUDGET & FINANCE

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**SENIOR CITIZEN/EXEMPTION**

Last Thursday afternoon, the House Finance Committee took testimony on a host of senior citizen exemption/deferral measures. The bill that drew the most attention was **HB 1408**, which provides an exemption for widows and widowers of honorably discharged veterans. The veterans' organizations were there in force and the Co-Chair of the Committee asked the Committee to waive the rules so that the committee could vote the bill out that same day. The measure passed the committee by a unanimous vote and now is in the House Rules Committee.

Scott Noble, King County Assessor and Assessors' Legislative Chair, testified in favor of **HB 1393** and **HB 1438**, and also suggested that the committee consider an amendment so seniors would not have to count their Medicare insurance payments as income.

It is unclear what the committee plans to do with the other senior bills; **HB 1486**, **HB 1574**, **HB 1642**, particularly those that have significant fiscal loss for the state budget. Those that do not, generally result in a fairly significant tax shift so there are reservations by committee members in that regard, as well. **HB 1489** would result in a loss to the state of \$90 million and **HB 1574** does not cause a loss to the state, but there is a tax shift of over \$40 million. **HB 1642** causes a state loss of approximately \$2.5 million with an additional shift of \$1.5 million. **HB 1642** also would cause a loss to local districts of over \$9.5 million and a local shift in excess of \$4 million. These kinds of fiscal impacts obviously spell doom for most of these bills given the financial condition of the state.

**DAIRY FARMS/ANAEROBIC DIGESTERS/PROPERTY TAX EXEMPTION**

**SB 5947** was heard on Wednesday in the Senate Agriculture Committee. This measure gives a sales tax exemption and a property tax exemption for all real and personal property, meeting the definition of “dairy nutrient management equipment” used by a dairy farmer, and any real and personal property, meeting the definition of an “anaerobic digester” for a six-year period. The measure had a fiscal impact to the state of approximately \$500,000, so it will most likely go to the Senate Ways & Means Committee where its future is uncertain. Proponents of the bill argue the fiscal note was overstated and that there is virtually no fiscal impact. *Query: If there is no fiscal impact to this exemption bill, why would the proponents ask in the first place?*

**TIMBER TAX**

On Monday, the Senate Ways & Means Committee gave a do pass recommendation to **SSB 5702**, which is the WACO/Assessors’ revisions to the Timber Tax Statutes. The substitute bill had a few technical amendments that WACO staff had worked out with some of the small landowners and made no significant changes. The measure passed from the Senate Ways & Means Committee by a unanimous vote, and is now in the Senate Rules Committee. Assessors should contact members of the Senate Rules Committee asking for favorable action on **SSB 5702**. The members of the Senate Rules Committee are as follows: **Democrats** – Lieutenant Governor Brad Owen, Chair; Rosa Franklin, Vice Chair, Dow Constantine, Jeri Costa, Tracey Eide, Georgia Gardner, Betti Sheldon, Paull Shin, Sid Snyder, and Harriet Spanel. **Republicans** – Larry Sheahan, Alex Deccio, Patricia Hale, Harold Hochstatter, Jim Horn, Stephen Johnson, and James West.

The House version of the timber tax revision has been introduced in the House as **HB 2027** and was referred to the Natural Resources Committee. The measure has not been scheduled for hearing next week.

**COMPENSATING TAXATION/DEATH WINDOW**

Last Thursday afternoon, the House Finance Committee gave a do pass recommendation to **SHB 1450**, after they amended the bill making it virtually identical with the assessors’ recommendation. The vote was 10-0. The only difference now between **SHB 1450** and the Assessors’ bill is that the House bill provides a two-year period of time from the effective date of the act for any individuals whose spouse passed away while this “window” was “closed.”

Letters and calls of support to members of the House Rules Committee would be appreciated. The members of the House Rules Committee are as follows: **Democrats** – Frank Chopp, Co-Chair, Bill Grant, Kathy Haigh, Chris Hurst, Lynn Kessler, Steve Kirby, Val Ogden, Erik Poulsen, Aaron Reardon, and Pat Scott. **Republicans** - Clyde Ballard, Co-Chair, Jim Buck, Roger Bush, Shirley Hankins, Kathy Lambert, Barb Lisk, Dave Mastin, John Pennington, Mark Schoesler, and Bev Woods.

**DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE (DOR)/PROPERTY TAX BILLS**

**SHB 1467** is now on the calendar waiting for action, however, DOR’s other proposal, **SHB 1202** remains in the Rules Committee and did not move to the calendar along with **SHB 1467**. **SHB 1202** is the measure that includes the use of three years of data for personal property ratios. Assessors may want to also ask House Rules members for their support of **SHB 1202**, when you contact them on **SHB 1450**.

**DOR ASSESSMENT PROGRAM**

Also receiving a do pass recommendation from the committee was **HB 1489**, which requires DOR to develop property tax assessment improvement plans to provide for increased uniformity among counties. The measure passed the committee by a 10-0 vote and now goes to the House Rules Committee. This is **not** a DOR request bill.

