



**Week 4 Report
02.7.26**

The highlight of the fourth week of session was seeing so many of our WPPA members in Olympia for our Ports and Maritime Day festivities. We had a great time celebrating our partnership with the Washington Maritime Federation on Thursday evening at our reception and once again had a near-record turnout of legislators in attendance. On Friday morning, we gathered under the Capitol dome and heard from senior budget writers in the legislature with updates on the latest budget negotiations. Thank you to everyone who made the trip to Olympia to ensure their port's perspective was heard by their legislative delegations. This week also marked the first cutoff deadline, with bills needing to be passed out of their policy committee by February 4th. We have updates on what's moving forward and what is unlikely to advance later in this report.

As a reminder, we primarily include bills in our report that we have marked as "high or medium" priority in our tracking list and that are currently moving forward in the process or experienced a change of status in the past week or the week ahead. For a full list of the bills we're tracking, including all priority levels, or to raise a specific bill you don't see in the list below, please contact WPPA staff directly.

Thank you!

-WPPA team

This Week's 3 Key Things:

- **Permitting Bills:**
 - [HB 2418](#) This bill proposes changes to the project permit review process by updating how permit applications are timed and administered by counties and cities. It impacts land use project permits and development for local governments, utilities, and water/sewer districts under the GMA. The bill requires a single point

AT A GLANCE

Length: 60 days; Regular session began on January 12, 2026

For up-to-date legislative information, visit: leg.wa.gov

To listen to a legislative hearing, visit: tvw.org

For current & previous copies of our report, visit our website at: washingtonports.org

SESSION CUTOFF DATES

- February 9: House of Origin Fiscal Cutoff
- February 17: House of Origin Floor Cutoff
- February 25: Opposite House Policy Cutoff
- March 2: Opposite House Fiscal Cutoff
- March 6: Opposite House Floor Cutoff
- March 12: Last Day of Session

For more information about cutoff dates, visit: leg.wa.gov

of contact for permit applications and aligns permit review deadlines across all government entities that charge fees, including provisions for refunding fees if review timelines are not met. It received a public hearing in the House Appropriations Committee on February 5th and is scheduled for an executive session on February 7th.

- [HB 2198/SB 5968](#) This bill requires agencies that review any permitting applications to reimburse application fees if agency established timelines are not met and gives them the statutory authority to do so. It also requires a centralized database and inventory of all permit applications and status. This bill comes at the request of the Governor's office. WPPA testified in support of this bill at the public hearing in the Senate State Government, Tribal Affairs & Elections Committee on January 16th and at the House State Government & Tribal Relations Committee public hearing on January 23rd. SB 5968 was passed out of committee on January 23rd and received a public hearing in the Senate Ways & Means Committee on February 5th. Neither bill has further action scheduled at this time.
- [SB 5609](#) This bill requires a cultural resources review for certain land use activities that are categorically exempt from the state environmental policy act (SEPA). That review would be required unless specific conditions related to tribal consultation, data sharing with the Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation, or local planning protections are met. The intent of the bill is to target infill and housing development projects under Growth Management Act (GMA). However, WPPA and other stakeholders are concerned the bill will require this additional review for minor maintenance projects, any Ecology-related rulemaking, and future statutory change relating broadly to SEPA categorical exemptions. The bill received a public hearing in the Senate Environment, Energy & Technology Committee on January 27th. It was passed out of the committee on February 3rd and received a public hearing in the Senate Ways & Means Committee on February 6th. It has not yet been scheduled for further action.
- [HB 2718](#) This bill would streamline transportation project permitting by setting specific timelines and coordination requirements for the WSDOT multiagency permit program, including mandatory meetings and expedited decision points with state and federal agencies. The bill also requires WSDOT to create a public contractor rating website and report on ways to simplify and accelerate permitting processes, with an emphasis on engaging affected tribes and stakeholders. The bill received a public hearing in the House Transportation Committee on February 5th and is scheduled for an executive session on February 9th. WPPA signed in "pro" at the bill hearing, as the concept is consistent with our focus on improving the permitting process. But we have questions about some of the provisions and are participating in a workgroup with the bill sponsor and other stakeholders this coming week to continue reviewing and to discuss potential changes.
- **Port Employee Pensions:** [HB 2179/SB 5905](#), This bill would allow a small number of impacted ports to continue to make contributions to employee pension plans that are outside of the Public Employees Retirement System (PERS). WPPA worked with Senator Short on this legislative proposal after being alerted to this situation by the Ports of Pend Oreille and Vancouver. This bill also impacts a small number of employees at the Ports of

