



Activities of the Legislature affecting farmers and ranchers in Washington state

Farm Bureau Achieves Public Policy Successes

The 2008 legislative session adjourned Thurs., March 13. In this issue you will find a review of the bills most important to Washington's farmers and ranchers.

Each year Washington Farm Bureau publishes its goals for the session in a Public Policy Agenda that is distributed to Farm Bureau members, lawmakers, and other elected officials. These goals fall into five categories and are listed below in italics, followed by descriptions of the related bills and their outcome.

We have also included a review of additional legislation that was not part of our Public Policy Agenda but important to our members across the state.

PUBLIC POLICY AGENDA

ENERGY/ENVIRONMENT

Farm Bureau seeks policies that will:

- ***Support efforts to increase the percentage of Washington-produced feedstock used to produce alternative fuels at in-state production facilities;***

Progress Report: While biofuel production was the topic of several bills this session, no legislation made it to the Governor's desk. However the budget did include tax incentives for anaerobic digesters (See SSB 6806 in the tax & fiscal section.)

- ***Ensure that any efforts related to addressing climate change recognize the benefits of agricultural practices;***

Progress Report: This session the Legislature put considerable effort into the issue of climate change. Large crowds filled each hearing on the subject, with most testimony hailing the legislation as recognizing the reality of climate change and human influences on global warming and the need to act now. Some suggested that the bills could be modified to be workable. Only a handful testified against the measures, one of those being Washington Farm Bureau. Farm Bureau pointed to the lack of agreement in the scientific community related to human influence on climate change. Legislators were encouraged to make wise policy decisions based on fact not fear.

In the end HB 2815 passed the Legislature in a form considerably different than introduced. E2SHB 2815, was sponsored by Rep. Hans Dunshee, D-Snohomish.

The bill has four major components: direction for Ecology to develop a program to meet greenhouse gas

emission standards; direction for the state to explore development of a cap and trade program for carbon emissions; creation of a program to reduce vehicle miles traveled; and a training program for “green collar” workers.

Farm Bureau policy on climate change recognizes the fact that climate change is not due to human activities. Therefore, our goal is to ensure that agriculture and forestry are fully recognized for the positive impact they have on the environment, thus they should have “credits” under any regulatory or market-based program dealing with carbon. The bill includes a section that directs a study to make recommendations regarding how agriculture and forestry may participate in a voluntary carbon cap and trade program. The bill also directs that any offset or credit program not disadvantage Washington in relation to other states.

The vehicle miles traveled section is perhaps the most controversial aspect of the bill and was the target of much of the floor discussion. This section establishes benchmarks for the reduction of vehicle miles traveled in Washington. The benchmarks are reductions of 18 percent by 2020, 30 percent by 2035, and 50 percent by 2050. Although we are unsure how this reduced miles program will be created, these benchmarks will obviously have an exaggerated impact on rural residents of the state. As such, we wanted the Governor to at least veto this section of the bill. Unfortunately, she chose to sign the whole bill.

and,

▪ ***Support reasonable efforts that encourage buying locally-grown products.***

Success: SSB 6483, Local Farms Healthy Kids, sponsored by Sen. Brian Hatfield, D-Raymond, is on the Governor’s desk awaiting her signature. This measure creates a grant program to help put Washington produce in the hands of school children, provides for increased education related to the food production and the value of eating fresh Washington grown products, and will help facilitate connections between local farms and food banks.

Farm Bureau supported this measure.

Additional Issue Success: One additional measure that warrants noting in this section is SSB 6607 sponsored by Sen. Harriet Spanel, D-Bellingham. This measure provides relief to agricultural lands within shellfish protection districts by capping the annual assessment at \$500 for a dairy or other commercial agricultural operation on agricultural lands. Farm Bureau supported this measure as a means of protecting upland agricultural operations from excessive taxation. Farm Bureau members in such shellfish protection districts have experienced assessments of thousands of dollars per year.

LAND USE

Farm Bureau seeks land-use policies that will:

▪ ***Provide protection against eminent domain abuse by narrowing the uses for which eminent domain may be invoked, and requiring that property taken by eminent domain be used only for the purpose for which it was taken or be returned to the original owner at the purchase price.***

Progress Report: HB 2920, sponsored by Rep. Lynn Kessler, D-Hoquiam, would require agencies to distribute a brochure outlining the process and the rights of property owners threatened with an agency action to take their property through eminent domain. The bill passed the House unanimously, but was not given a vote in the Senate Judiciary Committee. The bipartisan bill was a product of the Attorney General’s Eminent Domain Task Force. Washington Farm Bureau has representation on that task force and will continue efforts to protect the rights of property owners.