**SUBSTANTIAL NEED/TIME LIMITATION**

On Tuesday afternoon, the House Finance Committee took testimony on **HB 1488**, which restricts the number of years that a jurisdiction may utilize the substantial need provisions. The measure says that a jurisdiction may do so, for a maximum of nine consecutive years and that for however many consecutive years that they do declare a substantial need, then they cannot do so for that many years in the future. In other words, if a county declared a substantial need for five years in a row, then ceased; they would not be able to do so for a period of five years. The only person testifying in favor of the measure was the prime sponsor Representative Mike Carrell from the 28<sup>th</sup> District.

**AG BURNING EXEMPTION – EXPANSION FOR ORCHARDS**

**HB 2070** has been introduced that amends the ag burning bill that passed last year to include machinery, equipment, and structures used more than half the time “for gathering, transporting, chipping, grinding, composting and incorporating orchard trimmings and take outs, and other agriculture debris in lieu of burning.” The bill makes a second substantial change by taking out the existing language that says this exemption only lasts until 2006. In other words, the bill is being broadened and the termination date is being eliminated. We are hearing from some of the rural counties that last year’s bill is causing a significant loss in personal property valuation. The elimination of the expiration date would result in that impact continuing indefinitely. The measure is scheduled for Friday (March 2) at 1:30 p.m. in the House Finance Committee. Officials who have concerns over the expansion of

this measure and/or the elimination of the expiration date should contact members of the House Finance Committee notifying them of their concerns.

#### **STATE OFFERS PROGRAM TO ASSIST SMALL FOREST LANDOWNERS**

Under a new program offered by the Washington State Department of Natural Resources, small forest landowners may now receive partial compensation for the trees they must leave along streams and rivers in order to protect water resources according to new forest practice rules. Acknowledged as a first of its kind in the country, the Forestry Riparian Easement Program provides monetary compensation to small landowners who are disproportionately affected by new forest practice rules. According to the state Legislature's Salmon Recovery Act of 1999, forestland owners must provide long-term, protective habitat for salmon and more than a dozen at-risk fish species that are impacted by logging, road building, and other regulated forest practices across nearly all Washington counties.

In May of 2000 the Washington Forest Practices Board adopted new forest practice rules to implement the Forests and Fish Report, the result of two years of negotiation between the timber industry, small forest landowner organizations, tribal governments, state and federal agencies and counties. Recognizing that the new laws governing timber management activities would have a proportionately greater impact on small landowners, the Legislature created the easement program to offset the loss in revenue to small forest landowners, thereby promoting their economic viability and maintaining the public values provided by their lands.

The rules authorize the Department of Natural Resources to purchase 50-year easements from qualifying landowners to protect harvestable timber near fish-bearing streams and other aquatic areas. In general, qualifying landowners must have a history of selling less than 2 million board feet of timber annually, possess 50-year rights to the protected timber, and hold an approved forest practices permit. To administer the program, the Small Forest Landowner Office has been established within the Forest Practices Division of the Department of Natural Resources. The Office serves as a focal point for small forest landowner concerns and issues. By actively engaging the public, the Small Forest Landowner Office is working to create and promote incentives to help small landowners keep their land in forestry use, and continue their contributions to public values. The Office is also developing criteria for alternate management plans that will allow small forest landowners site-specific flexibility in their management operations while providing riparian function. For more information on the Forestry Riparian Easement Program and other assistance provided by the Small Forest Landowner Office, please call the Office at: 360-902-1389, e-mail at: sflo@wadnr.gov, or visit their website at: www.wa.gov/dnr/sflo.

## **LAW & JUSTICE**

#### **LAW AND JUSTICE**

**SB 5896**, DNA testing of evidence, has major implications for both law enforcement and county clerks. **SB 5896**, heard in Senate Law and Justice today, sets a process for convicted felons who are still in custody to petition the court for DNA testing of evidence. The bill suggests that custodian of the evidence should keep the biological evidence in a "condition suitable for DNA testing." Subsequent to trials, evidence is inventoried and stored, but the maintaining biological evidence most likely requires specialized conditions. In **SB 5896**, the state is to pay for DNA testing or the felon, if possible, but there is no assistance for court appointed counsel and court support for additional hearings. The companion, **HB 1889**, will be heard tomorrow, February 23, at 8:00 a.m. in the House Criminal Justice and Corrections Committee.

#### **NONPARTISAN SHERIFFS**

**SB 5141**, the Sheriffs' recommendation requiring the office of county sheriff to be nonpartisan, is on the Senate calendar awaiting a vote by the whole body. Sheriffs need to call their State Senators and ask for a yes vote.

#### **FISH & WILDLIFE ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS**

**HB 2153** and **SB 6076** modify the powers of fish and wildlife law enforcement officers. Both bills would require all fish and wildlife officers employed after the effective date of this act to successfully complete the basic law enforcement academy course, or the basic law enforcement equivalency certification course. The two courses are sponsored by the Criminal Justice Training Commission.

**HB 2153** is scheduled for a hearing in House Natural Resources on 2/26/01 at 10:00 a.m. **SB 6076** is scheduled for both public hearing and possible executive session in Senate Judiciary on 2/27/01 at 8:00 a.m.