Longview and Seattle. WPPA testified in support at the public hearing in the House Appropriations Committee on January 15th and the Senate Ways & Means Committee on January 20th, along with representatives from the Ports of Pend Oreille and Vancouver. HB 2179 was passed out of the House Appropriations Committee on January 22nd. WPPA worked to eliminate an amendment that would have applied the changes to statute only prospectively, which would not help the Port employees who are currently employed by the impacted ports. SB 5095 was passed out of committee on February 3rd with an amendment that WPPA worked with committee staff to draft an amendment to address concern about unintended pension liability. The bill has been placed on the Senate Floor Calendar, where it could be voted on at any time.

- **Lower Columbia River Channel Maintenance Plan:** The Governor's proposed supplemental transportation budget proposal included \$15 million in funding for the state's initial contribution toward the 20-year plan to maintain the Lower Columbia River Federal Navigation Channel at 43 feet. This is a priority for WPPA and was included in our 2026 Legislative Agenda as part of our WA Trade Strategy. Earlier this session, we testified in support of the budget proposal and expressed appreciation to the Governor for prioritizing this investment. Since that time, we have been joining the lobby team from our Lower Columbia River ports to meet with members of the Transportation Committees and Capital Budget Committees to advocate for this budget item. This week, WPPA attended a meeting between the ports of Kalama, Longview, and Vancouver, House Transportation Chair Jake Fey, and Capital Budget Vice Chair Lisa Callan, to answer questions about the project. Conversations continue amid ongoing budget development, with budget drafts expected to come out the week of February 23rd.

WPPA Weekly Bill Tracking Update

**Indicates A New Bill Introduced in 2026*

Please Note: Many bills are scheduled for executive session on Saturday, February 7th so their status may have changed by the time you read this report.

Aviation

SEA Environmental Justice and Community Engagement

The substitute amendment to [SB 5652/HB 1948](#) would authorize a University of Washington study of airport environmental impacts to occur every two years and would establish a Department of Commerce-led work group that would meet quarterly to "inform the development of mitigation strategies." The substitute bill passed its first committee on January 30th but has not yet been scheduled for a hearing at the Senate Ways and Means Committee. HB 1948 appears unlikely to advance further this session. If it is not added to the agenda and advanced by February 9th, it's unlikely to continue moving forward.

****Sustainable Aviation Fuel Development***

[SB 5932/HB 2322](#) – Sen. Warnick (13th, Moses Lake), Rep. Dent (13th, Moses Lake)

This bipartisan bill aims to encourage and support the additional production and use of alternative jet fuel in Washington. WPPA supports this legislation based on our members' engagement in supporting the development of a robust sustainable aviation fuel industry. SB 5932 received a public hearing in the Senate Environment, Energy & Technology Committee on January 28th, while HB 2322 received a public hearing in the House Environment & Energy Committee on January 29th. WPPA signed in "pro" on both bills. Both were passed out of committee on February 3rd. A substitute amendment to HB 2322 was heard at the House

Finance Committee on February 6th and is scheduled to advance through executive session on February 9th.

Broadband

Digital Equity

[HB 2365](#) – Rep. Gregerson (D-33rd, Sea-Tac)

This bill updates state law to clearly define ideas like “digital equity” and “broadband adoption,” and it recognizes the role of places like libraries, schools, ports, and other community organizations as “community anchor institutions” that help connect underserved communities. WPPA supports this legislation due to our members’ interest in supporting broadband adoption. The bill received a public hearing in the House Appropriations Committee on February 6th and is scheduled for an executive session on February 9th.

