

# Senate Committee Services

Summary of Select 2008 Interim Activities



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# Senate Agriculture & Rural Economic Development Committee

## 2008 Summary of Select Interim Activities

**TITLE: Animal Health Requirements for Cattle Imported into Washington**

**DESCRIPTION/FINDINGS/OUTCOME:** In response to concerns raised by the livestock industry, the committee sent letters to the Washington State Patrol (WSP), the Washington State Department of Agriculture (WSDA) and the United State Department of Agriculture (USDA) regarding whether adequate efforts have been made to determine compliance with animal health regulations for cattle imported from Canada and other states. The purpose of the regulations is to safeguard Washington's livestock herds from introduction of highly contagious diseases such as tuberculosis and brucellosis, and dangerous diseases such as bovine spongiform encephalopathy (mad cow disease). The WSP and WSDA reported to the committee at its December meeting that the two special surveillance activities to monitor the movement of cattle trucks did not show major violations of animal health laws. Further monitoring is expected to continue. The USDA also provided a lengthy written response explaining the nature of their activities.

**REFERENCES:** NA

**STAFF CONTACT:** Bob Lee (786-7404)

**TITLE: Condition of Honey Bees used to Pollinate Cranberries**

**DESCRIPTION/FINDINGS/OUTCOME:** There has been increased concern nationally about colony collapse disorder affecting bees that pollinate fruits and vegetables that comprise our nation's food supply. The area of greatest loss of honeybees in the state last winter was in colonies used to pollinate cranberries. Agricultural research scientists with Washington State University were responsive to requests on behalf of beekeepers and cranberry growers to establish a testing program to determine the factors contributing to the high bee mortality rate. During the committee tour of blossoming cranberry fields, the project cooperators summarized the weekly testing that was occurring. Nutrition, stress from transportation, pest control materials, parasites, and the availability of summer pasture are among the myriad of factors being evaluated as possible contributing factors to bee longevity, reproductive efficiency and hive strength. The results of these studies are expected to be presented to the committee in the upcoming session.

**REFERENCES:** NA

**STAFF CONTACT:** Sam Thompson (786-7413)

**TITLE: Mobile Slaughtering Units to Aid Livestock Producers**

**DESCRIPTION/FINDINGS/OUTCOME:** With the continuing consolidation of livestock slaughter facilities and the decline in the number of public livestock markets, the lack of marketing options and increasing distance to markets is of concern to livestock producers and to consumers who desire to purchase locally produced meats. Among the options being considered to reverse this trend are expanding the use of mobile slaughtering units, creating additional marketing options including label standards for grass-fed and natural beef, and establishing a state meat inspection program. The committee received input from livestock interests, consumers, and agencies regarding these options at the September committee work session in Vancouver. Consideration of these and other alternatives are expected to continue into the upcoming legislative session.

**REFERENCES:** NA

**STAFF CONTACT:** Bob Lee (786-7404)

# Senate Consumer Protection & Housing Committee

## 2008 Summary of Select Interim Activities

**TITLE: Distressed Properties**

**DESCRIPTION/FINDINGS/OUTCOME:** HB 2791 expands the equity skimming laws. Those offering services to homeowners in danger of foreclosing on their homes are regulated as distressed home consultants. Throughout the interim, stakeholders and state agencies met to address concerns about how this law impacts homeowners/consumers, real estate licensees, and third-party purchasers who buy a distressed property within 20 days of the foreclosure sale. Legislation will be proposed to address these issues.

**REFERENCES:** [HB 2791 \(2008\)](#)

**STAFF CONTACT:** Alison Mendiola (786-7483)

**TITLE: Construction Defects**

**DESCRIPTION/FINDINGS/OUTCOME:** An informal workgroup met with the building industry, consumers, and other stakeholders throughout the interim to further examine the issue of construction defects in residential construction and substantial remodels. The group examined the issues of 1) residential contractor licensing, for which the Department of Licensing concurrently and independently completed a sunrise review, 2) creating an ombudsman office for home construction and repair, and 3) identifying legal remedies for home construction defects. Legislation will be proposed to address the issue of construction defects.

**REFERENCES:** [ESSB 5550 \(2007\)](#), [SB 6385 \(2008\)](#)  
<http://www.dol.wa.gov/about/reports/sunriseResContractors.pdf>

**STAFF CONTACT:** Alison Mendiola (786-7483)

# Senate Early Learning & K-12 Education Committee

## 2008 Summary of Select Interim Activities

**TITLE: State Assessment Workgroup**

**DESCRIPTION/FINDINGS/OUTCOME:** A legislative workgroup on the Washington Assessment of Student Learning (WASL) composed of state House and Senate members was created to review and evaluate the current student assessment system by January 1, 2009. The WASL workgroup held six work sessions with an opportunity provided for public comment at each meeting. The final report of the workgroup contains both short- and long-term recommendations for the design of a new, balanced, assessment system.

**REFERENCES:** [ESHB 2687 \(Sec. 127\) \(2008\)](#)  
<http://www.leg.wa.gov/jointcommittees/wasl/documents/waslfinalrpt.pdf>  
<http://www.leg.wa.gov/JointCommittees/WASL/Pages/default.aspx>

**STAFF CONTACT:** Susan Mielke (786-7422)

**TITLE: Regional Delivery of Educational Programs, Training, and Services through the Educational Service Districts (ESDs)**

**DESCRIPTION/FINDINGS/OUTCOME:** Committee staff summarized information on the history of the role of ESDs; and reviewed and summarized the current programs, training, and services offered regionally through the ESDs. Additionally, summary information is included on the actions taken by the ESDs in response to the 2006 performance audit report to further develop the ESDs into a "system" of regional support.

**REFERENCES:** [HB 2629 \(2008\)](#), [SHB 2679 \(2008\)](#), [E2SSB 6673 \(2008\)](#), [INITIATIVE 900 \(2005\)](#)  
<http://www.leg.wa.gov/Senate/Committees/EDU/documents/ESDRReport.pdf>

**STAFF CONTACT:** Susan Mielke (786-7422) Catherine Nicolai (786-7430)

**TITLE: The Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children Task Force**

**DESCRIPTION/FINDINGS/OUTCOME:** In the 2008 Legislative Session, an interstate compact to improve educational opportunities for children in grades K-12 in the household of an active duty uniformed service member was introduced as legislation. The bill ultimately passed the Legislature creating a task force composed of four legislators and others to review and make

recommendations regarding the interstate compact. During the 2008 interim, the task force met six times across the state, including Tacoma, Bremerton, Oak Harbor, and Everett. Legislative staff assisted in staffing the task force. The task force considered each provision of the interstate compact, identified issues or concerns, and made recommendations to adopt the compact and either amend the current state law to address military children as addressed in the compact, amend some of the compact provisions, or take no action in the areas where the current state law and the compact are consistent.