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**COURTS**


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**2001 COUNTY CLERK PRIORITY BILL**

**HB 1793**, Tax warrants, was heard in the House Judiciary Committee last Friday. Grant County Clerk Ken Kunes risked the mountain passes to stay and testify for **HB 1793**. In order to get **HB 1793** out of Committee, it will be amended to remove the filing fee increase for disclaimers of interest. The tax warrant filing fee will go to \$20.00 with the first \$5.00 subject to the PSEA split. County Clerks are encouraged to call House Judiciary Chairs and members to encourage their support. The companion bill, **SSB 5115** is still in Senate Rules Committee but it is hopeful that the contacts made by county clerks will move it when Rules meets again.

**2000 COUNTY CLERK PRIORITY**

**HB 1864**, Family law information, was heard today in the House Judiciary Committee with Thurston County Clerk Betty Gould testifying. **HB 1864** is the result of extensive collaboration among clerks, the State Bar Association, OAC, DCS, and the federal government to remove social security numbers and financial information from family law files. **SB 5975**, the companion bill, will be heard on Monday, February 26, at 10:00 a.m. Now is the time to thank sponsors Representative Mary Lou Dickerson and Senator Jeri Costa and to contact both members on both Judiciary committees to encourage their support of **SB 5975** and **HB 1864**.

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**ENVIRONMENT, LAND USE & RESOURCES**


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**SUPREME COURT LIMITS GROWTH BOARD JURISDICTION TO GMA-PLANNING COUNTIES**

The jurisdiction of the Growth Management Hearings Boards was limited yesterday in a decision handed down by the Washington State Supreme Court. In *Moore v. Whitman County*, the Court was faced with an appeal of Whitman County's critical area designations. The Court reversed and dismissed the case, finding that the Boards only have jurisdiction over counties that are required or choose to plan under the Growth Management Act. The Court found that because Whitman County is not required and has not chosen to plan under the GMA, the Eastern Washington Growth Management Hearings Board lacked jurisdiction to enter the order that was the subject of the case. Writing for the Court, Justice Sanders said the language used by the Legislature to grant jurisdiction to the Boards is clear and unambiguous and required no judicial interpretation – Boards only have jurisdiction over counties that plan under the GMA.

A stinging dissent by Justice Talmadge, sitting as a justice pro tempore, states that Boards are the administrative agency designated in statute to review critical area ordinances, even for counties not engaged in comprehensive planning under the GMA. Justice Talmadge argues that the Legislature divided up the jurisdiction of Boards on a geographical basis, but did not limit Board authority to hear petitions for review of critical area ordinances adopted pursuant to the GMA. To read the opinion, visit [www.courts.wa.gov](http://www.courts.wa.gov).

**LITTLE NEWS ON SHORELINES LEGISLATION**

No shorelines legislation moved from Committee or was even discussed in Committee during this past week. It is expected that something will move from the Senate Natural Resources, Parks and Shorelines Committee before the cut-off on Wednesday. It also appears possible that a bill exempting both on-going and new agricultural practices from the Act may emerge from the House Local Government and Housing Committee. There is not likely agreement to move anything more than that in the House at this point.

**COUNTY PANEL ILLUSTRATES BENEFITS OF RURAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT TAX CREDIT**

Grant County Commissioner and WSAC Vice-President LeRoy Allison, Cowlitz County Commissioner Jeff Rasmussen and Skagit County Budget Manager Alicia Huschka all described to a joint meeting of two House Committees the projects underway in their counties using the .08 tax credits for rural economic development put in place during 1999. Both the House Local Government and Housing Committee and the House Trade and Economic Development Committee spent over two hours on testimony and discussion about the need and progress of rural economic development efforts. DCTED provided a preliminary report on use of the funds statewide.

Commissioner Allison stressed that counties need the broadest authority to use the tax credit as possible. Economic development needs and opportunities differ among jurisdictions. Commissioner Rasmussen downplayed the emphasis that some committee members appeared to place on creation of high-paying jobs with the tax credit, explaining that in Cowlitz County, “we not only need family-wage jobs, we need welfare-to-work transition jobs.”

Although the Committee generally appeared pleased with the progress, House Trade and Economic Development Co-Chair Velma Veloria (D-King County) wants more tracking of job creation results and salaries as a result of the tax credits provided.

**WATERSHED ASSESSMENT AND PLANNING GUIDANCE OUT FOR PUBLIC REVIEW**

The Governor's Salmon Recovery Office has released for public comment two lengthy inter-related documents titled *Statewide Watershed Assessment Guidance for Salmon* and *Guide for Watershed Plans for Salmon Habitat*. The guidance documents were developed to assist watershed planning groups and governmental agencies to help bring together different assessment elements and approaches and to help ensure that information from watershed assessments can be rolled up to the scale of salmon recovery regions.

After comments have been incorporated into the guidance documents, the state intends to seek formal recognition from the National Marine Fisheries Service that those using the guidance will qualify for an exception from "take" under the ESA 4(d) rule recently adopted by NMFS for salmon and steelhead. Limit 8 of the 4(d) rule provides protection from "take" liability for local habitat restoration activities that are consistent with NMFS-approved guidelines for watershed conservation.

