

2026 Weekly Legislative Session Update

Points Communities

January 25, 2026

General Background

On campus this week, the weather was sunny with milder winter temperatures than is typical for Olympia as legislative activity kicked off with ceremonies held by the 2026 Washington State Legislature to celebrate Martin Luther King, Jr. Day. Following this ceremonial activity, lawmakers quickly transitioned back into the rigors of conducting legislative business.

Looking ahead, the first legislative cutoff date this session will occur on February 4 with the Policy Committee Cutoff. This is the day a bill must be passed out of its house of origin in order to remain alive this session. There are exceptions to legislative cutoff dates, especially for bills in fiscal and transportation committees and all bills marked necessary to implement the budget (NTIB). Until legislative cutoff dates start coming into effect, all bills introduced this session and last session are in play, making for a considerably high volume of bills to track.

To effectively conduct their business during this short 60-day session, lawmakers have been holding hearings nearly every business day from 8am to 6pm. This legislative work will seep into the weekends as cutoff dates get nearer, in order to keep as many priority bills alive as possible.

Below is a summary of session highlights from this week. Please note that bill numbers are hyperlinked so that you can find the most up-to-date information about bill hearings and status.

Budget

Governor Bob Ferguson (D-Olympia) proposed redirecting \$569 million from carbon-auction funds under the Climate Commitment Act to protect the [Working Families Tax Credit](#) amid a \$1.6–\$2.3 billion shortfall. Governor Ferguson said, “It’s in the legislation. It’s an entirely appropriate use. Is it ideal? No.” The funds, previously dedicated to clean-energy projects, have supported overburdened communities. House Minority Leader Representative Drew Stokesbary (R-Auburn) praised the move stating, “I appreciate him following Republicans’ lead.” Climate advocates called it an “unprecedented raid” on climate funding, as reported in this *KUOW News* [article](#).

The Legislature is also considering a “millionaire’s tax” during this 60-day session as reported in this *KNKX News* [article](#). “The focus... is to make our tax structure more fair,” explained Governor Ferguson. “It’s got to be targeted... helping out Washingtonians,” stated Speaker Jinkins about the tax proposal. The proposal aims to address affordability and revisit the 1933 Supreme Court ban on income tax.

As noted in this *KING News* [article](#), Governor Ferguson's proposal to withdraw \$1 billion from Washington's Budget Stabilization Account (BSA) as another solution to address the large projected deficit continues to be in consideration. House Majority Leader Representative Joe Fitzgibbon (D-West Seattle) said, "It feels like it's for times like this," supporting its use to protect education and health care. Senate Majority Leader Jamie Pedersen (D-Seattle) was in agreement stating conditions meet constitutional requirements, citing low job growth. In contrast, the House Republican Leader Representative Stokesbary warned, "The more we chip away at the rainy day fund...the more we risk losing [AAA rating]." Also weighing in on this issue was State Treasurer Mike Pellicciotti (D), who called the move "risky." The BSA fund was last tapped in 2021 for pandemic relief.

Additionally, the Governor's budget proposal includes savings by capping enrollment in the Working Connections Child Care program (saving \$217 million), freezing child care funding (\$41 million cut), and reducing higher-ed budgets by up to 3%. These proposals are receiving mixed reviews, as reported in this *Washington State Standard* [article](#).

This Week's Bills of Interest

- [HB 2100](#) - Enacting an excise tax on large operating companies on the amount of payroll expenses above the minimum wage threshold of the additional medicare tax to fund services to benefit Washingtonians and establishing the Well Washington fund account.
- [HB 2251](#) - Concerning climate commitment act accounts.
- [SB 6129](#) - Concerning the taxation of cigarettes and other nicotine products.
- [SB 6162](#) - Concerning property tax reform.

Business & Labor

Governor Ferguson [announced](#) he appointed Sarah Clifthorne as interim director of the Washington State Department of Commerce following the departure of Joe Nguyễn, who will lead the Seattle Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce. The appointment took effect January 20.

Transportation

The Washington State Department of Transportation estimates it will cost Washington state \$40–\$50 million to repair damage from historic December 2025 floods, with over 50 emergency work sites and 16 contracts initiated so far. Federal aid is expected to cover most of these costs, leaving the state responsible for roughly 20%, though exact figures remain uncertain, as explained in this *Fox13 News* [article](#). For background, much of the major damage occurred along Highway 2, which was closed for two weeks.