**REFERENCES:** [SSB 6426 \(2008\)](#)  
<http://www.leg.wa.gov/Senate/Committees/EDU/documents/InterstateCompactTaskForceRpt.pdf>

**STAFF CONTACT:** Susan Mielke (786-7422)

**TITLE: Joint Task Force on Basic Education Definition and Funding**

**DESCRIPTION/FINDINGS/OUTCOME:** In the 2007 Legislative Session, a joint task force comprised of legislators and others was created to review the definition of basic education, the current funding formulas, and propose a new definition and options for a new funding structure. The Washington State Institute for Public Policy was tasked with providing research support, with assistance from legislative committee staff, the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, the Legislative Evaluation and Accountability Program, and the Office of Financial Management.

During 2007 and 2008, the task force met on 25 days for staff presentations, public hearings, presentations from nationally-recognized experts, and task force discussion. In early December 2008, the task force considered its final report and recommendations and adopted an amended version of its recommendations on December 9<sup>th</sup>. The final report is scheduled to be fully reviewed and approved by January 7, 2009.

The key recommendations of the task force include a definition of basic education, an instructional program of education, a funding-allocation methodology, revised school-employee compensation policies, requirements for teacher preparation, and oversight and accountability provisions.

**REFERENCES:** [E2SSB 5627 \(2007\)](#), [SSB 6879 \(2008\)](#), [2SSB 6377 \(2008\)](#)  
<http://www.leg.wa.gov/JointCommittees/BEF/Documents/FinalReport.pdf>  
[Minority Report](#)  
<http://www.leg.wa.gov/JointCommittees/BEF/Pages/default.aspx>

**STAFF CONTACT:** Susan Mielke (786-7422) Kim Cushing (786-7421) Elise Greef (786-7708)

**TITLE:** Online Teaching and Learning

**DESCRIPTION/FINDINGS/OUTCOME:** Committee staff profiled each of the private and state-funded entities providing online education; explored which Washington schools, districts, and students are accessing online education; summarized the relevant state and federal law governing online education; and sampled how schools, districts, and students decide which courses and/or providers are chosen. Additionally, staff reviewed how other states are addressing online education.

**REFERENCES:** [SSB 5828 \(2005\)](#), [2SHB 2598 \(2007\)](#), [2SHB 3129 \(2007\)](#)  
[http://www.leg.wa.gov/Senate/Committees/EDU/documents/Washington State Online Learning Policies and Programs.pdf](http://www.leg.wa.gov/Senate/Committees/EDU/documents/Washington%20State%20Online%20Learning%20Policies%20and%20Programs.pdf)

**STAFF CONTACT:** Juliana Roe (786-7438) Kelsey Burwell (NA)

# Senate Economic Development, Trade & Management Committee

## 2008 Summary of Select Interim Activities

### **TITLE: Higher Education and Economic Development**

**DESCRIPTION/FINDINGS/OUTCOME:** The committee held four work sessions and a tour of the University of Washington to explore how our higher-education system can support economic development in the state. The work sessions were held in Vancouver, Bellingham, Yakima, and Tacoma. The focus was on how universities and colleges can align their contributions with what is actually happening in the local economy and how it can strengthen local capabilities for innovation.

The committee learned that institutions of higher education can be catalysts for helping local firms to innovate. The historical mission of education and research can be joined to economic development and activities benefitting local industries through: cooperative/contractual research, faculty consulting, offering access to specialized equipment and facilities, student involvement through internships and projects focused on solving firm-identified problems, technical and in-firm training, and the alignment of curriculum with industry needs.

Legislation relating to aligning higher education activities with industry needs will be considered.

**REFERENCES:** NA

**STAFF CONTACT:** Jack Brummel (786-7428)

### **TITLE: Transparency in Economic Development Subsidies**

**DESCRIPTION/FINDINGS/OUTCOME:** One of the best strategies for improving performance is transparency. A 2007 report ranking the states in transparency gave Washington a grade of "A" in disclosure of state lobbying activities and a grade of "A-" in disclosure of state procurement contracts, but a grade of "F" in disclosure of state economic development subsidies. Committee staff researched other states' efforts in making their economic development subsidies transparent and met with Department of Revenue staff. Prior to this summer, the department's public disclosure reports were online but were difficult to find. The Department has established a new link on their website taking the user to annual reports and annual survey data submitted by incentive recipients; the new link makes descriptive statistics reports more prominent and easy to find.

The Department has suggested that there could be better consistency in statutes requiring reporting and has prepared draft legislation which would accomplish this. In addition, the Department has suggested that the Legislature may want to consider instituting reporting requirements for all incentive programs and pointed to one economic development incentive

statute which provides tax credits for projects in rural counties and empowerment zones but lacks accountability provisions. Committee staff has prepared draft legislation amending the statute to require incentive recipients to complete an annual survey.

**REFERENCES:** NA

**STAFF CONTACT:** Jack Brummel (786-7428) Aaron Gutierrez (786-7448)

# Senate Financial Institutions & Insurance Committee

## 2008 Summary of Select Interim Activities

**TITLE: Life Settlement Model Act**

**DESCRIPTION/FINDINGS/OUTCOME:** Directly following the 2008 session, Chair Berkey convened a workgroup in Everett, Washington, to craft consensus language for the Washington Life Settlement Act. This Act would be the first regulation of the life settlement industry in this state, though models have been adopted in some other states. Representatives of the life settlement industry, the life insurance industry, the Office of Insurance Commissioner, and committee members were actively involved in this series of three meetings. The consensus bill draft was achieved and will be offered in the 2009 session.

**REFERENCES:** [SB 6631 \(2008\)](#)

**STAFF CONTACT:** Diane Smith (786-7410)

**TITLE: Personal Injury Protection (PIP) Automobile Insurance**

**DESCRIPTION/FINDINGS/OUTCOME:** Two meetings were held in Everett to discuss possible approaches to the calculation of attorneys' fees under automobile insurance policies in personal injury law suits. The primary issue was whether a court decision awarding attorneys' fees based, in part, on the amount recovered, but not litigated; under the personal injury protection (PIP) portion of an automobile insurance policy is appropriate Washington policy. Ancillary issues also arose and were discussed by the participants including representatives of the auto insurance industry, various insurance companies, and lawyers. No legislation resulted from these discussions.