Comments are due to the Salmon Recovery Office by March 30. For copies, contact Cheryl Vance at 360-902-2216 or [Cheryl.Vance@esa.wa.gov](mailto:Cheryl.Vance@esa.wa.gov).

For questions on the *Guide for Watershed Plans for Salmon Habitat*, contact Phil Miller at 360-902-2219 and for questions on the *Statewide Watershed Assessment Guidance for Salmon*, contact Steve Leider at 902-2242.

**GMA TIMELINE BILL HAS PUBLIC HEARINGS IN BOTH THE HOUSE AND SENATE COMMITTEES**

The Washington State Association of Counties (WSAC) and the Association of Washington Cities (AWC) is advocating for amendments to the current statutes that now require all GMA planning jurisdictions to review and update if necessary, local GMA plans and development regulations by September 2002. **HB 1588** and the companion bill **SB 5841** would establish new deadlines beginning in 2004 over a 4-year period. Both bills have been given public hearings and now await executive action in their respective committees.

WSAC and our partners within the AWC appreciate consideration of these measures and encourage all GMA-planning jurisdictions to convey your support for these bills to your legislators.

Please contact WSAC staff, Jackie White for questions or comments.

**REALTORS' ASSOCIATION PUSHES FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT USING GMA AS THE TOOL**

Promoted by the Washington Realtors' Association, **HB 2056** and the companion bill **SB 6070** would make substantial changes to the growth management act (GMA) in order to promote economic development. This measure would mandate that all GMA-jurisdictions adopt an economic development component in local comprehensive plans and requires plans to include extensive costly data elements. It further requires additional monitoring of the development activity and analyzing the residential and employment capacity of the urban growth areas.

The house bill was up before the House Local Government Committee Thursday, Feb. 22. Both WSAC and Pierce County opposed the bill, but supported the notion that this measure would allow rural counties to expand the siting of new small-scaled businesses. The Senate version will be heard on Monday, Feb. 26<sup>th</sup> before the Senate State and Local Government Committee. The hearing begins at 1:30 pm and will be held in SHR 3. WSAC staff is organizing a panel of counties to testify in opposition to this bill.

Please contact Jackie White, WSAC staff, for more information or comments.

**AFW DRAFT GUIDELINES OUT FOR COMMENT**

The Agriculture, Fish and Water (AFW) Irrigation District process has released a draft guidelines document for irrigation districts on how to prepare comprehensive management plans. The AFW process includes two consecutive processes: in addition to the Irrigation Districts' effort, there is an attempt underway to update farm conservation practice standards found in the "Field Office Technical Guide" (FOTG) developed by the federal Natural Resources Conservation Service.

The informal comment period on the Irrigation District guidelines runs from February 12 through March 13. Public workshops will be held at 3:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m. on the following dates and locations:

**February 26**

Labor and Industries Bldg. Auditorium  
7273 Linderson Way SE  
Tumwater, WA

**March 1**

Benton County PUD Auditorium  
2721 W.10<sup>th</sup> Ave  
Kennewick

February 28  
Wenatchee Convention Center,  
Rooms Gala 3-4  
Wenatchee

Comments should be sent to Paula Smith, Washington Conservation Commission, P.O. Box 47721, Olympia, WA 98504.

## HEALTH, PUBLIC HEALTH & SOLID WASTE

### **SB 6043** - Recycling Discarded Vehicle Tires.

Declares that, for the purposes of RCW 70.95.020, 70.95.260 and 70.95.530, the phrase "new technologies to convert discarded vehicles into energy" means the use of tires as a fuel source with an electro thermal technology used in a noncombustive, oxygen-reduced process, that results in low emissions of air pollution, produces highly stable, leach-resistant products that are of commercial value, and is a net producer of energy.

### **SB 6044** - Modifying Requirements Concerning On-Site Sewage Disposal Systems.

Recognizes that a major source of nonpoint pollution is failing on-site sewage disposal systems. The 1999-2001 Puget Sound water quality work plan, developed by the Puget Sound water quality action team, indicates that local governments have reported failure rates for on-site sewage disposal systems of up to twenty-five percent along the shoreline of Puget Sound. Finds that pollution from these failing systems poses a risk to public health and water quality, and significantly impacts the shellfish industry. Finds that the public health and water quality can be better protected by: the development of better data; the development of clear lines of responsibility between the designers, installers, and homeowners; and clarifications to the existing law regarding on-site sewage disposal systems.

### **SB 6067** – Creating an Advisory Committee on Cancer Coordination and Control.

This bill establishes an advisory committee on cancer coordination and control in the Department of Health. The committee shall recommend to the secretary a plan for the statewide implementation of an interagency comprehensive coordinated cancer control program that includes, but is not limited to: (1) Identify and examine the limitations and problems associated with existing laws, regulations, programs, and services related to cancer control; (2) Examine the awareness of, access to, and financing of cancer control services for Washington's citizens, with attention paid to the uninsured and underinsured, and regional and urban/rural differences; (3) Advise the secretary on a coordinated, effective, and efficient use of resources; (4) Identify and review health promotion and disease prevention strategies relating to the leading causes of cancer mortality and morbidity; and (5) Support and encourage state research efforts to find a cure for cancer.

