

WEEK of Monday, February 28, 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](mailto: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 5360: Delaying or modifying certain regulatory and statutory requirements affecting cities and counties.**

#### **POSITION: *OPPOSE***

- Last year we were willing to support a three year delay (from 2011 to 2014) of the next GMA update, out of respect for funding situation at the state and local levels. This bill effectively makes this one-time delay permanent.
- Weakens laws our communities depend on, like the growth management act and shoreline management act. Please remove sections 2 and 13 from the bill.

### **SSB 5431: Defining the attributes of null generation electricity.**

#### **POSITION: *OPPOSE***

- This bill attempts to clarify the attributes of retail electric utilities' fuel mix so that consumers are better informed on the sources of their electric power. As currently amended, however, the bill will have the unintended consequence of creating more confusion in the Western market for Renewable Energy Credits and risks double counting reductions in greenhouse gas emissions.
- We support the work underway to further amend the bill.

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

#### **POSITION: *SUPPORT***

- This bill preserves jobs, reduces congestion, and protects the environment by authorizing local governments and transit agencies in 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 5575: Recognizing certain biomass energy facilities as an eligible renewable resource.**

**POSITION: *OPPOSE***

- The purpose of I-937 is to support NEW clean energy investments and this bill substantially erodes that intent by amending I-937 to include black liquor and almost 120 aMW of biomass plants operating before 1999 - some older than 30 years. 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. The more existing resources are included as eligible resources, the fewer new resources, new jobs and new economic activity the clean energy initiative will produce.

**SB 5607: Establishing a process for the payment of impact fees through provisions stipulated in recorded covenants.**

**POSITION: *OPPOSE***

- Delaying impact fee collection will hurt a community's ability to build new streets, fire stations, schools, and parks. For example, a school needs this money immediately after the building permit is issued so they can be ready to handle new students as the new residents move in; the same is true for other infrastructure improvements.
- Impact fees were created to ensure that in many ways, new growth helps pay its way. SB 5607 makes the impact fee process more expensive and less certain. We are joined in opposition to this bill by the cities, counties, and schools districts.

**SB 5611: Regarding the use of designated agricultural lands.**

**POSITION: *OPPOSE***

- Counties, cities, and the state occasionally buy farmland for the sole purpose of permanent conservation or environmental mitigation. This is land that property owners willfully sell to the public. This bill now restricts the public's intended use for this land, wasting millions of dollars already spent across the state and making it more difficult for farmers to voluntarily sell their land for these purposes in the future.
- Should be amended to allow state & local governments to be able to use the land for compatible activities that property owners are allowed to perform on the same agricultural lands.

**SB 5730: Authorizing mileage-based automobile insurance.**

**POSITION: *SUPPORT***

- This legislation eliminates existing regulatory barriers to offering mileage-based automobile insurance policies, which leads to cost savings and affordability, reduces congestion, incentivizes less driving, results in reduced air pollution, traffic congestion, and carbon emissions.
- There are discussions between regulators, companies, and advocated to create a balanced bill that moves the policy forward and protects the privacy of policy holders and technology of companies. Please pass the sub that includes these changes.

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**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