This Week's Bills of Interest

- [ESB 5746](#) - Creating an advisory committee on electric vehicle charger infrastructure property crime. (Hearing is on the Proposed Substitute.)
- [HB 2109](#) - Addressing vehicle loads on public highways.
- [HB 2134](#) - Concerning regional transportation plans, of regional transportation planning organizations containing certain counties, providing for reductions in greenhouse gas emissions and vehicle miles traveled.
- [SB 5750](#) - Concerning fees for charging electrical vehicles at state facilities.
- [SB 5820](#) - Concerning the responsibility of certain counties to include freight rail dependent use overlay as part of the transportation element of their comprehensive plan.

- [SB 5839](#) - Concerning county ferry district authority. (Hearing is on the Proposed Substitute.)
- [SB 6148](#) - Modifying the maximum terms of regional transit authority bond issues.

Work Sessions

- January 20 - Senate Transportation - Aircraft fuel pipeline resiliency with updates given by [Olympic Pipeline Company](#), [bp](#), [Port of Seattle](#), [Mark Soletta Fuel Consortium](#), & [Earth Finance](#) and [Impacts of recent flooding to the state highway system and the Department of Transportation response](#).
- January 22 - Senate Transportation - Transportation investments supporting the World Cup ([WSDOT](#) and [FIFA](#))

Housing & Homelessness

[HB 2489](#) would sharply limit when cities can clear homeless encampments, requiring proof of available shelter that allows pets, partners, and belongings. Programs mandating sobriety or treatment wouldn't qualify. Supporters, including the ACLU, say it "restores fairness and dignity," while critics argue it strips local control, as reported in this *MyNorthwest* [article](#).

The Senate Housing Committee heard a bill by Senator Marcus Riccelli (D-Spokane) to expand a 2022 law incentivizing conversion of parking lots into affordable housing. The proposal raises the population cap for eligible cities to 275,000 and lowers affordability requirements to 20% in high-need areas, as noted in this *The Spokesman Review* [article](#).

[HB 2559](#) would let cities and counties impose up to a 4% tax on short-term rentals starting April 2027 to fund affordable housing—construction, maintenance, and rental assistance. Opposition to this legislation is strong, as reported in this *Washington State Standard* [article](#).

This Week's Bills of Interest

- [HB 1974](#) - Establishing land banking authorities.
- [HB 2265](#) - Protecting tenants from periods of extreme heat.
- [HB 2266](#) - Encouraging permanent supportive housing, transitional housing, indoor emergency housing, and indoor emergency shelters.
- [HB 2269](#) - Concerning middle housing in unincorporated areas.
- [HB 2304](#) - Increasing the supply of condominiums by expanding the types of condominium buildings that may be subject to an express warranty of quality and express warranty insurance coverage.
- [HB 2489](#) - Establishing statewide standards for when local governments may enforce laws regulating the use of public space for life-sustaining activities.
- [SB 5249](#) - Concerning siting kit homes.
- [SB 5470](#) - Establishing limitations on detached accessory dwelling units outside urban growth areas. (Hearing is on the Proposed Substitute.)
- [SB 5884](#) - Expanding the limited sales and use tax incentive program to encourage redevelopment of underutilized property.
- [SB 5885](#) - Expanding opportunities for affordable housing developments on properties owned by religious organizations.
- [SB 6015](#) - Concerning permit-ready residential building plans.
- [SB 6026](#) - Concerning residential development in commercial and mixed-use zones.

- [SB 6069](#) - Encouraging permanent supportive housing, transitional housing, indoor emergency housing, and indoor emergency shelters.
- [SB 6091](#) - Prohibiting real estate brokers from marketing residential properties to an exclusive group of prospective buyers or real estate brokers.

Local Government

Representative Liz Berry (D–Seattle) introduced [HB 2333](#) to shield elected officials’ home addresses from public records, allow campaign or office funds for security upgrades, and raise harassment penalties to a Class C felony. Representative Berry said the goal is to prevent “random people Googling” addresses and threatening officials. During a hearing on the bill, critics cautioned the measure is too broad making it very difficult to implement, as reported in this *Seattle Times* [article](#).

