2022 LEGISLATIVE UPDATE
Office of Drinking Water
Summary of Legislative Session

• General information:
  • Short session of 60 days
  • Friday, March 4 was last day for bills to be considered in each house, except those necessary to implement the budget (NTIB).
  • Last scheduled day of session is Thursday, March 10.
  • A special session could be called and last a max of 30 days.

• Governor can sign, veto or chose to not act on a bill that passes the Legislature. If no action on a bill, it becomes law.

• Bills become effective 90 days after the end of session, unless otherwise specified in the legislation.
We reviewed and watched 20+ bills during session and the topics included:
- Fluoridation
- Climate resilience planning
- Failing water systems
- Federal infrastructure bills
- Drought
- GMA-related
- Water rights

We actively tracked 6 bills but none are still active.
Summaries of Tracked Bills

  - Water Systems:
    - Water systems serving 5,000+ must undertake an analysis of the cost of fluoridation.
    - Notice requirements for a water system considering discontinuing fluoridation.
  - ODW:
    - Adopt rules.
    - New program to provide related engineering assistance.
- Status
  - Not active after the February 28 cutoff.
Summaries of Tracked Bills

- Senate Bill 5626, Adding a climate resilience element to water system plans. Sponsored by Sen. Rolfes.
  - Water Systems:
    - After June 30, 2024, Group A Community Water Systems serving 1000+ must include a climate resilience element in the plans.
  - ODW:
    - Develop grant and loan eligibility criteria and consider applications from water systems that identify climate readiness projects.
    - Work with the University of Washington Climate Impacts Group to develop a technical assistance program.
    - Update the Water System Planning Guidebook.
  - Status
    - Not active after the February 28 cutoff.
House Bill 1948, Failing Water Systems Receivership; Sponsored by Rep. Steele

• Summary
  • The Department of Health assumes the role held by counties in water system receivership cases.
  • Allows the Water System Acquisition and Rehabilitation Program to reimburse a water system receiver if reasonable assessments imposed by the receiver are insufficient to cover costs.

• Status
  • Not active after the February 3 cutoff.
Operating Budgets

- Both House and Senate proposed operating budgets:
  - Funded ODW’s ongoing and anticipated operating expenses.
  - Funded HB 1684, Drinking water fluoridation. But the Senate budget only funded two elements of the bill:
    - Oral health equity assessment
    - Program to provide related engineering assistance
- The Senate proposed operating budget:
  - Funded SB 5626, Adding a climate resilience element to water system plans, if passed.
Additional Bills

• Other bills we watched:
  • Still with “legs” prior to the March 4 cutoff:
    • SB 5860, Water policy & aquifer level
    • SJM 8006, National infrastructure bank
  • No longer with legs:
    • HB 1337, Accessory dwelling units
    • HB 1627, Water & sewage system access
    • HB 1653, Salmon Recovery Advisory Cabinet
    • HB 1856, Voluntary stewardship program
    • HB 1951, Seller disclosure statements
    • SB 5188, Washington state public bank
    • SB 5632, Water infra. Projects
    • SB 5746, Drought preparedness
Contact Information

- Brad Burnham
  Policy and Planning Section Manager
  - brad.burnham@doh.wa.gov
  - 360-236-3102
  - www.doh.wa.gov/DrinkingWater
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