



League of Women Voters of Washington

Barbara Seitle, President // Marilyn Johnston, Lobby Team Coordinator // Newsletter edited by Laura McCarty

[www.lwvwa.org / advocacy](http://www.lwvwa.org/advocacy)

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ACTION PRIORITIES

March 23 - 29, 2007

This is

“make-or-break” week for the following bills –

please make a special effort to contact

House and Senate committee members:

- | | | |
|--|-----------|-----------|
| Eliminate Toxic Flame Retardants (PBDEs) | – SUPPORT | ESHB 1024 |
| Mitigate Impacts of Climate Change | – SUPPORT | ESSB 6001 |
| Creation of Public Speedway Authority (NASCAR bill) | – OPPOSE | SSB 6040 |
| Re-enactment of Initiative 747 | – OPPOSE | HB 2117 |

ESHB 1024 **Eliminate Toxic Flame Retardants**

Get this bill out of Senate Committee on Water, Energy & Telecommunications.

ESSB 6001 **Mitigate Impacts of Climate Change**

Get this bill out of House Committee on Technology, Energy and Communications.

SSB 6040 (and HB 2062) **Creation of Public Speedway Authority**

Continue to urge your senators on Ways & Means
not to bring the bill up for consideration.

HB 2117 **Re-enactment of Initiative 747**

Continue to urge House leadership and representatives from your district
not to bring this bill up for consideration.

Eliminate Toxic Flame Retardants (PBDEs) — SUPPORT HB 1024

The bill would ban two forms of PBDEs by January 2008, and phase out the most widely used form of PBDE, deca, in computers, televisions, and residential upholstered furniture by January 2011. It would also provide a safety clause if suitable and effective alternate flame retardants could not be found.

League Positions: (LWVUS) Early Intervention for Children at Risk; (LWVUS) Environmental Protection & Pollution Control; LWVWA Toxics in the Home.

Status: Passed out of Senate Committee on Water, Energy & Telecommunications and is now in **Senate Rules**.

Action: If your senator is on this committee, please contact him/her urging support for this bill. Committee members are **Franklin, Vice Chair; Hewitt; Brown; Eide; Fraser; Haugen; Kline; Kohl-Welles; McAuliffe; Murray; Parlette; Pflug; Poulsen; Regala; Schoesler; Spanel; Stevens; Zarelli**

Contact: Elizabeth Davis, 360-331-4184, elizabethd@whidbey.com

Mitigate Impacts of Climate Change — SUPPORT ESSB 6001

This important bill moves the state toward a comprehensive climate policy by setting clear goals for reducing global warming emissions and directing utilities away from major investments in power plants with excessive carbon emissions. To mitigate global warming and achieve climate stability, two immediate actions are needed: 1) We must avoid long-term decisions and investments that would actually increase our greenhouse gas emissions, and 2) We must get onto the path of making serious reductions over time. This bill does both.

League Position: (LWVUS) Energy, elements 3 and 5

Status: Scheduled for a public hearing in the **House Technology, Energy, and Communications Committee** on Tuesday, March 27, at 10 a.m.

Action: If you are a constituent of any of the following committee members, call and ask your representative to support SB 6001: **Morris, McCoy; Crouse; McCune; Eddy; Ericksen; Hankins; Hudgins; Hurst; Takko; Van De Wege**

Contact: Toni Potter, 206-365-8949, antoniapotter@comcast.net
or Marian Wineman, 206-285-1066, mwineman@comcast.net

Creation of Public Speedway Authority — OPPOSE SSB 6040

SSB 6040 did not make the deadline for getting bills out of committee—but now it is back again in Senate Ways & Means with a hearing scheduled for next week. This is not good, and means that some legislator(s) really want this bill out of committee. The bill would amend the Growth Management Act by allowing extension of urban governmental services (including stormwater and sewer) to the proposed speedway project if the project is located at least partially within an urban area. The bill would exempt the project (from the date the land is acquired for a speedway) from the six-year moratorium requirement that prevents conversion of land to non-forestry uses (thus amending the Forest Practices Act and certain tax provisions). There would be other negative environmental costs. Finally, the bill would also establish tax provisions and lease authority for a NASCAR speedway, and address other economic issues relating to building a public speedway.