****Broadband Infrastructure Repair & Replacement:***

[SB 5188](#) – Sen. Wellman (D-41st, Mercer Island)

This bill would allow the Public Works Board to fund repair projects for broadband infrastructure by either grants or loans. WPPA supported this bill throughout the 2025 Session. The bill passed the Senate 48-2 on January 21st. It received a public hearing in the House Capital Budget Committee on February 4th. WPPA signed in “pro”.

Economic Development

****Industrial Land Banks***

[HB 2006](#) – Rep. Ybarra (R-13th, Quincy)

This bill extends and updates a planning tool for certain rural counties that want to promote industrial economic development outside urban growth areas. It would allow eligible rural counties to establish up to two “industrial land bank” areas in their comprehensive plans. WPPA supports this legislation based on member feedback and communicated that support to the committee. The bill was passed out of the committee on February 3rd and is in House Rules. In discussing this with stakeholders, WPPA learned the bill is expected to be amended to clarify that it only applies to Kittitas County.

****MATCH Act 2.0***

[HB 2186](#) – Rep. Barnard (R-8th, Pasco)

This bill requires the Dept. of Commerce to support local agencies in the acquisition of federal funds to promote economic development. WPPA supports this bill and signed in “pro” at the public hearing in the House Technology, Economic Development, & Veterans Committee on January 16th. The bill passed out of the committee on January 23rd with an amendment that clarifies that this requirement is subject to the availability of funds. The amended bill is scheduled for a public hearing in the House Appropriations Committee on February 7th and an executive session on February 9th.

****Port Bonding Authority***

[SB 6132](#) – Sen. Warnick (R-13th, Moses Lake)

This bill would allow the Port of Moses Lake to increase its bonding capacity by modifying the section of RCW 53 that specifies the borrowing limit for port districts. This will allow the port to contribute its required match for federal funding for its rail expansion project. WPPA signed in “pro” on this bill at its public hearing, and the bill was passed out of committee on January 29th

by a unanimous vote. It was moved from the Senate Rules Committee to the Consent Calendar on February 6th and is eligible for Senate passage at any time.

***Rural Public Facilities Funding**

[SB 6149](#) – Sen. Wilson, J. (R-19th, Longview)

This bill would expand the statutory definition of rural counties to include those counties with a population density over 100 people per square mile but no city over 75,000 people for the purposes of funding eligibility in programs such as CERB and .09. Cowlitz County is the only county that would meet the parameters established in the bill, and it was requested by the Cowlitz Economic Development Council. WPPA signed in “pro” at the public hearing in the Senate Business, Trade & Economic Development Committee on January 28th. The bill passed out of committee on February 4th with an amendment reducing the city population threshold from 75,000 to 45,000. It was moved from the Senate Rules Committee to the Consent Calendar on February 6th where it is eligible for Senate passage at any time.

***Statewide Economic Development Plan**

[SB 6289](#) – Sen. Kauffman (D-47th, Kent)

This bill would direct the Dept. of Commerce to develop a statewide economic development and competitiveness strategic plan. At a minimum, the plan must establish goals and strategies for state supported economic development activities. The plan must be completed by November 1st, 2026, and updated every two years thereafter. WPPA supports this effort generally and testified to the need for more coordinated economic development when it was heard in the Senate Business, Trade & Economic Development Committee on January 29th. The bill was passed out of committee on February 4th with an amendment that specified certain factors that should be considered in the economic development planning process. It received a public hearing in the Senate Ways & Means Committee on February 6th.

Energy

***Port Districts Under CETA**

[HB 2245/SB 5982](#) – Rep. Doglio (D-22nd, Olympia), Sen. Hunt (D-5th, Issaquah)

This bill would add public port districts to the definition of consumer-owned utilities under the Clean Energy Transformation Act (CETA) if they generate and sell electricity to at least one customer. WPPA is neutral on the bill, with a preference for the amended language in the Senate version. WPPA was successful in advocating to include in SB 5982 a requirement that Commerce establish port specific reporting requirements and allowing irrelevant reporting requirements to be waived. We are engaged with stakeholders and bill sponsors seeking consistency between bills. HB 2245 was pulled from Rules on February 6th to the House floor calendar and may be voted on at any time. SB 5982 is in the Rules committee where it will need a pull to the floor calendar. This same language including public port districts in CETA is also in [HB 2515/SB 6171](#) relating to large energy use facilities (below).