**REFERENCES:** 2008 discussion draft S-4320 available from staff.

**STAFF CONTACT:** Aaron Gutierrez (786-7448) Diane Smith (786-7410)

# Senate Government Operations & Elections Committee

## 2008 Summary of Select Interim Activities

**TITLE: Creating the Public Records Accountability Committee**

**DESCRIPTION/FINDINGS/OUTCOME:** The Public Records Exemptions and Accountability Committee – or “Sunshine Committee” – was created by Substitute House Bill 5435 in 2007. The Legislature established the Committee to review all public disclosure exemptions, and make recommendations to the Legislature as to whether each exemption should be continued without modifications, modified, scheduled for sunset review at a future date, or terminated.

In 2008, the Sunshine Committee held a total of 10 meetings. The Committee adopted 12 recommendations to retain, modify, or terminate exemptions. Eight recommendations were adopted with unanimous agreement of the members; four recommendations were adopted by a majority vote.

**REFERENCES:** [HB 1444 \(2007\)](#)  
<http://www.leg.wa.gov/Senate/Committees/GO/documents/PublicRecordsExemptionsAcctabilityAnnualRpt.pdf>  
<http://www.atg.wa.gov/opengovernment/sunshine.aspx>

**STAFF CONTACT:** Sharon Swanson (786-7447) Cindy Calderon (NA)

**TITLE: Preserving the Viability of Agricultural Lands**

**DESCRIPTION/FINDINGS/OUTCOME:** Substitute Senate Bill 5248 was adopted by the Washington State Legislature in April 2007 following continuing controversy over the designation of critical areas under the Growth Management Act and regulatory requirements for agricultural activities. The Legislature requested that “willing participants” from agricultural and environmental organizations and tribal and local governments embark on fact finding and discussion to prepare recommendations for the preservation of agricultural lands and the protection of critical areas. The William D. Ruckelshaus Center was designated to coordinate fact finding and facilitate discussions.

During 2008, the Ruckelshaus Center held four meetings related to SSB 5248. The emphasis of the 2008 effort has been to carry out required and supplementary fact finding and to allow each of the four caucuses to communicate its interests and desired outcomes. An initial report was presented in 2007. A progress report was completed and submitted to the Legislature on December 1, 2008. A final report is due September 1, 2009.

**REFERENCES:** [HB 1167 \(2007\)](#)  
<http://www.leg.wa.gov/Senate/Committees/GO/documents/5248ProgressRptNo2.pdf>

**STAFF CONTACT:** Sharon Swanson (786-7447) Cindy Calderon (NA)

**TITLE: Modifying Assessed Valuation Requirements for the Direct Petition Method of Annexation**

**DESCRIPTION/FINDINGS/OUTCOME:** Committee staff coordinated six meetings with stakeholders regarding annexation procedures and concerns related to potential negative impacts to cities, fire fighters, citizens, and fire commissioners. Discussions addressed the need to clarify annexation procedures between cities and fire districts.

**REFERENCES:** [HB 2483 \(2008\)](#)

**STAFF CONTACT:** Sharon Swanson (786-7447) Cindy Calderon (NA)

**TITLE: Exempting Specialty Agricultural Structures from Building Code Requirements**

**DESCRIPTION/FINDINGS/OUTCOME:** Committee staff studied and prepared findings addressing the cost of permits for specialty agricultural structures in each county in Washington as well as border counties in Idaho and Oregon. Staff reviewed local ordinances and regulations in an effort to create uniformity with permitting fees across the state. Findings were presented to the Government Operations and Elections Committee in September, 2008.

**REFERENCES:** [SB 6609 \(2008\)](#)

**STAFF CONTACT:** Aaron Gutierrez (786-7448) Sharon Swanson (786-7447)

## Senate Health & Long-Term Care Committee

### 2008 Summary of Select Interim Activities

**TITLE: Comprehensive School Health**

**DESCRIPTION/FINDINGS/OUTCOME:** Legislation in 2007 directed widespread efforts to improve the health of children in Washington State. One such effort was looking at how schools could play a role through improving school based health care, daily nutrition, physical activity, psychosocial services, environmental concerns. The Select Interim Legislative Task Force on Comprehensive School and Health Reform met for two years and completed its report in November 2008.

**REFERENCES:** [2SSB 5093](#)  
<http://www.leg.wa.gov/jointcommittees/cshr/documents/FinalReport.pdf>

**STAFF CONTACT:** Rhoda Donkin (786-7465)

**TITLE: Economic Analysis of Health Care Reform Proposals**

**DESCRIPTION/FINDINGS/OUTCOME:** ESSB 6333 directed the Legislature to contract with a consultant to complete analysis of five health care reform proposals. The Legislature issued a competitive Request for Proposals (RFP) and contracted with Mathematica Policy Research, Inc. to complete the modeling and analysis. A final report summarizing the analysis will be presented during the 2009 Legislative session.

**REFERENCES:** [ESSB 6333](#)

**STAFF CONTACT:** Mich'l Needham (786-7442)

**TITLE: Managing Health Care Cost, Quality, and Access**

**DESCRIPTION/FINDINGS/OUTCOME:** The Senate and House Health Committees jointly hosted roundtable discussions around the state focusing on how to control costs, improve quality; and increase access to health care. Roundtables were held in Wenatchee discussing primary care, in Spokane addressing electronic health information, in Seattle focusing on reducing administrative costs, and in Olympia discussing pharmacy purchasing.

**REFERENCES:** NA

**STAFF CONTACT:** Rhoda Donkin (786-7465) Edith Rice (786-7444) Mich'l Needham (786-7443)

## Senate Higher Education Committee

### 2008 Summary of Select Interim Activities

**TITLE: Electronic File Sharing**

**DESCRIPTION/FINDINGS/OUTCOME:** P2P file sharing is what occurs when computer users upload or download files through a P2P file sharing network. Much of the content being shared over these networks is copyrighted works. Since the passage of the Digital Millennium Copyright Act (DMCA) in 1998, universities have received thousands of DMCA takedown notices notifying them of copyright infringement occurring on their campus networks. The recording industry began including university students in its new wave of lawsuits in 2004. Early in 2007, the recording industry began a new initiative of sending “pre-litigation settlement” letters to universities asking them to forward the letters on to the students engaging in copyright infringement on campus networks. To date, approximately 5,404 pre-litigation letters have been sent and 2,465 lawsuits filed against letter recipients nationwide, including many in Washington. Information was gathered regarding the responses by Washington institutions of higher education to pre-litigation letters and possible alternative responses identified. No present legislative actions were identified.