League Positions: Our opposition to this legislation is based on these positions:

Economic Diversification: The quality of the environment should be a prime consideration when making economic decisions. The environment should not be permitted to degrade.

Land Use: Uniqueness or scarcity... as well as the irreversibility of the decisions should be considered in resolving conflicts in each case. [Regional authorities] All governments and groups involved must cooperate to resolve conflicts and eliminate inconsistent policies ... wasted resources and irrevocable decisions on a patchwork basis.

Status: Hearing scheduled in **Senate Ways & Means Committee** on Monday, March 26 at 3:30 p.m.

Action: Immediately contact the committee chair (Sen. Margarita Prentice), committee vice-chair (Sen. Karen Fraser), or your own senator on the committee. Ask them to OPPOSE the bill and not vote it out of committee. Committee members are **Prentice, Chair; Fraser, Vice Chair, Capital Budget Chair; Pridemore, Vice Chair, Operating Budget; Zarelli; Brandland; Carrell; Fairley; Hatfield; Hewitt; Hobbs; Honeyford; Keiser; Kohl-Welles; Oemig; Parlette; Rasmussen; Regala; Roach; Rockefeller; Schoesler; Tom**

Contact: Ann Aagaard, 425-488-8418, aagaarda@nwlinc.com

Re-enactment of Initiative 747— OPPOSE HB 2117

This bill would codify I-747's damaging 1% annual cap on the growth of state and local property tax levies.

League Position: LWVWA opposed I-747 in 2001. Property taxes fund essential public services, and the 1% cap has made it more difficult to adequately fund those services.

Status: HB 2117 has still not been brought to the floor by the leadership -- that's the good news. But, there is pressure to do something on property tax relief before end of session and HB 2117 is a strong candidate -- that's the bad news.

Action: If you haven't yet contacted your **representatives**, e-mail them and **urge them not to support a bill that would codify Initiative 747**. Also, e-mails to **Speaker Chopp** and the **leadership** would be useful.

Contact: Barbara Bush, 425-349-5184, omi.bush@verizon.net

Here's a tip from the Lobby Team:

When you e-mail a senator or representative **outside your district (i.e., you're not that legislator's constituent)** you have a better chance of having your email reach the intended person IF you compose your message with your usual email software and address the email directly to the legislator. Where do you find the email address? Several places, including our **legislator contact list**. Or, if you'd rather build the address yourself, do it this way: Type in the senator or representative's last name, followed by a period, followed by the first name, followed by **@leg.wa.gov** . Good luck!

Other ACTION ITEMS

"If you can make another call or two..."

Budget Proviso for a Study of Public and Traditional Financing of Campaigns — SUPPORT

Governor Gregoire has requested this study to keep public campaign financing alive: \$150,000 would be provided solely to the **Washington State Institute for Public Policy** to study expenditures between public financing and traditional financing of campaigns, including, but not limited to: 1) the amount of money spent on independent expenditures and electioneering communications; 2) the rate of increase or decrease of independent expenditures and electioneering communications; 3) the amounts of money expended within 14 days of an election; 4) the number of candidates that file for office; and 5) the rate of incumbency. In addition, the study would include an assessment of the amount of money necessary to adequately fund a public financing program for appellate judicial positions.

League Positions:

Representative Government: Action to facilitate changes in the state constitution to achieve a representative and effective state legislature. Action to limit methods of financing political campaigns in order to ensure the public's right to know, combat undue influence, enable candidates to compete more equitably for public office, and promote citizen participation in the election process.

Administration of Justice: Action to ensure that our courts are fair, efficient, accessible and staffed with qualified personnel.

Campaign Financing: Campaign contributions should be limited. These limits should apply both to state and out-of-state contributions. The PDC should implement laws pertaining to these limitations.

Administration of Justice: Action to ensure that our courts are fair, efficient, accessible and staffed with qualified personnel.

Status: This proviso was not in the House Appropriations budget sent to the Senate.