***Data Center Energy Usage**

[HB 2515/SB 6171](#) – Rep. Doglio (D-22nd, Olympia), Sen. Shewmake (D-42nd, Bellingham)

This bill adds additional requirements around the energy use of data centers and other large energy use projects. HB 2515 received a public hearing in the House Environment & Energy Committee on January 22nd. SB 6171 received a public hearing on January 23rd in the Senate Environment, Energy & Technology Committee. WPPA testified to our concerns of being included in the definition of consumer owned utilities like HB 2245/SB 5982. Both HB 2515 and SB 6171 passed out of committee February 2nd. HB 2515 is scheduled for a public hearing in the

House Appropriations Committee on February 7th and an executive session on February 9th. SB 6171 appears unlikely to advance further this session.

***Waste to Energy Facilities**

[HB 2416/SB 6092](#) – Rep. Hill (D-3rd, Spokane), Sen. Riccelli (D-3rd, Spokane)

This bill reasonably adjusts compliance requirements under the Climate Commitment Act (CCA) for waste to energy facilities. The waste to energy facility in Spokane is the only of its kind in the state where a few ports with international flights rely on the facility's assured destructive services for waste incineration. WPPA supports this bill and testified at the public hearing in the House Environment & Energy Committee, where it later passed in executive session on February 3rd. A substitute bill was up for a public hearing in the House Appropriations on February 6th that WPPA signed in support. The executive session on SHB 2416 is scheduled for February 9th. SB 6092 is unlikely to advance further this session.

***Clean Energy Project Procurement**

[SB 6076](#) – Sen. Goehner (R-12th, Dryden)

This bill would allow public utility districts to streamline procurement and self-perform work for projects related to electric generation facilities fueled by non-emitting or renewable resources, energy storage, transmission, and distribution. The bill received a public hearing in the Senate Environment, Energy & Technology committee on January 20th. WPPA signed in “pro” based on our support for the build-out of energy projects statewide. A substitute bill passed out of committee on January 30th that clarifies certain bidding requirements for common facilities. The bill was placed on the Senate floor calendar, where it be voted on at any time.

Environment & Natural Resources

Emissions From Ocean-Going Vessels [Scrubbers]

[HB 1652/SB 5519](#) - Rep. Lekanoff (D-40th, Bow), Sen. Lovelett (D-40th, Anacortes)

This bill seeks to reduce emissions from ocean-going vessels by mandating the use of low-sulfur fuel within three miles of Washington shorelines. The [proposed substitute](#) house bill contains similar language from last session, but with new definitions and Ecology record-keeping requirements. HB 1652 received a public hearing in the House Environment & Energy Committee on January 19th. The executive session on February 3rd on the house bill was cancelled and that bill will not move forward. SB 5519 did not receive a public hearing in the Senate Environment, Energy & Technology Committee prior to cutoff day, February 4th so we now consider the bill unlikely to advance this session. WPPA has committed to continue working with the bill sponsors and stakeholders on this proposal over the interim.

***Green Fertilizer Incentive Program**

SB 5971 – Sen. Boehnke (R-8th, Kennewick)

This bill directs the Department of Agriculture to establish the green fertilizer incentive program to promote the in-state production and agricultural utilization of green fertilizer and establishes a definition of “green fertilizer.” Atlas Agro is currently developing the Pacific Green Fertilizer Project in Richland to manufacture nitrogen fertilizer using green hydrogen. At the encouragement of our Tri-Cities ports WPPA is supporting this bill. A substitute amendment passed out of the Senate Committee on Agriculture & Natural Resources on February 2nd. It received a public hearing in the Senate Ways & Means Committee on February 5th where WPPA again signed in “pro”. It has not yet been scheduled for executive session.