**REFERENCES:** NA

**STAFF CONTACT:** Aldo Melchiori (786-7439)

**TITLE: State Performance Agreement Committee**

**DESCRIPTION/FINDINGS/OUTCOME:** A state performance agreement committee was formed to represent the state's interest in developing performance agreements at Washington's four-year public institutions. Each of the institutions submitted proposed performance agreements that included enrollment goals and budget requests to implement changes needed to reach the enrollment goals. The committee reviewed the proposed agreements and requested more information which was then compiled by the institutions. The committee accepted the additional data which will be utilized in the budget-making process. The process of formalizing specific agreements was truncated by the realities of the state's current economic condition.

**REFERENCES:** [EHB 2641 \(2008\)](#)

**STAFF CONTACT:** Aldo Melchiori (786-7439)

**TITLE: NCSL Institute for Legislative Staff**

**DESCRIPTION/FINDINGS/OUTCOME:** The National Conference of State Legislatures sponsored a legislative staff institute for higher education policy staff. Topics included the defining and designing state agendas, the changing demographics of the college going population, aligning finance and accountability, using policy to accomplish state goals, aligning federal and state policy, and the staff role in developing and designing state policy. Ideas and concepts learning at the institute were shared with Senate Higher Education Committee members and a number of legislative actions are being considered.

**REFERENCES:** NA

**STAFF CONTACT:** Aldo Melchiori (786-7439)

# Senate Human Services & Corrections Committee

## 2008 Summary of Select Interim Activities

**TITLE: Community Custody Workgroup**

**DESCRIPTION/FINDINGS/OUTCOME:** HB 2719 made clarifying changes to the Sentencing Reform Act with the intent to support continued discussions with the Sentencing Guidelines Commission (SGC), courts and criminal justice community.

The group met numerous times during the interim and those meetings were monitored by staff. The SGC will submit a status report in January 2009 and plans to ask permission to continue discussions.

**REFERENCES:** [HB 2719 \(2008\)](#)

**STAFF CONTACT:** Shani Bauer (786-7468)

**TITLE: Competency Evaluation and Restoration Procedures**

**DESCRIPTION/FINDINGS/OUTCOME:** SB 6311 proposed several reforms to the procedures used to evaluate and treat criminal defendants who are alleged to be incompetent to stand trial due to a mental illness or developmental disability. Staff met with stakeholders from prosecutor's offices, courts, regional support networks, jails, sheriff's offices, and state hospitals to discuss the proposed legislation. Meetings were held in Olympia and Spokane, and staff delivered presentations to representatives of state associations. Several ideas were received for changes to the legislation, which will be proposed again during the 2009 session.

**REFERENCES:** [SB 6311 \(2008\)](#)

**STAFF CONTACT:** Kevin Black (786-7747)

**TITLE: Marital Dissolution Task Force**

**DESCRIPTION/FINDINGS/OUTCOME:** 2SSB 5470 requested that the Supreme Court convene a task force to establish statewide protocols in certain areas in dissolution matters as follows: develop a clear and concise dispute mediation process; develop consistent standards for parenting evaluators; develop a curriculum for training evaluators on sexual assault and domestic violence issues. The task force was also asked to look at the issues and venue and the establishment of a point of first contact program.

The task force met numerous times during the interim. It published an interim report in September 2008 and a final report in December 2008.

**REFERENCES:** [2SSB 5470 \(2007\)](#)  
<http://www.courts.wa.gov/>

**STAFF CONTACT:** Jennifer Strus (786-7316) Kevin Black(786-7747)

**TITLE: Prioritization of Children's Administration Social Worker Tasks**

**DESCRIPTION/FINDINGS/OUTCOME:** The legislature directed the Children's Administration (CA) to work with the exclusive bargaining representative for the CA social workers to prioritize social worker tasks and devise methods by which to decrease social workers' workload.

CA and the bargaining representative met numerous times during the interim. An interim report was released in July 2008 which described the process used by the parties in identifying the social worker tasks. A final report is due in December 2008.

**REFERENCES:** [ESHB 2687 \(2008 - SUPPLEMENTAL OPERATING BUDGET\)](#)

**STAFF CONTACT:** Jennifer Strus (786-7316)

**TITLE: Sex Offender Policy Board**

**DESCRIPTION/FINDINGS/OUTCOME:** SSB 6596 created the Sex Offender Policy Board under the Sentencing Guidelines Commission. Staff has monitored the establishment and ongoing work of the Board.

**REFERENCES:** [SSB 6596 \(2008\)](#)

**STAFF CONTACT:** Shani Bauer (786-7468)

## Senate Judiciary Committee

### 2008 Summary of Select Interim Activities

**TITLE: Environmental Laws and Public Participation in Settlement Agreements**

**DESCRIPTION/FINDINGS/OUTCOME:** The ability of a citizen group to intervene in a settlement between a developer and the Washington State Department of Ecology regarding excessive pollution discharged into local waterways gave rise to an interim project that looked at public involvement in the settlement of environmental and other land use proceedings. Concerns have been raised that developers and others may avoid public comment when settlements are reached. Staff surveyed environmental statutes and administrative practices and concluded that the Model Toxics Control Act is the only Washington environmental statute providing for public participation in settlements. Further research generated analysis of Federal provisions and statues enacted in other states that could serve as models for Washington legislation authorizing more extensive public participation in settlements between agencies and respondents.

**REFERENCES:** NA

**STAFF CONTACT:** Lidia Mori (786-7755) Sam Thompson (786-7413)

**TITLE: Sentencing Guidelines Commission**

**DESCRIPTION/FINDINGS/OUTCOME:** The Sentencing Guidelines Commission evaluates and monitors adult and juvenile sentencing policies and practices, recommends modifications to the Governor and the Legislature and serves as an information center on adult and juvenile sentencing. Staff attended its monthly meetings and tracked various legislative proposals, including amending the statutes of limitation for sex offenses, the possible proposal of an evidence-based system of community custody for adult felons, and modifications to juvenile justice laws.

**REFERENCES:** <http://www.sgc.wa.gov/>

**STAFF CONTACT:** Lidia Mori (786-7755)

# Senate Labor Commerce, Research & Development Committee

## 2008 Summary of Select Interim Activities

### **TITLE: Joint Select Committee on Beer and Wine Regulation**

**DESCRIPTION/FINDINGS/OUTCOME:** The Select Committee was directed to review laws relating to the manufacture, distribution, and sale of beer and wine to determine whether the laws should be continued in their present form or reformulated to decrease the number of bills introduced in the Legislature each year. Starting in June 2008 and continuing through the fall, the Select Committee reviewed relevant laws and solicited the participation of and received input from various stakeholder groups, including representatives of manufacturers, distributors, and retailers of beer and wine; representatives of the prevention community; and the Washington State Liquor Control Board. A final report is expected approximately January 30, 2009.