Action: Contact **Senate Ways & Means Committee** members from your district urging them to add the proviso to the budget: **Prentice, Fraser, Pridemore, Zarelli, Brandland, Carrell, Fairley, Hatfield, Hewitt, Hobbs, Honeyford, Keiser, Kohl-Welles, Oemig, Parlette, Rasmussen, Regala, Roach, Rockefeller, Schoesler, Tom.**

Contact: Susan Sanders, 253-833-9376, DavidAndSusan@Sanders.name

House Budget Provisions for Increases in Basic Education Funding — SUPPORT

The House Budget has provisions that will increase basic education funding in transportation, K-3 staffing ratios, non-employee related costs, special education, and classified staff ratios.

League Position: The state has the responsibility for amply funding education through the Basic Education Act. All programs mandated by the legislature should be fully funded.

Status: The House budget, SHB 1128, is expected to pass the House on Monday. The Senate budget is scheduled to be released on Tuesday.

Action: Contact your senators on the **Senate Ways & Means Committee** and ask for their support of—or additions to—the provisions in the House budget that increase K-12 Basic Education funding. Message: “Don’t miss the opportunity this year to make a greater down payment to fully funded basic education.” Committee members are **Prentice, Fraser, Pridemore, Zarelli, Brandland, Carrell, Fairley, Hatfield, Hewitt, Hobbs, Honeyford, Keiser, Kohl-Welles, Oemig, Parlette, Rasmussen, Regala, Roach, Rockefeller, Schoesler, Tom.**

Contact: Catherine Ahl, 360-697-7924, cathahl@hotmail.com or Nancy Jander, 253-851-9260, nancyjander@comcast.net

Asthma Pilot Budget Proviso — SUPPORT

League Positions: We support efforts to reduce exposures in the home (LWVWA), early intervention for children at risk, as well as policies and programs that promote the well being, development, and safety of all children (LWVUS).

Status: The Asthma Budget Proviso did not make it into the House budget. It is still alive in the Senate under the leadership of Sen. Kohl-Welles. We have asked the State Insurance Commissioner, Mike Kreidler, if he will assist us in lobbying for a measure that will reduce health costs. We keep asking the question: Why should we let children with asthma suffer when we can save money?

Action: Please contact members on **Senate Ways & Means Committee** and ask that they let the Chair Margarita Prentice know that they can support this proviso. The important members to contact include **Fraser, Pridemore, Brandland, Fairley, Hatfield, Keiser, Oemig, Rasmussen, Regala, Roach, Rockefeller, and Tom.**

Contact: John Roberts, 425-868-9439, jrahimsa@seattle-ts.org

Family Medical Leave and Insurance — SUPPORT E2SB 5659

SB 5659 was amended in the Senate and now provides for up to five weeks of leave for the birth or placement of a new child, or to care of a seriously ill family member (child, spouse, domestic partner, or parent), but would no longer cover worker’s own serious illness. Benefits would be \$250 per week, financed by a premium of 2 cents per hour worked (would be paid by worker), which is about \$40 per year for a full-time worker or \$3.50 per month (would be pro-rated for part-time work).

League Position: [Children’s Services]

Status: This bill was heard in the **House Committee on Commerce & Labor** on March 20. It must pass out of committee by Friday, March 30. E2SB 5659 is well on its way to becoming law. Please help to move it along for the benefit of working families.

Action: If your representative is on the House Committee on Commerce & Labor, please urge a favorable vote on E2SB before cut-off date of March 30. Committee members are [Conway, Chair](#); [Wood, Vice Chair](#); [Condotta](#); [Chandler](#); [Crouse](#); [Green](#); [Moeller](#); [Williams](#).

Contact: Marjorie Reeves, 360-866-7507, mpreeves@comcast.net or Pat Dickason, 360-753-7647, p.dickason@comcast.net

Vote Canvassing Provisions — SUPPORT WITH AMENDMENT SHB 1654

This bill says that, during balloting for any office or issue, political party observers could (upon mutual agreement) request that up to three precincts or three batches be selected at random to be counted by hand. This count would then be compared with the machine total.

League Position: LWVWA supports random audits of all ballots, with the percentage of ballots audited to be determined by a statistician.