This Week’s Bills of Interest

- [HB 1529](#) - Increasing opportunities for cities to utilize county resources for road construction and maintenance.
- [HB 2133](#) - Making the property tax exemption for multipurpose senior citizen centers permanent.
- [HB 2135](#) - Modifying and extending the adaptive housing retail sales and use tax preference for disabled veterans.
- [HB 2174](#) - Establishing accident risk zones.
- [HB 2183](#) - Requiring counties to develop and implement heat response plans.
- [HB 2210](#) - Protecting local representation by strengthening and securing fair elections in local governments.
- [HB 2258](#) - Authorizing cities and counties the ability to levy a household excise tax for the operation, maintenance, and capital needs of animal control and shelter systems.
- [HB 2273](#) - Reducing embodied carbon emissions of buildings and building materials.
- [HB 2381](#) - Concerning performance-based building codes for low-rise residential buildings.
- [HB 2418](#) - Concerning permit review processes.
- [HB 2442](#) - Providing local governments tax resources and fund flexibility (5% REET increase).
- [HB 2543](#) - Concerning county clerk fees.
- [HB 2559](#) - Providing a local government option for the funding of essential affordable housing programs.
- [SB 5820](#) - Concerning the responsibility of certain counties to include freight rail dependent use overlay as part of the transportation element of their comprehensive plan.
- [SB 5983](#) - Exempting land classified under current use that is sold or transferred to a governmental entity from additional tax in certain circumstances.
- [SB 5995](#) - Concerning moneys available to a port district allocated for the purchase of zero and near zero emission cargo handling equipment.
- [SB 6077](#) - Concerning Washington's property assessment appeal procedures.
- [SB 6101](#) - Requiring coroners to be appointed rather than elected.
- [SB 6132](#) - Authorizing a narrow modification to indebtedness limits for select inland port districts to ensure continued eligibility for federal funding for rail, power, and other critical public infrastructure improvements.
- [SB 6154](#) - Concerning local government permits for replacing existing culverts.
- [SB 6181](#) - Concerning city incorporation.
- [SB 6189](#) - Changing the deadline for forming a public facilities district for regional aquatics and sports facilities.

2026 Session Important Dates

February

- **February 4 - Policy Committee Cutoff.**
 - Last day to read in committee reports in house of origin, except House fiscal committees and Senate Ways & Means and Transportation committees.
- **February 9 - Fiscal Committee Cutoff.**
 - Last day to read in committee reports from House fiscal committees and Senate Ways & Means and Transportation committees in house of origin.
- **February 17 - House of Origin Cutoff.**
 - Last day to consider bills in house of origin (5 p.m.).
- **February 25 - Policy Committee Cutoff - Opposite House.**
 - Last day to read in committee reports from opposite house, except House fiscal committees and Senate Ways & Means and Transportation committees.

March

- **March 2 - Fiscal Committee Cutoff - Opposite House.**
 - Last day to read in opposite house committee reports from House fiscal committees and Senate Ways & Means and Transportation committees.
- **March 6 - Opposite House Cutoff (until 5 p.m.)**
 - Last day to consider opposite house bills with the exception of budgets, matters necessary to implement budgets, matters that affect state revenue, initiatives to the legislature and alternatives, differences between the two houses, and business related to the interim or closing the session.
- **March 12 - Sine Die.**
 - Last day allowed for regular session under state constitution.

Governor Review Period

- The Governor has 5 days, if the Legislature is still in session, or 20 days, if the Legislature has adjourned, to take action on any bill passed by the Legislature.

Committee Activities of Interest

Local Government (Senate) - SHR 3 and Virtual JACB - 1/26 @ 1:30pm

- SB 6211 - Public Hearing - Creating uniformity for the process by which cities planning under the growth management act implement real estate excise taxes. (Remote Testimony Available).

Transportation (House) - HHR B and Virtual JLOB - 1/26 @ 4:00pm

- HB 2495 - Public Hearing - Addressing the removal of vehicles by certain cities when obstructing the operation of streetcar vehicles or jeopardizing public safety. (Remote Testimony Available).

Finance (House) - HHR A and Virtual JLOB - 1/27 @ 8:00am

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- HB 2227 - Public Hearing - Providing a real estate excise tax exemption for the sale of qualified affordable housing. (Remote Testimony Available).
- HB 2528 - Public Hearing - Creating uniformity for the process by which cities planning under the growth management act implement real estate excise taxes. (Remote Testimony Available).

Local Government (House) - HHR E and Virtual JLOB - 1/27 @ 10:30am

- HB 2566 - Public Hearing - Concerning local government procurement. (Remote Testimony Available).

Housing (House) - HHR C and Virtual JLOB - 1/27 @ 4:00pm

- HB 2266 - Exec Session - Encouraging permanent supportive housing, transitional housing, indoor emergency housing, and indoor emergency shelters.
- HB 2489 - Exec Session - Establishing statewide standards for when local governments may enforce laws regulating the use of public space for life-sustaining activities.

Local Government (House) - HHR E and Virtual JLOB - 1/28 @ 8:00am

- HB 2480 - Public Hearing - Concerning residential development in commercial and mixed-use zones. (Remote Testimony Available).