***Regulating 6PPD**

[SB 6119/HB 2421](#) – Sen. Lias (D-21st, Edmonds), Rep. Hall (D-5th, Issaquah)

This bill would ban the manufacturing and sale of tires containing 6PPD beginning in 2035 and in

the original version of the bill, established a per tire fee beginning in 2027. HB 2421 received a public hearing in the House Environment & Energy Committee on January 19th, while SB 6119 received a public hearing in the Senate Environment, Energy & Technology Committee on January 20th. A substitute proposal for HB 2421 passed out of committee on January 29th that eliminates the per tire fee and only includes a 2035 ban. There was a public hearing in the House Appropriations Committee on February 6th and an executive session is scheduled for February 9th. SB 6119 appears unlikely to advance further this session.

***PCHB Efficiency in Appeals**

[HB 2426](#) - Rep. Bernbaum (D-24th, Port Angeles)

This bill aims to improve the appeals process to the Pollution Control Hearings Board (PCHB) by modifying procedures or criteria for how appeals are handled, with the goal of streamlining environmental review. It received a public hearing in the House Environment & Energy Committee on January 20th where WPPA signed in “pro”. It passed out of committee on January 29th with no changes. It is now on the House Floor Calendar, where it could be voted on at any time.

Environmental Crimes

[SB 5360](#) - Sen. Trudeau (D-27th, Tacoma)

This bill creates new definitions for environmental crimes such as violations of the state Water Pollution Control Act, Clean Air Act, Hazardous Waste Management Act, and others. The bill increases penalties for these crimes up to certain first- and second-degree felony violations. WPPA worked extensively in 2025 to express concerns about this bill. The bill is still in the Senate Rules Committee and will need to be brought up for a Senate floor vote again before February 17th if it is going to be referred to the House and continue advancing. There was no action taken on the bill again this week.

***SEPA Local Government Projects**

[HB 2418](#) - Rep. Duerr (D-1st, Bothell)

This bill proposes changes to the project permit review process by updating how permit applications are timed and administered by counties and cities. Relating to land use project permits and development for local governments, utilities, and water/sewer districts under the GMA. The bill requires a single point of contact for permit applications and aligns permit review deadlines across all government entities that charge fees, including provisions for refunding fees if review timelines are not met. It received a public hearing in the House Appropriations Committee on February 5th and is scheduled for an executive session on February 7th.

***Permitting and Licensing Timeline Adherence**

[HB 2198](#)/[SB 5968](#) - Rep. Richards (D-26th, Gig Harbor), Sen. Krishnadasan (D-26th, Gig Harbor)

This bill requires agencies that review any permitting applications to reimburse application fees if agency established timelines are not met and gives them the statutory authority to do so. It also requires a centralized database and inventory of all permit applications and status. This bill comes at the request of the Governor’s office. WPPA testified in support of this bill the public hearing in the Senate State Government, Tribal Affairs & Elections Committee on January 16th and at the House State Government & Tribal Relations Committee public hearing on January 23rd. SB 5968 was passed out of committee on January 23rd and received a public hearing in the Senate Ways & Means Committee on February 5th. Neither bill has further action scheduled at this time.

***SEPA Cultural Resources Review**

[SB 5609](#) – Sen. Kauffman (D-47th, Kent)

This bill requires a cultural resources review for certain land use activities that are categorically exempt from the state environmental policy act (SEPA). That review would be required unless specific conditions related to tribal consultation, data sharing with the Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation, or local planning protections are met. The intent of the bill is to target infill and housing development projects under Growth Management Act (GMA). However, WPPA and other stakeholders are concerned the bill will require this additional review for minor maintenance projects, any Ecology related rulemaking, and future statutory change relating broadly to SEPA categorical exemptions. The bill received a public hearing in the Senate Environment, Energy & Technology Committee on January 27th. It was passed out of the committee on February 3rd and received a public hearing in the Senate Ways & Means Committee on February 6th. It has not yet been scheduled for further action.