Status: This bill is scheduled for a public hearing in the [Senate Committee on Government Operations & Elections](#) at 10 a.m. Monday, March 26.

Action: The bill needs to be amended to strengthen it. Message: Audits should be mandatory, with a qualified statistician selecting the number of precincts to be audited, depending on the particular circumstances of the election. Members: [Fairley, Chair](#); [Oemig, Vice Chair](#); [Roach](#); [Benton](#); [Kline](#); [Pridemore](#); [Swecker](#)

Contact: Betty Sullivan, 206-682-5240, jaybetty2@msn.com

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**NATIONAL  
Action Item**

**Public Campaign Financing for U.S. Congressional Seats — SUPPORT**

Sens. Richard Durbin (IL) and Arlen Specter (PA) introduced the bipartisan “Fair Elections Now Act” in Congress this week. Modeled on the public campaign financing systems in Maine, Arizona, and North Carolina, the bill would provide full public financing for qualified congressional candidates.

**League Positions:**

Representative Government: Action to facilitate changes in the state constitution to achieve a representative and effective state legislature. Action to limit methods of financing political campaigns in order to ensure the public's right to know, combat undue influence, enable candidates to compete more equitably for public office, and promote citizen participation in the election process.

Administration of Justice: Action to ensure that our courts are fair, efficient, accessible and staffed with qualified personnel.

Campaign Financing: Campaign contributions should be limited. These limits should apply both to state and out-of-state contributions. The PDC should implement laws pertaining to these limitations.

**Status:** Introduced this week. Similar legislation will be introduced in the House.

**Action:** Contact your [legislators in the U.S. Congress](#), urging them to co-sponsor and support this legislation.

**Contact:** Susan Sanders, 253-833-9376, [DavidAndSusan@Sanders.name](mailto:DavidAndSusan@Sanders.name)

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## ADDITIONAL BACKGROUND

### TRANSPORTATION GOVERNANCE PROPOSALS

*Please contact your legislators on the transportation committees about ESSB 5803 and HB 2101, the regional transportation governance proposals. We are opposed to the Senate bill but agree with the basic premise of the House bill.*

In the Senate, the current version of this legislation (ESSB 5803) seems to us to give sufficient power to a small elected body to allow them to override the Growth Management Act's required "bottom-up" comprehensive planning and therefore to gut the GMA over time. The expected power that the group would have over transportation planning in the region is one of the reasons we recommend the group be a federated board rather than a small elected body.

ESSB 5803 also would require that the small elected body which is recommended by this legislation unanimously agree on any plan before it can go to the voters (Section 305 (2)). If one person were to disagree, the group might have to wait up to six years before they could take a particular plan to the voters. There is no accountability in this process, and no requirement for compromise if the person's constituency (or monetary backers) voted him/her into office on a specific platform. Locally elected officials, on the other hand, do have some accountability: they have responsibilities affecting all of the GMA goals, not just transportation, and their performance is judged on that broader basis.

We agree with the basic premise of the House version (HB 2101), which would set up a task force to thoroughly study the ramifications of the suggested changes to the governance of transportation planning and financing before any changes could be made. And we would urge such a task force, were it to be formed, to keep in mind the possibility of adjusting the charter of the Puget Sound Regional Council, the planning group in this region for the past 50 years.

**Contact:** Pat Matteson, 206-232-8028, [patricialpm@cs.com](mailto:patricialpm@cs.com) or Linnea Hirst, 206-322-3076, [lwwquilter@comcast.net](mailto:lwwquilter@comcast.net)

### PRIORITIES FOR A HEALTHY WASHINGTON

All four priorities are alive and well after meeting the requisite cut-off dates (so far) that need to be met in order for that legislation to continue to move through the legislative process. League **supports** all four Priorities for a Healthy Washington:

Eliminate Toxic Flame Retardants (PBDEs) – **ESHB 1024** passed out of Senate Committee on Water and Energy & Telecommunications and is now in Senate Rules. **Contact:** Elizabeth Davis, 360-331-4184, [elizabethd@whidbey.com](mailto:elizabethd@whidbey.com)