HB 2016, sponsored by Rep. Larry Springer, D-Kirkland, would prevent agencies from taking property predominantly for the purpose of increasing the tax base, economic development, and the transfer of the property to another private entity. The bill would have required agencies to return the property to the previous owners if the property was not used for the purpose for which it was taken. The bill contained many of the provisions discussed in the Attorney General’s Eminent Domain Task Force. It passed the House 96-1. Senate Judiciary Committee Chair Senator Adam Kline, D-Seattle, offered amendments that so limited the provisions of the bill that the bill received no supportive testimony when it was referred to another

committee. Absent any significant beneficial provisions, the bill died in the Senate Transportation Committee.

- ***Require expedited action by local governments and state agencies when private property is threatened by repeated flooding and erosion;***

Success: SHB 2525, originally introduced by Rep Kirk Pearson, R-Monroe, would allow the removal of excess gravel as a means to reduce flooding and erosion. The bill was amended to include the provisions of SB 5733, which was sponsored by Sen. Val Stevens, R-Arlington. The bill allows county councils or commissions to declare a “chronic danger” when private property is affected or threatened by two or more consecutive years of flooding or erosion. When a chronic danger is declared, the Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife (WDFW) must issue a permit to correct the situation. The standard State Environmental Procedures Act (SEPA) process would apply. If the correction meets “fish-friendly” standards – such as soft armoring with large woody debris - then the project would qualify for programmatic SEPA approval, which would expedite the process. The bill also provides that the Governor’s declaration of an emergency would trigger the issuance of an oral hydraulic permit and bypass the SEPA requirement in the same manner as an emergency declaration from the county.

- ***Appropriately regulate the use of outside experts by growth boards;***

No legislation was introduced on this topic.

- ***Oppose the addition of a climate change element to any local planning activity, including but not limited to, the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA), the Growth Management Act (GMA), or the Shoreline Management Act (SMA);***

Success: ESSB 6580, introduced by Sen. Chris Marr, D-Spokane, would add a 14th goal to the Growth Management Act – addressing global climate change. Rep. Geoff Simpson, D-Covington, introduced the identical HB 2797 to require cities and counties to address global climate change in their local land use plans.

The House Local Government Committee passed Rep. Simpson’s bill after amending it to delay the new goal until December 2010. After the House Appropriations Committee considered and revised the bill further, the full House did not vote on it.

The Senate ultimately passed the Senate bill without the new goal, but left in provisions that required a state agency to provide computer modeling and to recommend actions that local governments should adopt. Washington Farm Bureau, other business associations, and local government associations expressed concerns that the remaining “study and recommendation” provisions would be considered “best available science” and would become de facto requirements for local governments to adopt.

When the Senate bill was referred to the House Local Government Committee, Washington Farm Bureau offered an amendment to make sure that there would be no mandates and no appeals as a result of the study and recommendations. Other groups, including business associations, agricultural organizations, cities and counties, supported the WFB language.

Environmental groups, led by Futurewise, were opposed to the amendment and the chair, Rep. Simpson, ruled out of order an amendment offered by Rep. Deb Eddy, D-Kirkland, to address concerns with the legislation. After the chair’s surprising ruling, Rep. Dean Takko, D-Longview, joined with Eddy and Republicans Lynn Schindler, R-Spokane Valley, Joe Schmick, R-Colfax, and Judy Warnick, R-Moses Lake, to vote against the bill in committee.

The next day, a special meeting of the committee was held and Rep. Eddy’s amendment was considered and adopted by a majority of the committee. While the effort to block a new mandated goal was successful, the “no mandate, no appeal” amendment addressed only a portion of the bill, and Washington Farm Bureau remained opposed to final passage. The House passed the ESSB 6580 58-35, and the Senate concurred with the amendments, 30-18.

- ***Oppose misuse of Metropolitan Park District authority;***

No legislation was introduced on this topic.

- ***Ensure that the Right to Farm Act continues to protect agriculture specifically related to agricultural lands within the urban growth areas; and,***

No legislation was introduced on this topic. Concerns will be addressed administratively.

