



## Skagit County - Government Relations Report February 9, 2020

The first policy committee cutoff deadline was this last Friday, February 7<sup>th</sup>, while the first fiscal committee cutoff is next Tuesday, February 11<sup>th</sup>. Bills need to pass out of fiscal committees prior to the February 11<sup>th</sup> deadline to remain under consideration, greatly winnowing down the amount of bills being considered. The only exceptions to this deadline are bills that impact the state budget and have been deemed “necessary to implement the budget”. Bills without fiscal impact go to Rules Committee. The Rules Committee determines which bills will come to the floor; For the bills that prevail through the cutoff deadline and make it out of the Rules Committee, the House and Senate will meet on the floor to debate and vote on these bills.

Commissioner Dahlstedt joined us in Olympia this week for a series of meetings while he was in town for WSAC Legislative Steering Committee, including a successful meeting on housing with Rep. Ramel. We will look for opportunities for Commissioner Janicki to meet with key legislators in two weeks for the next Legislative Steering Committee meeting.

On Saturday, GTH-GA staff signed the County in to oppose [HB 2415](#), which changes election processes for special districts. The bill was heard in the Appropriations Committee but has not been scheduled for executive action. If it does not move out of committee by the end of the day on Tuesday, it will be “dead.”

### Legislative Priorities

#### Historic Skagit Courthouse Seismic Repairs

Skagit County is requesting \$150,000 in the Capital Budget for design and preconstruction for seismic repairs on the historic County Courthouse. [Rep. Alex Ramel](#) (D- Bellingham) has confirmed he is sponsoring the House request and submitted the forms. We are working with [Sen. Keith Wagoner](#) (R-Sedro-Woolley) and [Sen. Ron Muzzall](#) (R- Oak Harbor) to determine a path forward for this request in the Senate, including possible operating budget request. We will keep in close contact with the County as solutions are considered.

#### House Bill 1590 – Councilmanic Local Option Housing Sales Tax

Skagit County is supporting [House Bill 1590](#), sponsored by [Rep. Beth Doglio](#) (D- Olympia), as a potential tool for the County to fund affordable housing and human services programs. Both House Bill 1590 and its Senate companion, [Senate Bill 6126](#), have been referred to their respective Rules Committees; House Bill 1590 has been placed on second reading and will likely be pulled to the floor for a vote. Rep. Doglio has introduced an amendment that requires counties using the authority to split 30 percent of revenue with cities over 60,000 in population. This amendment appeases certain cities in King County wanting a dedicated revenue stream rather than County-administered appropriations for specific projects.

GTHGA emphasized the importance of House Bill 1590 at a stakeholder meeting held by Speaker Jinkins early this week. The comment was well-received by the Speaker, who has pledged to focus on housing and homelessness issues this session.



Supporting Other Association Priorities:

*Separate Funding Stream for Involuntary Treatment Costs*

Nothing to report this week.

*MAT Funding*

The Association of Washington Cities is seeking funding to increase the use of medication assisted treatment (MAT). Their current hope is to secure a budget proviso for an assessment of how to replicate the type of services being offered at the South Correctional Entity (SCORE) which is confinement center providing services to seven member cities located in south King County. SCORE provides a relatively high-level of treatment services, including MAT. This approach may prove useful in developing a model that can be replicated statewide. Rep. Irwin and Rep. Stokesbary have agreed to support the proposal in the House while Sen. Cleveland will be supporting in the Senate. AWC has been working with the sponsors of the proviso to find a suitable funding source and has identified [House Bill 2438](#) as a potential funding mechanism; the bill places an “impact” fee on opioid providers which is deposited in to the state Prescription Opioid Impact Account to be put towards treatment of substance use disorders.

*Increased Share of Marijuana Revenue*

Snohomish County is leading the effort to increase the amount of revenue shared by the state with local governments. The bill, [House Bill 2900](#), sponsored by [Rep. Strom Peterson](#) (D- Edmonds) was dropped on Tuesday and was referred to the Appropriations Committee. A hearing on the bill is likely to be scheduled after fiscal committee cutoff next Tuesday.

## **Bill Summaries**

Given that we are in between two crucial committee cutoffs, and that our bill list will change significantly in just a couple of days, we are not including a comprehensive bill list with this week’s report. We will send a separate bill list after Tuesday’s fiscal committee cutoff.