Increase Funding for Wildlife & Recreation – Budget proviso. **Contact:** Elizabeth Davis, 360-331-4184, [elizabethd@whidbey.com](mailto:elizabethd@whidbey.com)

Promote Clean Cars/Clean Fuels – **E2SHB 1303** had a public hearing in Senate Committee on Water and Energy & Telecommunications *but has not been voted out yet*. **Contact:** Toni Potter, 206-365-8949, [antoniapotter@comcast.net](mailto:antoniapotter@comcast.net)

Restore & Clean Up Puget Sound – **ESSB 5372** scheduled for hearing Friday, March 23 in House Select Committee on Puget Sound. **Contact:** Ann Aagaard, 425-488-8418, [aagaarda@nmlink.com](mailto:aagaarda@nmlink.com)

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FOR REFERENCE

Key Session Dates

The 60th Washington State Legislature opened its long session on Monday, January 8. The 2007 legislative session in Olympia runs from January 8 to April 22. Every day (including Saturday, Sunday, and holidays) is counted in the 105-day session. The Lobby Team will meet regularly during the session to talk with the League lobbyist, Lonnie Johns-Brown, and to decide on priority action for the upcoming week.

Jan. 8 – First day of regular session

Jan. 19 – LWVWA Lobby Day

Feb. 28 – Last day for any bill to be considered in **policy** committee of its “house of origin” (House for HB, or Senate for SB)

Mar. 5 – Last day for any bill to be considered in **fiscal** committee of its “house of origin”

Mar. 14 – Last day for bills to be considered on the floor of their “house of origin” (5 p.m.)

Mar. 30 – Last day for bills to be considered in a **policy** committee of the opposite house (Senate for HB, or House for SB)

Apr. 2 – Last day for bills to be considered in a **fiscal** committee of the opposite house

Apr. 13 – Last day for bills to be considered on the floor of the opposite house (5 p.m.) except initiatives and alternatives to initiatives, budgets and matters necessary to implementing budgets, differences between the houses, and matters incident to the interim and closing of the session.

Apr. 22 – Last day of regular session

CONTACT LISTS

Portfolios / Lobby Team – www.lwvwa.org/about/officers.html

Legislators – www.lwvwa.org/advocacy/newsletters/Legislators.pdf

Legislative Committees – www.leg.wa.gov/legislature/committeelisting.aspx

Representation by legislative district – www.lwvwa.org/advocacy/newsletters/DistrictReps.pdf

LEAGUE POSITIONS

LWVWA positions – www.lwvwa.org/advocacy/prog_in_action05-07.html

RESOURCES

League action website – lwvwa.org/advocacy

House Floor Activity as it happens – flooractivityext.leg.wa.gov/default.aspx?chamber=3

Senate Floor Activity as it happens – flooractivityext.leg.wa.gov

Public hearings as they happen – tvw.org

Bill information – text, analysis, status, committee action – apps.leg.wa.gov/billinfo

Bill room (legislative information center) – **360-786-7573**

State budget information – www.ofm.wa.gov

Governor’s website – governor.wa.gov

Washington state’s official website – access.wa.gov

Speaking to a Legislator

Visit, write to, call, or email the legislator directly (see contact list for legislators). Or, use the toll-free Legislative Hotline available weekdays from 8:00 am - 8:00 pm, and Saturdays from 9:00 am - 1:00 pm:

800-562-6000 / TTY: 800-635-9993

Legislative hotline operators will send your message to one of your legislators, all three of your legislators, the governor and lieutenant governor, or all of these, as you request. Language translation services are also available. Person placing the call needs to know enough English to understand “Please Wait” and to report the language needed.

Addressing a Letter to a Legislator

Representative _____ Senator _____

P.O. Box 40600 P.O. Box 404[leg district]

Olympia, WA 98504-0600 Olympia, WA 98504-04[leg district]

Visiting Your Legislators

Citizens are welcome to visit their legislators in Olympia on any day during the session. Making an appointment first is prudent but not always required. Later in the session, town hall meetings back in the legislators’ home districts are good opportunities for talking to your legislators. Lobby day events provide organized support for visits.