This bill would begin to address a concern expressed at the last WSAC Legislative Steering Committee meeting that there should be a coordinated approach to cancer rather than a piecemeal, cancer-by-cancer, approach.

### **HEARINGS OF INTEREST TO PUBLIC HEALTH & SOLID WASTE**

In addition to the public hearings, much emphasis will be on the Executive Sessions in the Policy Committees as they try to get bills passed out prior to first cutoff.

#### **House Appropriations:**

3/01/01 1:30 pm HHR A

**HB 1058** – Providing Assistance to Treat Breast & Cervical Cancer

#### **House Health Care:**

2/27/01 1:30 pm HHR C

**HB 1759** – Allowing for the Sale of hypodermic syringes and needles to reduce the transmission of blood borne diseases

#### **House Transportation**

2/26/01 3:30 pm HHR B

**HB 1460** – Enforcing Seat Belt Laws as a Primary Action.

3/1/01 1:30 pm HHR B

**HB 1772** – Strengthening Child Safety Restraint Laws

#### **Senate Health & Long Term Care:**

2/28/01 1:30 pm SHR 4

**SCR 8408** – Establishing a blue ribbon Commission on Medical Care cost and access.

#### **Senate Transportation:**

2/26/01 3:30 pm SHR 1

**SB 5782** – Enforcing Seat Belt Laws as a Primary Action

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**HUMAN SERVICES, JUVENILE JUSTICE & HOUSING**


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**HUMAN SERVICES, JUVENILE JUSTICE, AND HOUSING HEARING WEEK OF FEBRUARY 26 – MARCH 2**

This is the final week of hearings and executive sessions in the policy committees of origin. Hundreds of bills will die in Senate Ways & Means and House Appropriations by the end of the week and on Saturday, March 3 due to what was already a tight budget year becoming hundreds of millions of dollars worse. Anything new with a fiscal note is expected to die. In those committees where bills aren't listed but just executive session or public hearing, the bills won't be announced until the day of the hearing. On that day, the agenda can be obtained from the Committee Assistants whose phone numbers are all available on the Legislative website. For the primary health and human services and fiscal committees, the phone numbers are:

House Children and Family Services 360-786-7144  
House Health Care 360-786-7104  
House Appropriations 360-786-7204

Senate Health & Long-Term Care 360-786-7436  
Senate Human Services & Corrections 360-786-7407  
Senate Ways & Means 360-786-7710

**Monday, February 26, 10:00**

House Criminal Justice & Corrections  
Executive Session

Executive Session on:

**HB 1759**, Distribution of syringes  
**HB 1629**, Mental Health Ombuds

**Monday, February 26, 1:30**

Senate Health & Long-Term Care  
**SB 5986**, Public psychiatric facilities (Pierce County bill)  
Senate Education

Senate Ways & Means  
Public Hearing and Executive Session Announced Day of Hearing

**SB 5544**, Mental health evaluations in school

House Children & Family Services

Executive Session on:

**HB 1338**, Developmental disabilities ombuds

**HB 1994**, Revising availability of community support services for persons with developmental disabilities

House Local Government & Housing

Executive Session

**Wednesday, February 28, 1:30**

Senate Health & Long-Term Care  
Work Session on Health Care Cost and Access

**Wednesday, February 28, 3:30**

Senate Ways & Means  
Public Hearing and Executive Session – bills to be announced day of hearing

**Monday, February 26, 3:30**

Senate Ways & Means

**SB 5965**, Raising the real estate excise tax for affordable housing

**Thursday, March 1, 1:00**

Senate Ways & Means

Public Hearing and Executive Session – bills to be announced day of hearing

**Monday, February 26, 6:00**

House Local Government & Housing

Executive Session

**Thursday, March 1, 1:30**

House Appropriations

**HB 1259**, Services for kids between 18 – 21

**Tuesday, February 27, 8:00**

House Juvenile Justice

**HB 2042**, Youth courts

Senate Labor and Commerce and Financial Institutions

**SB 6075**, Creating a housing preservation task force

**Friday, March 2, 1:30**

Senate Ways & Means

Public Hearing and Executive Session – bills to be announced day of hearing

House Appropriations

**HB 1197**, Increasing penalties for methamphetamine manufacture

**Tuesday, February 27, 10:00**

Senate Health & Long-Term Care

Executive Session

**Saturday, March 3, 9:00**

House Appropriations

Public Hearing and Executive Session – bills to be announced day of hearing

**Tuesday, February 27, 1:30**

House Health Care

**YOUTH COURTS**

**HB 2042** and **SB 5692**, Youth Courts, are the Snohomish County proposals, endorsed by the WACO membership and are being very well received the legislature. Snohomish County Clerk Pam Daniels testified for **SB 5692** last week in the Senate Human Services and Corrections Committee. **HB 2042** will be heard in the House Juvenile Justice Committee on Tuesday, February 27 at 8:00 a.m.