Housing (Senate) - SHR 4 and Virtual JACB - 1/28 @ 10:30am

- SB 6069 - Public Hearing - Encouraging permanent supportive housing, transitional housing, indoor emergency housing, and indoor emergency shelters. (Remote Testimony Available).
- SB 6026 - Exec Session - Concerning residential development in commercial and mixed-use zones.

Finance (House) - HHR A and Virtual JLOB - 1/29 @ 1:30pm

- SHB 1859 - Exec Session - Expanding opportunities for affordable housing developments on properties owned by religious organizations.
- HB 2442 - Exec Session - Providing local governments tax resources and fund flexibility.

Local Government (Senate) - SHR 3 and Virtual JACB - 1/29 @ 1:30pm

- SB 5633 - Public Hearing - Concerning the subdivision of land. (Hearing is on the Proposed Substitute.) (Remote Testimony Available).

Housing (Senate) - SHR 4 and Virtual JACB - 1/30 @ 10:30am

- SSB 5470 - Exec Session - Establishing limitations on detached accessory dwelling units outside urban growth areas.

Local Government (House) - HHR E and Virtual JLOB - 1/30 @ 10:30am

- HB 2566 - Exec Session - Concerning local government procurement.

Bills of Interest

Bill #	Abbrev. Title	Title	Status	Sponsor
SHB 1015	Energy labeling/residential	Concerning energy labeling of residential buildings.	H Local Govt	Duerr
SHB 1160	Local gov. design review	Concerning local government design review.	H 2nd Reading	Walen
HB 1164	Urban growth area boundaries	Expanding urban growth area boundaries for residential development.	H Local Govt	Connors
E2SHB 1175	Small businesses/residential	Allowing small business establishments in residential zones.	S Loc Gov	Klicker
HB 1226 (SSB 5160)	Transportation budget, supp.	Making supplemental transportation appropriations for the 2023-2025 fiscal biennium.	H Transportation	Fey
HB 1235 (E2SSB 5148)	GMA housing element	Ensuring compliance with the housing element requirements of the growth management act.	H Housing	Peterson
HB 1299 (ESSB 5184)	Minimum parking requirements	Concerning minimum parking requirements.	H Local Govt	Peterson
SHB 1305	Property owners/projects	Concerning reimbursement by property owners for street, road, and water or sewer projects.	H Local Govt	Donaghy
EHB 1345	Detached ADU limits	Establishing limitations on detached accessory dwelling units outside of urban growth areas.	H Passed 3rd	Low
HB 1694	City & county REET revenues	Concerning revenues from the excise tax on real estate transactions imposed by cities and counties under RCW 82.46.035.	H Finance	Thai
HB 1704	Cannabis revenue/local gov.	Increasing cannabis revenue distributions to local governments.	H Approps	Schmidt
HB 1772 (ESB 5595)	Shared streets	Establishing shared streets.	H Transportation	Reed
HB 1840 (ESB 5471)	Middle housing	Authorizing middle housing in unincorporated growth areas and unincorporated urban growth areas, certain limited areas of more intensive rural development, and fully contained communities.	H Housing	Peterson
SHB 1859 (SB 5885)	Housing dev./religious orgs.	Expanding opportunities for affordable housing developments on properties owned by religious organizations.	H Finance	Salahuddin
HB 2097	County B&O tax	Authorizing counties to impose a business and occupation tax.	H Finance	Scott
HB 2201	Urban growth area planning	Standardizing city and county planning and development regulations with an urban growth area.	H Local Govt	Parshley
HB 2227	Affordable housing/REET	Providing a real estate excise tax exemption for the sale of qualified affordable housing.	H Finance	Ramel