**REFERENCES:** [2ESSCR 8407 \(2008\)](#)  
<http://www.leg.wa.gov/JointCommittees/SCBW/Pages/default.aspx>

**STAFF CONTACT:** Mac Nicholson (786-7445)

### **TITLE: Joint Legislative Task Force on the HVAC/R Industry**

**DESCRIPTION/FINDINGS/OUTCOME:** In 2008, the Legislature enacted Engrossed Substitute Senate Bill 5831, which established the Joint Legislative Task Force on the HVAC/R Industry.

The Task Force was directed to review the following issues in the context of the of the framework set forth in Senate Bill 5831 and Joint Legislative Audit and Review Committee Report 5-12 on HVAC/R licensing and testing requirements:

- Requirements for certifying heating, ventilating, air conditioning, and refrigeration mechanics;
- Methods of registering heating, ventilating, air conditioning, and refrigeration contractors who qualify for two or more registrations or licenses;
- Establishing at least three levels of heating, ventilating, air conditioning, and refrigeration mechanics, with the ability to be certified in several specialties including: (1) heating, ventilating, and air conditioning; (2) refrigeration; and (3) gas piping;
- The experience requirements for each mechanic level;
- The methods by which apprentices and other persons learning to perform heating, ventilating, air conditioning, and refrigeration work obtain training certificates;
- Exemptions to the registration or certification requirements; and
- Such other factors the Task Force deems necessary.

A final report is expected approximately January 30, 2009.

**REFERENCES:** [SB 5831 \(2008\)](#)  
<http://www.leg.wa.gov/JointCommittees/HVAC/Pages/default.aspx>

**STAFF CONTACT:** Ingrid Mungia (786-7423)

**TITLE: Joint Legislative Task Force on the Underground Economy in the Washington State Construction Industry**

**DESCRIPTION/FINDINGS/OUTCOME:** In 2007, the Legislature enacted Senate Bill 5926, which created a Joint Legislative Task Force on the Underground Economy in the Construction Industry. The Task Force met in the 2007 interim and developed findings and recommendations. The recommendations from the 2007 work led to enactment during the 2008 legislative session of two bills-- ESHB 3122 and 2SSB 6732-- and budget provisos. The 2008 legislation extended the Task Force for an additional year.

During the 2008 interim, Task Force topics included a review of the 2008 legislation; Benchmark Advisory Committee activities; best practices from other states; local government data sharing and suggestions for addressing the underground economy; Department of Licensing (DOL) sunrise review of residential contractors; updates from agencies; new hire reporting; and stop work orders. The Task Force adopted a list of 18 recommendations which can be found in its final report which will be issued by January 30, 2009. Also included in the final report is a report by the Washington State Institute for Public Policy on preliminary data on monitoring and enforcement activities relating to the underground economy.

**REFERENCES:** [SB 5926 \(2007\)](#), [2SSB 6732 \(2008\)](#)  
<http://www.leg.wa.gov/JointCommittees/UECI/Pages/default.aspx>

**STAFF CONTACT:** Kathy Buchli (786-7488)

# Senate Natural Resources, Ocean & Recreation Committee

## 2008 Summary of Select Interim Activities

**TITLE: Forestry and Climate Change**

**DESCRIPTION/FINDINGS/OUTCOME:** Researched climate change and forestry issues relating to carbon sequestration and offset projects, including the collection and analysis of research articles and other countries', states' and governmental entities' projects and programs. Monitored the Department of Ecology and the Department of Natural Resources' Forestry Sector Working Group created by E2SHB 2815 that developed recommendations regarding how the forestry sector in Washington may participate in meeting its goals for reducing greenhouse gas emissions. The Forest Sector Workgroup's final report can be found on the reference below.

**REFERENCES:** [2SHB 2815 - SEC. 4](#)  
[http://www.ecy.wa.gov/climatechange/2008FA\\_for.htm](http://www.ecy.wa.gov/climatechange/2008FA_for.htm)

**STAFF CONTACT:** Sherry McNamara (786-7402)

**TITLE: Wolf Recovery Planning and Livestock Damage Programs**

**DESCRIPTION/FINDINGS/OUTCOME:** Monitored wolf recovery planning, including the Department of Fish and Wildlife's (DFW) efforts to develop a state conservation and management plan to respond to the reintroduction of gray wolves in Washington. DFW formed a working group to develop the state plan. The working group and DFW finalized a draft plan in summer 2008 that is currently undergoing scientific peer review. This will then be followed by blind scientific peer review in early 2009. A public review period is anticipated in summer 2009, followed by a final working group meeting to complete the plan. The working group and DFW hope to present the final plan to the Washington Fish and Wildlife Commission in late 2009.

Monitored discussions regarding the development of a livestock damage recovery program, including DFW's efforts to develop legislation for the 2009 session to provide for monetary compensation for farmers and ranchers who suffer damage to crops due to deer and elk and damage to livestock by wolves, bears, and cougars. DFW formed a working group to develop this legislation. The working group reached consensus on draft legislation, but due to fiscal concerns DFW does not plan to introduce this as agency request legislation.

**REFERENCES:** [2ESHB 1147 \(2008\)](#), [SB 6592 \(2008\)](#), [SJM 8023 \(2008\)](#)  
[http://wdfw.wa.gov/wlm/diversty/soc/gray\\_wolf/index.htm](http://wdfw.wa.gov/wlm/diversty/soc/gray_wolf/index.htm)

**STAFF CONTACT:** Karen Epps (786-7424)

**TITLE: Salmon Fishing Season Setting Processes & Issues**

**DESCRIPTION/FINDINGS/OUTCOME:** Analyzed the manner in which commercial and recreational salmon fishing seasons are set, including: the statutory authority of the Department of Fish and Wildlife (DFW) to establish fishing policies, including the time, place, manner, and methods used to harvest fish; the statutory directives that the DFW must follow when setting salmon seasons, including to conserve fisheries resources and seek to improve both recreation and commercial fishing; and the process the DFW follows to set salmon fishing seasons, including the collection and analysis of biological information and data, participation with other government entities in regional harvest management panels, and in season adjustments to account for changing circumstances

**REFERENCES:** [SB 6337](#)  
<http://wdfw.wa.gov/factshts/harvest.htm>  
<http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/northfalcon/faq.htm>

**STAFF CONTACT:** Curt Gavigan (786-7437)

## **Senate Transportation Committee**

### **2008 Summary of Select Interim Activities**

**TITLE: Financial Assumptions and Cash Management Study**

**DESCRIPTION/FINDINGS/OUTCOME:** Commissioned by the Joint Transportation Committee, this report provides an independent evaluation of the bond financing assumptions used in the 16-Year Transportation Financial Plan and corresponding Legislative, Office of Financial Management, and Department of Transportation (WSDOT) budget and debt models, as well as WSDOT's cash management practices as they relate to bond sales, capital spending, debt service withholding and fund balances.