Governance

***Third Party Litigation**

[HB 2255](#) – Rep. Walen (D-48th, Kirkland)

This bill would establish standards for third-party litigation funding in Washington, including disclosure and agreement-production requirements for along with contract limits and enforcement provisions under the Consumer Protection Act. WPPA received feedback on this bill from our Legal Committee and will support the bill as it advances. It received a public hearing in the House Civil Rights & Judiciary Committee on January 21st and was passed out of the committee on February 4th.

***Local Government Authority During Emergencies**

[HB 2520](#) – Rep. Lekanoff (D-40th, Bow)

This bill would allow local governments to take expedited action to address a state or federally declared emergency at a meeting held remotely or at which the physical attendance by some or all members of the public is limited. This bill comes at the request of Skagit County in response to the flooding event they experienced late last year. WPPA supports this bill to ensure government continuity during emergencies. The bill received a public hearing in the House State Government & Tribal Relations Committee on January 27th. WPPA signed in “pro”. The bill was passed out of committee on February 3rd.

***Public Records Act: Employee Information**

[SB 6123](#) – Sen. Conway (D-29th, Tacoma)

This bill would prevent the disclosure of individual employee demographic information. This was requested by Pierce County due to concerns that employees in certain demographic groups could be targeted for harassment. WPPA supports this bill and signed in “pro” at the public hearing in the Senate State Government, Tribal Affairs & Elections Committee on January 23rd. It was scheduled for an executive session on February 3rd, but no action was taken. It now appears to be unlikely to advance further.

Labor & Workforce

***Port Employee Pensions**

[HB 2179/SB 5905](#) – Rep. Abell (R-7th, Inchelium), Sen. Short (R-7th, Addy)

This bill would allow a small number of impacted ports to continue to make contributions to employee pension plans that are outside of the Public Employees Retirement System (PERS).

WPPA worked with Senator Short on this legislative proposal after being alerted to this situation by the Ports of Pend Oreille and Vancouver. This bill also impacts a small number of employees at the Ports of Longview and Seattle. WPPA testified in support at the public hearing in the House Appropriations Committee on January 15th and the Senate Ways & Means Committee on January 20th, along with representatives from the Ports of Pend Oreille and Vancouver. HB 2179 was passed out of the House Appropriations Committee on January 22nd. WPPA worked to eliminate an amendment that would have applied the changes to statute only prospectively, which would not help the Port employees who are currently employed by the impacted ports. SB 5095 was passed out of committee on February 3rd with an amendment that WPPA worked with committee staff to draft an amendment to address concern about unintended pension liability. The bill has been placed on the Senate Floor Calendar, where it could be voted on at any time.

Land Use

****Coastal Communities Transparency Act***

[HB 2679](#) – Rep. Rule (D-42nd, Blaine)

This bill was brought forward by the Whatcom Working Waterfront Coalition and seeks to address concerns with incompatible land use and gentrification of industrial and maritime lands. WPPA was contacted by the Whatcom Working Waterfront Coalition in advance of the bill and shared our general concerns with the loss of industrial land statewide and gentrification pressures our ports face. HB 2679 did not receive a public hearing prior to the cutoff deadline, so it is now considered unlikely to advance.

Marina

****Derelict Vessels***

[HB 2199](#) – Rep. Richards (D-26th, Gig Harbor)

This bill allows for problem vessels that have not been registered for two years or more to be declared derelict and for the custody process to begin so they can be removed. It also makes minor changes to the custody process to ensure proper notification of the legal owner. A workgroup of Kitsap County Ports, County Officials, and Dept. of Natural Resources staff brought this bill forward. WPPA supports this bill. The bill received a public hearing in the House Agriculture & Natural Resources Committee on January 27th. WPPA testified in support. The bill was passed out of committee on February 4th with a substitute amendment that makes the bill more workable for the Dept. of Natural Resources.

****Commercial Shellfish Fees***

[SB 6318](#) – Sen. Chapman (D-24th, Port Angeles)

This bill would cap the annual license, testing, and export fees for shellfish industry businesses and remove the requirement that the Dept. of Health's shellfish regulatory program be fully fee supported. This bill comes at the request of industry stakeholders and WPPA is supporting this bill based on member feedback. The bill was passed out of the Senate Ways and Means Committee on February 2nd.