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**TELECOMMUNICATIONS**


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**WIRELESS 911 TAX BILL IN WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE**

**SB 6034**, which would establish a new statewide tax on wireless phones for enhanced 911 service, was heard February 22 in the Ways and Means Committee.

Representatives of King, Kittitas and Snohomish counties testified in support of the bill. Several other counties, including Wahkiakum, Lincoln, Asotin and Pacific, have indicated they also support the bill. The WSAC Legislative Steering Committee has not yet taken a formal position on the bill, which was just introduced last week by the wireless industry. The issue likely will be on the agenda for discussion at the next WSAC Legislative Steering Committee meeting.

The bill would establish a new statewide 45-cent per month tax on wireless phones to pay for wireless E-911 services. This would allow E-911 agencies to identify the call-back number and location of emergency calls that originate from cell phones. Of the proposed 45-cents state tax, 25 cents would be distributed back to the counties. But the bill requires that the first priority for use of all wireless funds shall be full reimbursement to the carriers. The bill does not limit the amount of carrier reimbursement.

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**OF GENERAL INTEREST**


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**ASOTIN COUNTY PROSECUTOR TAKES DISTRICT COURT JUDGE POSITION**

Asotin County Prosecuting Attorney Ray Lutes was appointed as a District Court Judge last month after serving eight years as Prosecutor. Ray once served as an intern in the Washington Association of Prosecuting Attorneys' offices in Olympia (1978). Congratulations to him in his new position! County Commissioners have appointed Ben Nichols as the new prosecutor to fill the unexpired term.

**ARCHIVES NEWS**

**HB 1925** and **HB 1926**, Archives funding, have been combined into **SHB 1926** which removes the sunset on the auditors' surcharge and increases it to \$2.00 and very narrowly defines what the increase can be used for. The new language removes "state" from records managements and further states that any portion of an electronics records facility used by the state must be paid by the state. The House Appropriations Committee heard the bills on Monday. There is further discussion among local government groups that the bill should be further amended to read "facility" – meaning one as in Spokane and that a sunset provision should be built into **SHB 1926**. **SB 5892** and **SB 5893**, the companion bills, will be heard in the Senate State and Local Government Committee on Monday, February 26, at 1:30 p.m.

**BILL STATUS**

Status of bills of interest to county officials may be found at <http://www.wacounties.org/waco/leg.pdf>.

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**ELECTIONS**


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**ELECTIONS AND OTHER BILLS OF INTEREST**

A number of county auditors gave up their Monday holiday to come to Olympia to testify on a variety of bills. Al Brotche testified at the Senate Transportation Committee meeting on **SB 5274**, an auditor request bill dealing with some outdated language pertaining to the sub-agent selection process. There was some confusion on what the bill does; however, Al was able to set the record straight. Bob Terwilliger testified in front of the House Appropriations Committee on the archives bills, **HB 1925** and **HB 1926**. A proposed substitute bill was presented at the hearing and Bob spoke in favor of the substitute bill.

Suzanne Sinclair, Vern Spatz, Kim Wyman and Bob Terwilliger all attended a House State Government Committee hearing at 8:00 pm Monday evening. A variety of bills dealing with the state primary election date and postmark dates on absentee ballots were heard in the committee. The auditors told committee members that their preference on the primary date is June, but that they would also consider an August date. The auditors also testified that they do not want to change the procedures for when absentee ballots are to arrive in the elections offices; either postmarked on election day or an absentee ballot can be brought into the auditor's office or polling place.

**HB 1228**, reimbursement for even-year election costs and **HB 1108**, allowing the Secretary of State's office to observe county election facilities, both were passed out of the House State Government committee on Monday night. **HB 1288**, would require the state to pay for a pro rata share of election costs as is done in odd-year elections. Unfortunately, in the odd-numbered year, there are rarely any state offices on the ballot, generally only initiative and referenda measures. During the even-numbered year is when all statewide and legislative races are on the ballot. For the 2000 election cycle, this would have resulted in an additional \$12.6

million that would have gone to the counties. The bill has been sent to the House Appropriations Committee. We urge all county elected officials to call their Appropriations Committee members to support this bill.

Suzanne Sinclair and Bob Terwilliger were both at the Senate Labor, Commerce and Financial Institutions Committee to testify on **SB 5936**. **SB 5936**, adds an additional \$10 to any “real property” document recorded. The auditor could retain up to five percent of the funds. The recording fee is to assist in funding low-income housing as well as innovative housing demonstration projects for middle and moderate-income housing. Suzanne testified that the association has concerns about the bill. She mentioned that it would be very difficult to determine what a “real property” document actually is and secondly, the larger issue of adding another fee onto the existing recording fee. She also mentioned that for a county such as Garfield County that may only record about one hundred documents per year, using the formula as outlined in the bill, would only bring in about \$100 per year for the county. Suzanne suggested the committee may want to consider a different distribution method for these funds. After the hearing, Bob and Suzanne met with housing representatives and the State Office of Community Development staff to work on alternative language that would make the bill workable for the auditors.