Bill #	Abbrev. Title	Title	Status	Sponsor
HB 2236 (SSB 6018)	Housing finance commission	Concerning the housing finance commission.	H Exec Action	Zahn
HB 2266 (SB 6069)	Supportive & emerg. housing	Encouraging permanent supportive housing, transitional housing, indoor emergency housing, and indoor emergency shelters.	H Housing	Peterson
HB 2289 (SB 5998)	Operating budget, supp.	Making 2025-2027 fiscal biennium supplemental operating appropriations.	H Approps	Ormsby
HB 2295 (SB 6003)	Capital budget, supplemental	Concerning the capital budget.	H Cap Budget	Tharinger
HB 2306 (SB 6005)	Transportation budget, supp.	Making supplemental transportation appropriations for the 2025-2027 fiscal biennium.	H Transportation	Fey
HB 2346	Middle housing/perf. codes	Concerning performance-based building codes for middle housing.	H Local Govt	Duerr
HB 2359 (SSB 6027)	Affordable housing funding	Modifying requirements and allowed uses for certain funding related to providing and maintaining affordable housing and related services.	H Finance	Peterson
HB 2442 (SB 6294)	Local government fund use	Providing local governments tax resources and fund flexibility.	H Finance	Berg
HB 2480 (SB 6026)	Residential dev./zones	Concerning residential development in commercial and mixed-use zones.	H Local Govt	Street
HB 2489	Public space/local use laws	Establishing statewide standards for when local governments may enforce laws regulating the use of public space for life-sustaining activities.	H Housing	Gregerson
HB 2495	Removal of vehicles	Addressing the removal of vehicles by certain cities when obstructing the operation of streetcar vehicles or jeopardizing public safety.	H Transportation	Thomas
HB 2528 (SB 6211)	Real estate excise taxes/GMA	Creating uniformity for the process by which cities planning under the growth management act implement real estate excise taxes.	H Finance	Springer
HB 2566	Local government procurement	Concerning local government procurement.	H Local Govt	Zahn
SB 5421	Small businesses/residential	Allowing small business establishments in residential zones.	S Loc Gov	Shewmake
SSB 5470	Detached ADUs	Establishing limitations on detached accessory dwelling units outside urban growth areas.	S Housing	Goehner
SB 5555	Zoning regulations	Concerning zoning regulations in commercial, retail, and mixed-use areas in cities and code cities.	S Housing	Salomon
SB 5604	Transit-oriented development	Promoting transit-oriented development.	S Housing	Liias
E2SSB 5613	Residential development	Concerning the development of clear and objective standards, conditions, and procedures for residential development.	S Ways & Means	Salomon
SB 5633	Subdivision of land	Concerning the subdivision of land.	S Loc Gov	Lovelett
SB 5647	Affordable housing/REET	Providing a real estate excise tax exemption for the sale of qualified affordable housing.	S Ways & Means	Alvarado

Bill #	Abbrev. Title	Title	Status	Sponsor
SB 5659	Housing shortage/local share	Eliminating each local government's proportional share of Washington's housing shortage.	S Ways & Means	Goehner
SB 5732	Housing supply/GMA	Creating greater accountability for increasing the supply of housing consistent with growth management.	S Housing	Braun
SB 5733	Updating comprehensive plans	Concerning updating comprehensive plans.	S Housing	Braun
SSB 5798	Property tax	Concerning property tax reform.	S Ways & Means	Pedersen
SB 5800	Transportation funding bonds	Authorizing bonds for transportation funding.	S Rules 3	King
SB 5885 (SHB 1859)	Housing dev./religious orgs.	Expanding opportunities for affordable housing developments on properties owned by religious organizations.	S Housing	Riccelli
SB 5998 (HB 2289)	Operating budget, supp.	Making 2025-2027 fiscal biennium supplemental operating appropriations.	S Ways & Means	Robinson
SB 6003 (HB 2295)	Capital budget, supplemental	Concerning the capital budget.	S Ways & Means	Trudeau
SB 6005 (HB 2306)	Transportation budget, supp.	Making supplemental transportation appropriations for the 2025-2027 fiscal biennium.	S Transportation	Liias
SSB 6018 (HB 2236)	Housing finance commission	Concerning the housing finance commission.	S Ways & Means	Trudeau
SB 6026 (HB 2480)	Residential dev./zones	Concerning residential development in commercial and mixed-use zones.	S Housing	Alvarado
SSB 6027 (HB 2359)	Affordable housing funding	Modifying certain funding and exemptions related to providing and maintaining affordable housing and related services.	S Ways & Means	Alvarado
SB 6069 (HB 2266)	Supportive & emerg. housing	Encouraging permanent supportive housing, transitional housing, indoor emergency housing, and indoor emergency shelters.	S Housing	Alvarado
SB 6127	Paid leave integrity audit	Requiring a performance audit of program integrity measures in Washington's paid family and medical leave program.	S Labor & Comm	Braun
SB 6211 (HB 2528)	Real estate excise taxes/GMA	Creating uniformity for the process by which cities planning under the growth management act implement real estate excise taxes.	S Loc Gov	Wilson
SB 6225	Transportation funding bonds	Authorizing bonds for transportation funding.	S Transportation	Liias
SB 6294 (HB 2442)	Local government fund use	Providing local governments tax resources and fund flexibility.	S Ways & Means	Frame