WEEK of Monday, February 1, 2010

Environmental Community

Hot List for the STATE HOUSE

For the eighth 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

WORKING FOR CLEAN WATER: ***PLEASE CO-SPONSOR***
Later in the week a bill will be dropped that creates jobs, rebuilds local economies, and cleans up polluted waterways like Puget Sound and the Spokane River. By increasing the existing tax on Hazardous Substances (levied on petroleum and other toxic chemicals), the state can raise $450 million per biennium to fund job-creating clean water projects in every district and temporarily provide much needed dollars for the General Fund. The bill is prime-sponsored by Rep. Ormsby and supported by environmentalists, labor, local governments, and the Rebuilding our Economic Future Coalition. PLEASE CO-SPONSOR THIS ENVIROMENTAL COMMUNITY PRIORITY BILL!

1 of 3 Community Priorities For the 2010 Session

POSSIBLE HOUSE FLOOR ACTION

2SHB 1165: Providing safe collection and disposal of unwanted drugs from residential sources.
POSITION: ***SUPPORT***

- Drug producers will provide and pay for program to collect unneeded medicines including controlled substances such as narcotics. Producers can provide needed financial and logistical support to law enforcement, who can legally collect and dispose of controlled substances.
- Important public safety measure supported by WACOPS and many other organizations. The collected medicines will not cause accidental poisonings, be used illicitly by a teenager, or contaminate our water.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ACTION

HB 2597: Eliminating the HPA Permit Program.
Agriculture and Natural Resources: Public hearing
POSITION: ***OPPOSE***

- This bill would eliminate the entire HPA permit program at the Department of Fish and Wildlife. These permits are the only permits specifically designed to protect critical fish habitat from various types of development.

HB 2744: Protecting lake water quality by reducing phosphorus from lawn fertilizers.
Agriculture and Natural Resources: Possible Executive Session
POSITION: ***SUPPORT***

- Phosphorous from residential lawn fertilizers is a major water quality problem that, if not limited, will require local governments to spend millions on wastewater treatment plant upgrades.
- Broadly supported by local governments, business and environmentalists, this bill will prevent pollution by limiting phosphorous in lawn fertilizers.

HB 2853: Authorizing a local financing tool to fund energy efficiency upgrades and removing financial barriers to implementing conservation programs.
Technology, Energy & Communications: Possible Executive Session
POSITION: ***SUPPORT***

- This bill unlocks the full job-creating potential of making our homes and businesses more energy efficient by allowing municipalities to set up revolving loan programs that overcome the biggest barrier to money-saving conservation projects in Washington- the lack of up-front financing. Conservation loans are paid back with energy savings through utility or property tax bills.
- The bill also allows utilities to recover investments made to make our homes and businesses more energy efficient.

HB 2855: Providing financing options for the operations and capital needs of transit agencies.
Transportation: Possible Executive Session
POSITION: ***SUPPORT***

- Large and small transit agencies across the state are facing drastic budget shortfalls due to their dependence on sales taxes. If new, sustainable revenue is not identified in the next two years, agencies serving Anacortes, Walla Walla and everywhere between will be forced to make drastic cuts to their service, cuts that will hinder our region's economic recovery, clog our roads, prevent us from reducing greenhouse gas emissions and leave transit riders abandoned on the side of the road.
- This legislation provides a temporary tool that can help address transit agencies' revenue shortfalls during this economic crisis and directs the Joint Transportation Committee to create a statewide plan that will guide future investments in public transportation.

HB 2914: Reducing the release of mercury into the environment.
Environmental Health: Possible Executive Session
POSITION: ***SUPPORT PSHB 2914***

- Creates a producer-provided recycling program for CFLs and other mercury-containing lights from residents who currently have limited or no recycling options across the state. The program will protect people and the environment from mercury release while also bolstering consumer confidence in using energy-efficient lights that reduce greenhouse gases.
- Budget-neutral to the State. A fee paid by producers of mercury-containing lights recovers agency oversight costs.

HB 2935: Regarding environmental and land use hearings boards and making more uniform the timelines for filing appeals with those boards.
General Government Appropriations: Possible Executive Session
POSITION: ***SUPPORT PSHB 2935***

- This legislation seeks to streamline the process and timelines for environmental and land use appeals. It is part of the Governor's package to improve the efficiencies of the natural resource agencies.
- The proposed substitute ensures that the streamlining efforts also maintain existing levels of public participation and environmental protections. The filing deadlines for appeals that will go to the land use board will stay at 60 days; all other environmental appeals are given 30 day filing deadlines.

HB 2974: Reducing Ability of DFW to Enforce HPA Permits.
Agriculture and Natural Resources: Public hearing
POSITION: ***OPPOSE***

- This bill would virtually eliminate the ability of the Department of Fish and Wildlife to enforce HPA fish habitat permits.

HB 2992: Extending the deadlines for the review and evaluation of comprehensive land use plan and development regulations for three years.
Local Government & Housing: Public hearing & Possible Executive Session
POSITION: ***SUPPORT IF AMENDED***

- HB 2992 delays the next time local governments update their land use plans for three years. These updates are where cities and counties comprehensively review and revise their 20-year growth plans to reflect future land capacity & demand, population projection, and infrastructure funding.

- The amendment protects commercially significant farm and forest land from being converted to other uses during this 3 year delay. Paving over resource land is difficult if not impossible to undo; local governments should protect these non-urban lands from conversion until they are able to comprehensively review their land use plans.

HB 3018: Limiting the use of copper and other substances in vehicle brake pads.
Environmental Health: Public hearing
POSITION: ***SUPPORT***

- This bill calls for the phasing out of copper brake-pads. Copper from brake-pads is a major pollutant in stormwater runoff which is extremely toxic for salmon and other aquatic life.

Contributing Organizations

American Rivers ▪ Audubon Washington ▪ Climate Solutions ▪ Conservation Northwest ▪ Earth Ministry ▪ Environment Washington Fuse ▪ Futurewise ▪ Heart of America Northwest ▪ 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 ▪ Surfrider Foundation ▪ Transportation Choices Coalition ▪ Washington Citizens for Resource Conservation ▪ Washington Conservation Voters Washington Environmental Council ▪ WashPIRG ▪ Washington Toxics Coalition ▪ Washington Wildlife and Recreation Coalition