In general, the study confirmed the bond financing assumptions used by the Legislature are consistent with public finance practices in other states and, where appropriate, makes recommendations regarding changes in assumptions that are more aligned with best-practices that might result in a more effective use of budgeted and planned transportation cash and bond proceeds.

**REFERENCES:** <http://www.leg.wa.gov/documents/LTC/jtc/FinancialAssumptionsandCashManagementStudyfinal.pdf>

**STAFF CONTACT:** David Ward (786-7341)

**TITLE: Rail Projects Selection Process**

**DESCRIPTION/FINDINGS/OUTCOME:** In the 2007 transportation budget, the Legislature directed the Department of Transportation (DOT) to convene a stakeholder work group and develop the cost benefit evaluation methodology recommended by the Statewide Rail Capacity and Needs Study finalized in December 2006. During the 2008 interim, DOT hosted stakeholder meetings and developed the cost benefit evaluation methodology.

In the fall of 2008, DOT issued a biennial Request for Proposals for rail projects to be funded through the Freight Rail Investment Bank (loans) or Freight Rail Assistance Program (grants). DOT evaluated and prioritized applicant projects according to the cost benefit methodology developed during the 2008 interim. DOT's prioritized list has been submitted to the transportation committees of the Legislature for funding consideration during the 2009 legislative session. This process provides the Legislature a more formalized method of selecting rail projects eligible for state funding.

**REFERENCES:** [ESHB 2878 - SEC. 310](#)

**STAFF CONTACT:** Dory Nicpon (786-7321)

**TITLE: Washington State Ferries Studies**

**DESCRIPTION/FINDINGS/OUTCOME:** The Washington State Ferries (WSF) has just released its Draft Long Range Strategic Plan (DLRSP) and will be presenting it to the public in early January. The first Transportation Commission ferry customer survey has been completed and was used by WSF in developing its DLRSP. The DLRSP includes two plans; Plan A is based on keeping service at current levels while Plan B is a fiscally constrained plan that keeps all state marine highways open, while cutting the international run and reducing service on other routes. Both plans show a deficit in the 22-year plan. WSF plans to adopt the final plan at the end of January.

The Joint Transportation Committee (JTC) is now in the process of reviewing the DLRSP. The Transportation Commission's ferry funding study recommendations are scheduled to be adopted February 9. The JTC will also review the Commission's funding recommendations. The JTC has already made preliminary recommendations regarding the efficient timing and sizing of future vessel acquisitions. The JTC expects its final recommendations and reviews to be completed the end of February or beginning of March.

**REFERENCES:** [ESHB 2358 \(2007\)](#), [ESHB 2878 - SEC. 205 & 206 \(2008\)](#)  
<http://www.leg.wa.gov/JTC/Pages/CompletedStudies.aspx>

**STAFF CONTACT:** Janice Baumgardt (786-7319)

**TITLE: 2009 Citizen's Guide to the Transportation Budget**

**DESCRIPTION/FINDINGS/OUTCOME:** The 2009 Citizen's Guide to the Transportation Budget is currently being updated by Senate Transportation staff along with staff from the Legislative Evaluation and Accountability Program Committee for the 2009 session. The guide is published on an annual basis for use by legislators, legislative staff, and the general public to answer basic questions about the Washington State biennial transportation budget. It is anticipated that the guide will be published by the start of the 2009 session and available to the committee and the public in booklet form as well as online.

**REFERENCES:** <http://www.leg.wa.gov/Senate/Committees/Tran/>

**STAFF CONTACT:** Natalie Zukowski (786-7300)

# Senate Water, Energy, & Telecommunications Committee

## 2008 Summary of Select Interim Activities

**TITLE: Clean Air Act**

**DESCRIPTION/FINDINGS/OUTCOME:** The Washington Clean Air Act (CAA), enacted in 1967, authorizes the Department of Ecology and local air pollution control authorities to regulate air quality. After four decades of amendments, some CAA provisions, including limits on outdoor burning, have become somewhat difficult to grasp without careful analysis. Staff crafted a nonsubstantive, policy-neutral draft bill to clarify CAA outdoor burning provisions. The draft consolidates and reorganizes these provisions in a proposed new "Outdoor Burning" subchapter. Essentially, the bill makes limited, technical changes to current law by: reorganizing existing sections and subsections and creating new sections and subsections; deleting obsolete and inaccurate language and references to previously-repealed sections; updating archaic forms; and incorporating language from another RCW title to clarify existing requirements.

**REFERENCES:** [SB 6902 \(2008\)](#)

**STAFF CONTACT:** Sam Thompson (786-7413)

**TITLE: Climate Change**

**DESCRIPTION/FINDINGS/OUTCOME:** E2SHB 2815 required agencies to develop a framework for reducing greenhouse gas emissions. The Department of Ecology was required to develop a plan for legislative review and develop a design for a regional multi-sector market based system to limit and reduce greenhouse gases.

The Department of Ecology developed draft legislation for legislative review. The draft legislation includes requirements for Washington to participate in a regional cap and trade program and provisions for linking to a federal cap and trade program.

The climate action team and the Implementation Working Groups developed "Implementing Practical Solutions to the Climate Change Challenge." This report includes recommendations for energy efficiency, transportation, recycling, product stewardship and the State Environmental Policy Act that are to assist Washington with meeting the goals to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and vehicle miles traveled. The link to the report issued November 2008, provides details of the recommendations.

**REFERENCES:** [E2SHB 2815 \(2008\)](#)  
[http://www.ecy.wa.gov/climatechange/2008CATdocs/ltw\\_app\\_v2.pdf](http://www.ecy.wa.gov/climatechange/2008CATdocs/ltw_app_v2.pdf)

**STAFF CONTACT:** Jan Odano (786-7486)

**TITLE: Hanford Reservation Clean-Up Update**

**DESCRIPTION/FINDINGS/OUTCOME:** Researched and analyzed State and federal authority over the clean-up of Hanford as well as the issues relating to the clean-up efforts at Hanford and the Tri-party Agreement. In 1989, the Department of Ecology (Ecology), United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the US Department of Energy (Energy) negotiated the Tri-Party Agreement. Under the Tri-Party Agreement the state's authority and clean up regulations include oversight of tank waste treatment and storage and waste management activities. EPA's authority includes implementation of clean-up activities for removal and transfer of spent nuclear fuel and clean-up of contaminated soils and groundwater. In addition, the Tri-Party Agreement sets the schedule for clean-up and paces specific clean-up actions. The clean-up includes removing and treating hazardous and radioactive waste from underground tanks, groundwater remediation and constructing the Hanford Waste Treatment Plant. Ecology, EPA and Energy re-negotiate sections of the Tri-Party Agreement whenever there is a change to the schedule, to better determine a remediation method or solution, or address an issue or an element of clean-up that was not part of the original Tri-Party Agreement. There remain federal funding issues that hamper the on-going efforts at Hanford. Insufficient federal funding has resulted in Energy missing major milestones and creating significant delays in several projects. Ecology and Energy negotiated terms for 18 months. However, agreement to terms failed and in November of this year, the Governor and the Attorney General filed suit in federal court to enforce the terms of the Tri-Party Agreement and state and federal laws. Ecology's lawsuit and Notice of Intent to Sue can be viewed via the links provided.