On Wednesday, Greg Kimsey, Suzanne Sinclair and Bob Bruce testified in the Senate State and Local Government Committee on **SB 5704** and **SB 5783**. Greg testified in favor of **SB 5704**, which revises the election recount procedures. Suzanne and Bob Bruce testified in favor of **SB 5834**, which strengthens the Secretary of State’s Certification and Training bill. Both bills are Secretary of State request bills.

On Friday, Suzanne will be down to testify on **SB 5904**, in the Senate Agriculture and International Trade Committee. The bill revises procedures for conservation district elections. Grant County Auditor Bill Varney has been working with the conservation districts since last spring to revise some procedures in conservation districts elections as a result of legislation passed last year.

Next week will be spent primarily on working to get bills out of committee before the cutoff dates. Both **SB 5275**, the absentee/mail ballot bill and **SB 5273**, revising special filing dates, are scheduled for executive session today (Thursday, February 22) in the Senate State Government Committee. Both bills are WACO priority bills as well as being priority bills for the auditor’s association.

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## AUDITORS

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**HB 1993** was heard in the House Transportation Committee on Wednesday. The bill restores the fifty-cent fee on vehicle transactions for inclusion of those funds to be deposited in the Department of Licensing services account. The funds are to be used to maintain department owned equipment used by auditors and sub-agents for vehicle and vessel licensing transactions. The mechanism for collecting this fee was eliminated last year in a bill with I-695 provisions in it that was passed by the legislature last year. The County Auditors support this bill.

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## TREASURERS

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### **TREASURERS’ CLEANUP BILL**

The County Treasurers’ bill to make technical corrections in statute, **SB 5638**, was brought up in Executive Session Wednesday in the Senate State and Local Government Committee. A friendly amendment was made to Sec. 15 (nondelinquent tax deferrals to be collected by the Department of Revenue), and just as the bill was up for a vote, confusion was created by a question and wrong answer by two Senators, and the bill was put on hold. When the bill comes back up for consideration, most likely on February 22 (today), several officials will have made calls and cleared up the misunderstanding.

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## MEETINGS & WORKSHOPS

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### **PUBLIC WORKS BOARD OFFERS WORKSHOPS FOR LOAN APPLICATIONS**

The state Public Works Board, which administers the public works trust fund revolving loan account, invites county officials to participate in application workshops during the month of March. The purpose of the free workshops is to help applicants understand the application process and submit successful applications for the loan-interest loans.

In addition to public works officials, county budget officials and jail managers might also want to check out this year’s workshops. Two bills in the Legislature (HB 2116, SB 6015) would expand eligible project types to include jails and juvenile facilities, and if those bills are successful these projects will be included in the current application process and funding cycle.

Six workshops are scheduled around the state: Spokane on March 13, Pasco on March 14, Wenatchee on March 15, Longview on March 20, Tacoma on March 21 and Everett on March 22. The agenda will include information on the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund and the Public Works Trust Fund as well as technical assistance on operational and financing challenges.

For more information about times and locations, and to register for a workshop, contact the state Public Works Board at 360-725-5000 or [beth.Rockwell@pwb.wa.gov](mailto:beth.Rockwell@pwb.wa.gov). Loan application forms are already available online at [www.crab.wa.gov/pwtf](http://www.crab.wa.gov/pwtf).

## COMING EVENTS

**2001 Conferences, Meetings and Special Events:** Several changes and additions have been made to this list of conferences. Please make note of them.

### February

22-23 Washington State Association of County Auditors' Recording Conference, Enzian Inn, Leavenworth.

### March

2 Washington State Association of Counties Legislative Steering Committee Meeting, Washington Counties Building.

2-6 National Association of Counties' (NACo) Annual Legislative Conference, Washington Hilton Hotel, Washington, D.C.

13-15 Washington State Association of Sheriffs' and Oregon State Association of Sheriffs' Annual Joint Meeting, Seaside, Oregon.

16 Washington State Association of Counties Legislative Steering Committee Meeting, Washington Counties Building.

21-23 Association of County Human Services, Yakima.

30 Washington State Association of Counties Legislative Steering Committee Meeting, Washington Counties Building.

### April

13 Washington State Association of Counties Legislative Steering Committee Meeting, Washington Counties Building.

22-28 National County Government Week.

25-27 Washington Association of Prosecuting Attorneys' (WAPA) Annual Spring Training Program, WestCoast Olympia Hotel, Olympia.

27 Washington State Association of Counties Legislative Steering Committee Meeting, Washington Counties Building.

26-28 Washington State Association of County Clerks' and Superior Court Administrators' Joint Conference, Lakeway Inn, Bellingham.

### May

7-9 Washington State Association of County Auditors' Elections Conference, Yakima.

16-18 Association of County Human Services, Walla Walla.

21-24 Washington State Association of Sheriffs' and Police Chiefs' (WASPC) Spring Meeting, Sheraton Hotel, Tacoma.

23-26 National Association of Counties' (NACo) Annual Western Interstate Region (WIR) Conference, Hilton Waikoloa Village, Hilo, Hawaii.