Public Works

****Small Works Roster***

[HB 2420](#) – Rep. Zahn (D-41st, Bellevue)

This gradually increases the thresholds for the use of the small works roster from in 2026 \$530K to \$650K by July 1, 2030. This bill was brought forward by the Capital Projects Advisory Review

Board (CPARB) based on extensive discussions over the interim with public owners, labor organizations, and contractors. WPPA supports this bill and testified at the public hearing in the House Capital Budget Committee on January 29th. The bill was passed out of committee on February 4th.

Prompt Pay

[SB 5176](#) - Sen. Valdez (D-1st, Seattle)

This bill would require any payment on public works projects that exceed thirty days of receipt of a properly completed invoice to automatically remit a one percent penalty with the payment. All subcontractors must be paid within ten days after payment is received by the prime contractor. This bill was introduced in 2025 but did not advance out of the Senate Ways & Means Committee. WPPA and other public owners expressed concerns about being required to pay penalties for delays that they have no control over. It was subject to a great deal of stakeholder discussion over the interim and a [proposed substitute](#) was recommended by CPARB. Members of the WPPA procurement workgroup provided helpful feedback during the process. The bill was heard in the Senate Ways & Means Committee on February 5th and WPPA testified with other public owners to express support for the improvements made to the bill.

Recreation & Tourism

***Tourism Promotion Funding: Lodging Tax**

[HB 2278](#) – Rep. Barnard (R-8th, Pasco)

This bill removes the expiration date on the lodging tax assessed to visitors of the state, which provides funding to the state's tourism promotion account. It received a public hearing in the House Technology, Economic Development, & Veterans Committee on January 21st. WPPA signed in support, and the bill was passed out of committee on January 28th. The bill received a public hearing in the House Finance Committee on February 5th and is scheduled for an executive session on February 9th.

***Tourism Promotion Funding: Industry Self-Assessment**

[HB 2325/SB 6061](#) – Rep. Paul (D-10th, Oak Harbor), Sen. Riccelli (D-3rd, Spokane)

This bill would establish a tourism self-supported assessment program to fund statewide tourism promotion. It also creates the governance and oversight structure of the program to ensure industry compliance and engagement. HB 2325 received a public hearing in the House Technology, Economic Development, & Veterans Committee on January 21st and SB 6061 received a public hearing in the Senate Business, Trade & Economic Development Committee on January 22nd. WPPA signed in “pro” on both bills which were both passed out of committee on January 28th with amendments to add large restaurants and retailers to the program. HB 2325 received a public hearing in the House Finance Committee on February 5th and is scheduled for a public hearing on February 9th. SB 6061 has been placed on the Senate Floor Calendar by the Rules Committee, where it could be voted on at any time.

Revenue & Tax

Renewable Energy Personal Property Tax Exemption

[HB 1960](#) - Rep. Ramel (D-40th, Bellingham)

This bill authorizes a personal property tax exemption for qualified renewable energy facilities and replaces their personal property tax obligation with a new state and local renewable energy excise tax. The intent of the bill sponsor and proponents is to address what they view as an unintentional “property tax shift” that results from the development and current tax treatment of

large renewable energy facilities. The [third substitute bill](#) received a public hearing in the House Finance Committee on January 23rd and was passed out of the committee on January 29th. There are substantial changes in the substitute – one would require counties to distribute Local Grant Program funds to local taxing districts within the county in accordance with the taxing district's relative share of the local property tax levy. There was a public hearing in the House Appropriations Committee on February 6th and an executive session is scheduled for February 9th. WPPA is continuing to monitor the bill.

***Tax Increment Financing**

[HB 2451](#) – Rep. Duerr (D-1st, Bothell)

This bill updates the tax increment financing statute in a number of ways. Generally, it tightens the “but for” requirement for new tax increment areas, establishes a mitigation framework for all impacted taxing jurisdictions, and allows the “assessed value” cap on the size of an increment area to increase with the Consumer Price Index. Throughout the interim, WPPA has been engaged with a work group of local government representatives, the Washington Economic Development Association, fire commissioners, and more. As introduced, HB 2451 as introduced still included some language that concerned some WPPA members and other economic development partners. We worked on language that was adopted in committee that included the compromise language that WPPA helped negotiate. The amendment passed unanimously, and the bill then passed the committee on a voice vote. Since then, the Office of the State Treasurer and the Department of Revenue have proposed additional amendments which WPPA is reviewing. The bill had a public hearing in the House Appropriations Committee on February 6th and is scheduled for an executive session on February 9th.

