

WEEK of Monday, February 21, 2011

Environmental Community

Hot List for the STATE SENATE

As you are aware, the environmental community's "Environmental Priorities Coalition" prepares a weekly "Hot List" detailing its positions on up to ten of the **highest** priority issues for the upcoming week. Separate Hot Lists are prepared for the House and Senate and distributed each Monday. If the bill is one of the four environmental community priorities for 2011, it is so designated by the priorities "button" on the right. Please feel free to contact me at clifford@ctassociates.org or 206-369-2235 if you have any questions and we hope you find this communication helpful!

Respectfully,

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

POSSIBLE SENATE FLOOR ACTION

SSB 5231: Regarding the safety of certain children's products.

POSITION: *SUPPORT*

- Lead is just the tip of the toxic iceberg when it comes to toys and children's products. Recently, there has been cadmium in Shrek glasses, formaldehyde in baby blankets, toluene in "slime" toys. The law passed in 2008 gives the state the ability to get information from manufacturers on what harmful chemicals are in these products.
- The Children's Safe Products bill of 2011 simply requires manufacturers to identify safer alternatives if they are using harmful chemicals that have been prioritized by the Departments of Health and Ecology. The striker clarifies the definition of children's products and exempts certain products (forest and paper, food and drugs, and medical devices). It also preserves the legislature's authority to ban or restrict toxic chemicals in children's products.

SSB 5234: Creating a statewide program for the collection, transportation, and disposal of unwanted medicines.

POSITION: *SUPPORT*

- Requires no state funds and removes burden from Sheriffs, police, and local governments. Primarily financed by all drug producers, up to a maximum of about 1 penny for every \$16 of annual medicine sales.
- Education and take-back program to protect public safety and environment starts in 2014, allowing incorporation of new federal rules on take-back of controlled medicines.

SB 5575: Recognizing certain biomass energy facilities as an eligible renewable resource.

POSITION: *OPPOSE*

- Unfortunately and unexpectedly, a bill to erode I-937, the Clean Energy Initiative, appears to be moving through the Senate.
- This bill amends the definition of renewable resources in I-937 to include almost 120 aMW of biomass plants operating in Washington before 1999 and black liquor. Such changes to the law erode the purpose of I-937 to support new clean energy investment.
- I-937 already allows existing eligible resources, including biomass, from 1999 forward to qualify. The voters approved - and a clean energy economy requires - development of new renewable energy. Yet this bill would allow 30-year old facilities to qualify. The more existing resources are included as eligible resources the fewer new developments, new jobs and new economic activity the clean energy initiative will encourage.

SSB 5824: Concerning improving the electronic waste recycling program by including peripherals and converting to a market share funding mechanism.

POSITION: *SUPPORT*

- Expands the highly successful E-Cycle Washington recycling program to include printers, keyboards, digital video disk players, and other peripherals.
- Manufacturers will provide and pay for convenient recycling of peripherals from residents, small businesses and schools throughout Washington.

SENATE COMMITTEE ACTION

SSB 5457: Providing a congestion reduction charge to fund the operational and capital needs of transit agencies.

Transportation: Public Hearing & Possible Executive Session

POSITION: *SUPPORT*

- This bill preserves jobs, reduces congestion, and protects the environment by authorizing local governments and transit agencies in the central Puget Sound to impose a temporary congestion reduction charge to provide emergency funding for our critical transit service.
- Transit service faces a funding crisis in Washington State. Plummeting sales tax revenue is forcing transit agencies to slash service despite record-setting ridership.

SB 5536: Regarding the management of water resources

Ways and Means: Public Hearing

POSITION: *SUPPORT*

- This bill generates revenue for Ecology's Water Management Program and makes a number of needed changes to our water resource management system.
- While the bill needs some improvements, it is an important step forward to modernizing the management of our most precious resource.

SB 5713: Implementing recommendations of the Ruckelshaus Center process.

Ways & Means: Public Hearing & Possible Executive Session

POSITION: *SUPPORT*

- Implements the agreement worked out between the counties and agricultural & environmental interests after 3.5 years of negotiations at the Ruckelshaus Center. We ask that amendments only be supported if they are requested jointly by counties, farmers and environmentalists in order to preserve the agreement.
- Creates an alternative to the GMA for protecting critical areas and maintaining ag viability, by creating a voluntary stewardship program. We are all seeking federal funding to pay for the startup costs of program.

Contributing Organizations

American Rivers ▪ Audubon Washington ▪ Climate Solutions ▪ Conservation Northwest ▪ Earth Ministry ▪ Environment Washington
▪ Fuse ▪ Futurewise ▪ Heart of America Northwest ▪ The Lands Council ▪ League of Women Voters of Washington ▪ Lutheran Public
Policy Office ▪ National Wildlife Federation ▪ Nature Conservancy ▪ NW Energy Coalition ▪ People for Puget Sound ▪ Sierra Club
Cascade Chapter ▪ Surfrider Foundation ▪ Transportation Choices Coalition ▪ Washington Conservation Voters ▪ Washington
Environmental Council ▪ Washington Toxics Coalition ▪ Washington Wildlife and Recreation Coalition ▪ Zero Waste Washington