



2023-24 HOUSE OF ORIGIN CUTOFF

The Bills that Matter to Counties

UPDATED APR. 5



PRIORITY BILLS COUNTIES SUPPORT:

WSAC PRIORITY

HB 1670 is in House Rules. This bill replaces the current 1% annual property tax revenue growth limit for local governments with an annual growth limit of population growth plus inflation, not to exceed a total of 3%. This is a long-time priority for counties and was a recommendation of the tax structure work group.

WSAC LEGISLATIVE AGENDA PRIORITY

SHB 1267 has passed out of Ways & Means and is in Rules. It extends the current .09 rebate of the state portion of local sales tax generated in a county for public facilities and workforce housing projects. Amendments were added in Ways & Means with WSAC's support that enhance reporting requirements. This program is remarkably effective and has been in place for 25 years.

SSB 5353 is in House Rules and needs to be placed on a run calendar. The bill will allow more counties to "opt-in" to the Voluntary Stewardship Program (VSP). Currently, 27 of 39 counties participate in VSP, and others would like to join. This is a successful program for protecting ecosystem functions on agricultural lands.

2SHB 1425 passed out of Ways & Means and is in Senate Rules. This bill would renew the annexation sales tax credit for cities, incentivizing more annexation of developed lands in UGAs. It also requires cities and counties to enter into an interlocal agreement for the annexation.

SHB 1460 is in Senate Rules. This bill implements the recommendations of the trust land transfer work group and WSAC's encumbered lands proviso workgroup. It creates a program for replacing non-performing and underperforming trust lands.

WSAC LEGISLATIVE AGENDA PRIORITY

E2SHB 1515 is in Senate Rules. The bill requires the Health Care Authority to adopt regional standards for behavioral health networks managed by managed care organizations. Regional standards are needed to ensure timely and accurate access to care. Current standards are basically non-existent.

SSB 5358 is in House Rules. The bill creates a grant program for counties to expand and develop veterans' services and programs and peer mentoring programs throughout the state. We request that the legislature (1) maintain funding previously allocated to Steven, Clallam, Island, and Walla Walla Counties, and (2) that the state provides a meaningful level of funding for the intended expansion grants that are the primary goals of this bill.

SSB 5604 is in House Rules. This bill allows local governments to expand the use of the revenues from the chemical dependency and mental health treatment program sales and use tax to modify existing facilities to address health and safety needs necessary for the provision of the programs. It also allows local governments to retain 10% of the funds for administrative costs related to the tax.

E2SSB 5080 is in House Rules. Counties support this bill because it includes a requirement for the Liquor and Cannabis Board to honor local zoning restrictions when issuing licenses for new cannabis retailers.

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BILLS WITH WHICH COUNTIES HAVE CONCERNS:

ESHB 1050 has passed both chambers but with some differences. It would have required public works contracts awarded by a municipality estimated to cost more than \$1 million to include specifications that no less than 15% of the labor hours be performed by apprentices. We were concerned that a lack of available apprentices could mean contractors and municipalities would struggle to meet the new requirements, potentially impacting the number of qualifying bids.

The bill was amended on the Senate floor to include an improved phased-in approach. The bill now starts the utilization requirements at projects estimated to cost more than \$2 million and then lowers this threshold every two years so that by July 1, 2028, all contracts over \$1 million will have to include the apprenticeship utilization specifications. We supported this amendment to stair-step implementation of the new requirements and are requesting House concurrence with the bill as passed by the Senate. The amendment also included language to provide training and resources to local jurisdictions and to study and report out on program outcomes.

E2SSB 5536 is in House Rules. This bill makes knowing possession and use of a counterfeit substance, controlled substance, or legend drug a misdemeanor and encourages diversion and substance use disorder treatment, among other things. The state needs to provide sufficient programming, services, and funding for the implementation of this bill.

2SSB 5046 is in House Rules. This bill would provide the Office of Public Defense funding to appoint counsel for personal restraint petitions for certain individuals and provide the Court of Appeals funding for the increased caseload without providing similar funding to counties for the cost associated with prosecutor time. Costs for prosecutor time are estimated to be at least \$2.5 million statewide.

BILLS COUNTIES OPPOSE:

EHB 1337 is on the Senate calendar. It preempts local land use authority related to accessory dwelling units and it is far too prescriptive. It also imposes a requirement that local governments comply with agency guidance that has yet to be created administratively rather than through rulemaking or legislative action.

SSB 5235 is in House Rules. It creates a one-size-fits-all approach to mandates for accessory dwelling units that simply won't work in every unincorporated UGA in every county. It also preempts local authority regulating minimum parking and owner-occupancy requirements for short-term rentals.