**REFERENCES:** [E2SHB 2815 \(2008\)](#)  
<http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/nwp/pdf/2008lawsuit/complaint.pdf>  
[http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/nwp/pdf/2008lawsuit/112408\\_NoticeIntentLtr.pdf](http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/nwp/pdf/2008lawsuit/112408_NoticeIntentLtr.pdf)

**STAFF CONTACT:** Jan Odano (786-7486)

**TITLE: Kittitas County Groundwater**

**DESCRIPTION/FINDINGS/OUTCOME:** In March 2008, the Department of Ecology (Ecology) and Kittitas County released a draft Memorandum of Agreement (Agreement) regarding the management of exempt groundwater wells in Kittitas County. On July 8, 2008, Ecology adopted an emergency rule to implement the exempt well management measures identified in the Agreement with Kittitas County. Ecology held two open house sessions in September 2008 to discuss the new permanent rule proposal for managing underground water resources in Kittitas County. Ecology adopted a second emergency rule on November 6, 2008 after the first emergency rule expired on November 5, 2008. The second emergency rule will be in place while Ecology moves forward with the adoption of a permanent rule.

Additionally in 2008, the Legislature approved funding for a groundwater study to better understand and manage water supplies in Kittitas County. The Upper Kittitas County Advisory Group was formed to provide input concerning the scope and implementation of a study to define the hydrogeology of the area. The advisory group plans to have a scope of work prepared for the groundwater study by March 2009. The advisory group will then review the bids and provide input to Ecology and Kittitas County. The contract to conduct the study should

be awarded in June 2009. Work on the project should begin around August 2009 and be completed by August 2010.

**REFERENCES:**      [http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/wr/cro/kittitas\\_wp.html](http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/wr/cro/kittitas_wp.html)

**STAFF CONTACT:**    Karen Epps (786-7424)

## Senate Ways & Means Committee

### 2008 Summary of Select Interim Activities

**TITLE: 2009 Citizen's Guide to the Budget**

**DESCRIPTION/FINDINGS/OUTCOME:** The 2009 Citizen's Guide to the Budget is currently being updated by Senate Ways & Means staff along with staff from the Legislative Evaluation and Accountability Program Committee for the 2009 session. The guide is published on an annual basis for use by legislators, legislative staff, and the general public to answer basic questions about the Washington State biennial budget. It is anticipated that the guide will be published by the start of the 2009 session and available with the committee, as well as online.

**REFERENCES:** <http://www.leg.wa.gov/Senate/Committees/WM/>

**STAFF CONTACT:** Devon Nichols (786-7716) LEAP

**TITLE: 2009 Citizen's Guide to K-12 Finance**

**DESCRIPTION/FINDINGS/OUTCOME:** The 2009 Citizen's Guide to K-12 Finance is currently being updated by Senate Ways & Means staff along with staff from the Legislative Evaluation and Accountability Program Committee for the 2009 session. The guide is published on an annual basis for use by members, legislative staff, and the general public to answer frequently asked questions about K-12 finance. It is anticipated that the guide will be published by the start of the 2009 session and available with the committee, as well as online.

**REFERENCES:** <http://www.leg.wa.gov/Senate/Committees/WM/>

**STAFF CONTACT:** Elise Greef (786-7708)

**TITLE: 2008 Legislative Budget Notes**

**DESCRIPTION/FINDINGS/OUTCOME:** Legislative fiscal staff in the Senate and House worked together with the Legislative Evaluation and Accountability Program Committee staff to publish the Legislative Budget Notes (LBN) in August 2008. The LBN is a publication that represents the official record of the legislative action on the omnibus operating, transportation, and capital budgets. It is used by legislators, legislative staff, state agencies, and the general public to determine the legislative intent behind the hundreds of policy changes embedded in the three major budget documents.

**REFERENCES:** [2008 Legislative Budget Notes](#)

**STAFF CONTACT:** Ways & Means Committee Staff (786-7715)

**TITLE: Joint Task Force on Basic Education Definition and Funding**

**DESCRIPTION/FINDINGS/OUTCOME:** In the 2007 Legislative Session, a joint task force comprised of legislators and others was created to review the definition of basic education, the current funding formulas, and propose a new definition and options for a new funding structure. The Washington State Institute for Public Policy was tasked with providing research support, with assistance from legislative committee staff, the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, the Legislative Evaluation and Accountability Program and the Office of Financial Management.

During 2007 and 2008, the task force met on 25 days for staff presentations, public hearings, presentations from nationally-recognized experts, and task force discussions. In early December 2008, the task force considered its final report and recommendations and adopted an amended version of its recommendations on December 9, 2008. The final report is scheduled to be fully reviewed and approved by the task force by January 7, 2009.

The key recommendations of the task force include a definition of basic education, an instructional program of education, a funding-allocation methodology, revised school-employee compensation policies, requirements for teacher preparation, and oversight and accountability provisions.

**REFERENCES:** [E2SSB 5627 \(2007\)](#), [SSB 6879 \(2008\)](#), [2SSB 6377 \(2008\)](#)  
<http://www.leg.wa.gov/JointCommittees/BEF/Documents/FinalReport.pdf>  
[Minority Report](#)  
<http://www.leg.wa.gov/JointCommittees/BEF/Pages/default.aspx>

**STAFF CONTACT:** Elise Greef (786-7708) Susan Mielke (786-7422) Kim Cushing (786-7421)

**TITLE: Housing Assistance and Housing Finance**

**DESCRIPTION/FINDINGS/OUTCOME:** The 2007-09 Capital Budget directed the Department of Community, Trade and Economic Development (CTED) to prepare an inventory of housing assistance programs in the state. The purpose of the inventory is to determine the benefit provided per housing unit or family and the cost to provide the benefit. CTED contracted with the Washington State Low Income Housing Alliance to conduct the inventory. While most city, county and state housing entities have provided the requested information, the majority of public and tribal housing authorities have not responded or declined to participate. The inventory is due to the Legislature in June 2009.