### June

3-6 Government Finance Officers' Association (GFOA) Annual Conference, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

10-14 International Association of Coroners' and Medical Examiners' Annual Conference, Toronto, Canada.

11-13 Washington State Association of County Assessors' Annual June Conference, Olympia.

12-15 Washington State Association of Counties' (WSAC) Summer Conference, Cavanaugh's, Yakima.

15-21 International Association of Clerks, Recorders, Election Officials and Treasurers' Annual Conference, Billings, Montana.

18-22 Washington State Association of County Treasurers' Annual Conference, Red Lion Hotel, Wenatchee.

19-20 Washington Association of Coroners' and Medical Examiners' Annual Spring Training, Moses Lake.

19-22 Association of Washington Cities' (AWC) Annual Conference, Bellevue.

20-22 Washington State Association of County Auditors' Annual Conference, Quality Inn, Clarkston.

20-22 Washington State Association of Prosecuting Attorneys' (WAPA) Summer Training Program, Campbell's Lodge, Chelan.

23-27 National Sheriffs' Association Annual Conference, Marriott Marina, Fort Lauderdale, Florida.

24-29 Washington State Association of County Clerks' Annual Conference, Howard Johnson Hotel, Everett.

### July

13-17 National Association of Counties' (NACo) Annual Conference, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

16-18 Washington State Association of County Auditors' Finance/Licensing Conference, WestCoast Wenatchee Center Hotel, Wenatchee.

18-20 Association of County Human Services, Port Angeles.

22-26 National District Attorneys' Association (NDAA) Annual Summer Conference, The Westin Copley Place, Boston Massachusetts.

### August

27-30 Washington State Association of County Assessors' Annual Conference, Enzian Inn, Leavenworth.

### September

9-12 International Association of Assessing Officers' (IAAO) Annual Conference, Miami, Florida.

19-21 Washington Finance Officers' Association (WFOA) Annual Conference, Wenatchee.

19-21 Association of County Human Services, Ellensburg.

### October

1-5 Washington Association of County Officials' Annual Conference, Port Ludlow Resort and Conference Center, Port Ludlow.

### November

12-15 Washington Association of Sheriffs' and Police Chiefs' (WASPC) Annual Fall Conference, Doubletree, Pasco.

14-16 Washington State Association of Counties' (WSAC) Annual Legislative Conference, Silverdale Hotel on the Bay, Silverdale.

14-16 Association of County Human Services, Silverdale.

### December

13-14 Washington Association of Prosecuting Attorneys' (WAPA) Annual Winter Meeting, Crowne Plaza, Seattle.

## JOB ANNOUNCEMENTS

**Whatcom County**, in Bellingham, WA, has an opening for a part-time, 20 hrs. per week, **Social Worker**. This position requires a Master's degree in Social Work and 2 years of progressively responsible experience. Salary range: \$18.44 - \$23.43/hour, DOQ. Whatcom County offers excellent employer-paid medical, dental & vision benefits for employee and family, generous vacation, sick & holiday leave, pro-rated based on part-time hours. WA State Retirement system. Optional deferred comp & Flex 125 available. Application period closes 3/14/01. For required application packet contact Whatcom County Human Resources, 311 Grand Ave., Suite 107, Bellingham, WA, or call (360) 676-6802. For detailed job announcement visit our website at [www.co.whatcom.wa.us](http://www.co.whatcom.wa.us) or call the jobline at (360) 738-4550. Equal Opportunity Employer.

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**Whatcom County**, in Bellingham, WA, is seeking a **Public Health Nurse** to guide the professional and para-professional staff in both the STD and the HIV/AIDS programs within the division of Community Health & Wellness Services division of our Health & Human Services Department. This position requires a BS degree in Nursing including study in public health nursing and 4 years of public health experience, including 2 years as a lead. Must have a valid license to practice as a Registered Nurse in Washington State. Salary range: \$21.02 - \$26.71 / hr., DOQ. Whatcom County offers excellent employer-paid medical, dental & vision benefits for employee and family, generous vacation and sick leave, average 12 holidays per year, and WA State Retirement system. Optional deferred comp & Flex 125 available. Application period closes 3/19/01. For required application packet contact Whatcom County Human Resources, 311 Grand Ave., Suite 107, Bellingham, WA, or call (360) 676-6802. For detailed job announcement visit our website at [www.co.whatcom.wa.us](http://www.co.whatcom.wa.us) or call the jobline at (360) 738-4550. Equal Opportunity Employer.

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**Operations & Maintenance Supervisor - Kitsap County** - Salary Range: \$20.08 - \$25.62/hr. Closes: 03-16-01 Minimum qualifications: Specialized training in park facilities, landscape, and grounds maintenance, and six years of progressively responsible work experience in park maintenance with at least one year of supervisory or lead responsibility; or equivalent combination of education and experience.

For more info and application packet contact: Kitsap County Personnel, 507 Austin Ave., Mailing address: 614 Division St. MS-23, Port Orchard, WA 98366-4676 - (360) 337-7185 ext. 0, Kitsap County is an Equal Opportunity Employer. Check out our website: [www.wa.gov/kitsap](http://www.wa.gov/kitsap)