***Millionaires Tax**

[SB 6346/ HB 2724](#) – Sen. Pederson (D-43rd, Seattle), Rep. Fitzgibbon (D-34th, West Seattle)

This bill would establish a new state income tax on high-income earners, generally taxing annual income above \$1 million, with the goal of generating revenue to support K-12 education, health care, higher education, human services, and the Working Families Tax Credit while also reducing certain sales and business taxes. WPPA is neutral on this bill but have been working with our partners at the Washington Maritime Federation and the American Waterways Operators to raise awareness of the need for an exemption to align with a federal income tax program known as the Capital Construction Fund (CCF). This program allows owners of commercial and fishing vessels to defer federal income taxes on certain earnings and gains if those funds are deposited into a CCF account and later used to construct, reconstruct, or acquire vessels. This is an important tool for the commercial fishing and tug and barge industry to invest in their fleets. Other states with robust maritime industries and a state income tax structured like SB 6346/HB 2724 have this exemption in place. SB 6346 was heard at the Senate Ways and Means Committee on Friday, February 6th.

Transportation

Passenger-Only Ferries

[HB 1923](#) - Rep. Nance (D-23rd, Kitsap County), seeks to increase passenger-only ferry service. The bill authorizes local governments, including port districts, to create passenger-only ferry service districts. The original bill included a grant program for passenger ferry service, but that was removed during the 2025 session. WPPA and members from ferry dependent communities support this bill. The bill began 2026 back in the House Transportation Committee, where a [substitute bill](#) was adopted on February 6th. The substitute bill would allow for additional local

government entities to create passenger-only service districts and provides specific guidance for the protection of orca whales. WPPA will continue to support this bill as it moves forward.

***Truck Safety Commission**

[HB 2410](#) – Rep. Fey (D-27th, Tacoma)

This proposal from House Transportation Chair Jake Fey was developed collaboratively between the Chair and our partners at the Washington Trucking Association. It would establish the Washington State Commercial Truck Safety and Education Council and charge the Council with delivering programs and projects that improve the safety of the commercial truck industry. The bill would increase the Commercial Vehicle Safety Enforcement Fee assessed on commercial motor vehicles and direct the additional revenue to be used only for commercial vehicle safety and training improvement activities, administrative support, and grant projects and programs administered by the Council. WPPA supports this bill and signed in “pro” when it was heard at the House Transportation Committee on January 29th. It is scheduled for an executive session on February 9th.

***Transportation Project Permitting**

[HB 2718](#) – Rep. Richards (D-26th, Gig Harbor)

This bill seeks to streamline transportation project permitting by setting specific timelines and coordination requirements for the WSDOT multiagency permit program, including mandatory meetings and expedited decision points with state and federal agencies. The bill also requires WSDOT to create a public contractor rating website and report on ways to simplify and accelerate permitting processes, with an emphasis on engaging affected tribes and stakeholders. The bill received a public hearing in the House Transportation Committee on February 5th and an executive session on February 9th.

***Transportation Commission**

[SB 6335](#) – Sen. King (R-14th, Yakima)

This proposal would remove some of the statutory responsibilities of the Transportation Commission including the creation of the statewide transportation plan, voting membership on the Puget Sound Regional Council, and coordinating state transportation planning with federal, state, and local policies and plans. The bill was introduced jointly by Sen. King and Sen. Liias, the bi-partisan leaders on the Senate Transportation Committee. It received a public hearing in the committee on February 2nd, where WPPA joined our local government partners from the Association of Washington Cities and the Washington State Association of Counties in testifying “other” to share our perspective on the important work done by the Commission. It is now scheduled for an executive session on February 9th and a striking amendment is expected.

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