In addition, the 2007-09 Operating Budget (SHB 1128) directed the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Committee (JLARC) to evaluate housing assistance programs for low income households. JLARC developed a life-cycle cost model to analyze the costs and financing for alternative methods of supplying low-income housing. The analysis concluded that housing vouchers generally cost less than capital programs but that both types of assistance should be

available to meet the unique characteristics of communities. The final report is due to the Legislature in January 2009.

**REFERENCES:** [ESHB 1092 - SEC. 1031 \(11\) \(2007\)](#)

**STAFF CONTACT:** Richard Ramsey (786-7412) Brian Sims (786-7431)

**TITLE: Joint Task Force on School Construction Funding**

**DESCRIPTION/FINDINGS/OUTCOME:** The Joint Task Force on School Construction Funding (JTFSCF) includes eight legislators (two from each caucus of the Senate and House) and two members representing school districts.

The JTSCF held eleven meetings between August 2007 and December 2008, and toured elementary schools constructed to different space-per-student standards. The task force received presentations from a variety of people about aspects of school-construction spending and funding issues. Presenters included: (1) various panels of school district representatives; (2) school-construction contractors and other building professionals; (3) community organizations; (4) state and local governmental officials, and (5) House and Senate fiscal staff. A sub-workgroup undertook an exhaustive analysis of the K-12 construction funding formula, and Berk & Associates provided the following reports and studies: K -12 School Construction Funding Formula Transparency Study, a template for fund-source information for projects, and School-Enrollment-Projection Methodologies Analysis.

The task force's final recommendations – adopted on December 17, 2008 – include immediately-actionable and long-term recommendations, and pertain to both revenues and expenditures. The final report is available on the task force's website (below).

**REFERENCES:** [http://www.leg.wa.gov/JointCommittees/K12SCF/Documents/FinalReport\\_SchoolConstructionTaskForce12-29-2008.pdf](http://www.leg.wa.gov/JointCommittees/K12SCF/Documents/FinalReport_SchoolConstructionTaskForce12-29-2008.pdf)  
[Appendix C - Minority Report](#)

**STAFF CONTACT:** Elise Greef (786-7708) Susan Mielke (786-7422) Kim Cushing (786-7421)

**TITLE: Higher Education Capital Project Prioritization and Financing**

**DESCRIPTION/FINDINGS/OUTCOME:** ESHB 3329 directed the Office of Financial Management (OFM), in consultation with the legislative fiscal committees, to (1) design a new system for objectively evaluating and ranking capital budget proposals by the public research and regional universities; and (2) conduct a study to identify and assess alternatives for reducing facility construction costs and for supplementing state bond support for higher education construction with increased revenues from non-state sources. With policy guidance from committee leadership, committee staff assisted OFM and its contracted consultants define objective criteria for assessing the relative value of potential capital projects, and establish a process for teams of independent experts to score the proposals. The scoring criteria and process are available at the OFM website referenced below. Ranked lists of scored projects

were submitted to the Governor and to the fiscal committees on November 1, and will be used to inform their 2009-11 capital budget decisions. OFM and their contracted consultants are nearing completion of their study of alternative cost control and project financing mechanisms. The study recommends a set of benchmark construction and indirect cost ranges for different types of higher education facility, and assesses 18 different alternatives for financing higher education projects in terms of their revenue potential and ease of implementation.

**REFERENCES:** [ESHB 3329 \(2008\)](#)  
[http://www.ofm.wa.gov/budget/instructions/capinst/09-19capinstrhe\\_0911projectsubmittalinstructions.pdf](http://www.ofm.wa.gov/budget/instructions/capinst/09-19capinstrhe_0911projectsubmittalinstructions.pdf)

**STAFF CONTACT:** Tim Yowell (786-7435)

**TITLE: Local Financing Options for King County**

**DESCRIPTION/FINDINGS/OUTCOME:** The joint task force was created to review the current revenue streams used to pay for the construction, financing, and mitigation of Safeco and Qwest fields and financing of the Kingdome debt. The task force shall review only these existing King county-specific revenue options to fund housing, arts, cultural, civic center, Puget Sound restoration and preservation, youth recreation, and community development projects in King county.

The task force convened three meetings. The first was to review the different King County specific revenue streams. The second and third meetings were work sessions to hear from the aforementioned parties, their projects, and their need for funding. A final report has not yet been issued.

**REFERENCES:** [SHB 2765 - SEC. 6015 \(2008\)](#)  
<http://www.leg.wa.gov/JointCommittees/LFOKC/Pages/default.aspx>

**STAFF CONTACT:** Dean Carlson (786-7305)

**TITLE: Public Hearing on the Property Tax**

**DESCRIPTION/FINDINGS/OUTCOME:** The Ways & Means Committee held five public hearings on property tax issues throughout the state to identify citizens' questions and concerns about the property tax and to consider proposals to provide tax relief and reform.

**STAFF CONTACT:** Dean Carlson (786-7305) Dianne Criswell (786-7433)

**TITLE: Study of the Taxation of Electronically Delivered Projects**

**DESCRIPTION/FINDINGS/OUTCOME:** In 2007, the Washington State Legislature directed the Department of Revenue to “conduct a study of the taxation of electronically delivered products.” Chapter 522, Laws of 2007 (SHB 1128), requires a committee made up of legislative members and members representing different segments of government and industry assist the Department. SHB 1128 directed the Committee to review the following issues:

- the provision of explicit statutory definitions for electronically delivered products;
- the current excise tax treatment of electronically delivered products in the state of Washington and other states as well as the tax treatment of these products under the Streamlined Sales and Use Tax Agreement (SSUTA);
- the administration, costs, and potential recipients of the tax exemptions provided in ESHB 1981; and
- alternatives to the excise taxation of electronically delivered products.

The attached final report does not contain specific recommendations; however it identifies issues that should be addressed in proposals considered by the Legislature.

**REFERENCES:** [SHB 1128 - SEC. 136 \(2007\)](#)  
[http://dor.wa.gov/Docs/Reports/DigitalGoods/Digital\\_Goods\\_Study\\_Final\\_Report.pdf](http://dor.wa.gov/Docs/Reports/DigitalGoods/Digital_Goods_Study_Final_Report.pdf)  
<http://dor.wa.gov/content/aboutus/statisticsandreports/digitalgoods/>

**STAFF CONTACT:** Dean Carlson (786-7305)

## **Additional Electronic Resources**

[Senate Website](#)

[Senate Committee Services Website](#)

[2008 Interim Work Plan and Meeting Schedules](#)

[2008 Bills Passed During the 2008 Legislative Session](#)

[TVW Archives](#)