▪ ***Protect agricultural land from negative impacts of wetland mitigation banking.***

Success: SSB 6761 was introduced by Sen. Mary Margaret Haugen (D-Camano Island) to restrict wetland mitigation banks to the water resource inventory area (WRIA) in which the bank is located. A service area may include parts of an adjacent WRIA if it is ecologically defensible.

The local government will have final approval over the certification of the mitigation bank. The bill passed the House 94-0 and Senate 46-0.

Additional Issue Progress Report: SB 6805 was introduced by Senator Mary Margaret Haugen, D-Camano Island, to create a study on the feasibility and desirability of establishing farm and forestry-based conservation markets in Washington state. The study will include review of potential arrangements that would provide ongoing revenue to farmers for providing environmental enhancements. The bill passed the House and Senate unanimously.

Additional Issue Progress Report: An additional land use measure that warrants discussion in this section is SSB 6609, sponsored by Sen. Darlene Fairley, D-Lake Forest Park, to limit permit fees for specialty agricultural buildings. Rep. Brian Blake, D-Aberdeen, sponsored the counterpart bill in HB 2767.

SSB 6609 passed the Senate 47-0. The House Local Government Committee passed the bill as adopted by the Senate. On the House floor, Rep. Bill Hinkle, R-Ellensburg, offered an amendment to turn the bill into a study. The House adopted his amendment and passed the bill 94-2 on March 7.

On March 8, led by Sen. Fairley, the Senate insisted on its position of a \$75 permit fee limit, asking the House to back down from its amendment. Four days later, the House refused and asked the Senate to back down. The next day (March 13, the last day of the legislative session), the Senate again insisted on the \$75 limit.

Back in the House, Rep. Geoff Simpson, D-Covington, offered an amendment that changed the cap on permit fees and offered a *similar but different* version of Rep. Hinkle's study task force.

The legislative session adjourned without agreement on the legislation.

LABOR/EMPLOYMENT

Farm Bureau seeks labor policies that will:

- ***Provide higher education credits for students working in agriculture, and reduce hurdles to teens working in agriculture;***

Progress Report: HB 2082, establishing the Field of Dreams program, once again passed the House, and was funded in the House Supplemental Budget. We had numerous meetings with Senate leadership, who stated that they thought it was a great program. The bill died in the Senate. The official reason, and the only reason we have been given to date: the Senate had other priorities.

- ***Protect Washington's overtime exemption for agriculture;***

Success: Since we knew that organized labor would be coming at us, Farm Bureau crafted a bill that would have aligned the Washington agricultural overtime laws with the federal rules. The federal rules are more stringent than the Washington counterparts, and therefore farmers are already required to follow the federal overtime rules, so it makes sense to bring Washington laws up to the federal standard. However, our position enabled us to battle organized labor on this important issue with competing bills, HB 2717, endorsed by agricultural associations, and HB 2979, endorsed by organized labor. We were disappointed that the Department of Labor and Industries (L&I) sided with organized labor, supporting the labor bill (HB 2979) while being neutral on the agricultural bill (HB 2717). In the end, neither bill passed, which translates into a win for agriculture, and a loss for unions and L&I.

- ***Support workers' right to a secret ballot on the issue of union representation, and support the right of employers to freely communicate with employees;***

Success: Success in this area as well as with other similarly controversial issues may well have been due to the tight Governor's race this fall.

The so-called "Worker Privacy Act," HB 2383, would have prohibited employers from speaking to their employees about the subject of labor unions, unless the employee gave his or her permission. It was the number one legislative priority for the powerful Washington Labor Council, and was opposed by all business groups. The Governor's office met with big unionized businesses during the first week in session, and when it was clear that even these businesses would not support the bill, it was pulled from consideration. Lobbyists quipped that Dino Rossi had killed the bill! We asked the Governor if she would commit to opposing this bill next year, and the answer was a non-committal. Conclusion: this bill will be back.

- ***When debating paid family leave, exempt seasonal employers from reinstating workers to jobs if the seasonal jobs are not available when the leave expires;***

Progress Report: The agriculture fix referenced in our policy position appeared in every version of the bill, but the bill was never brought to the floor for a vote. The bill was another casualty of the tight Governor's race. The Governor has told several groups that paid leave has been "tabled." Although that is not true, the program may be in trouble if not funded next session.

In the end, lawmakers appropriated \$6.2 million in the budget to set up the administration of this huge new benefit program that, if funded, will be greater than a \$100 million hit to the budget.

More on Paid Leave: When the legislature passed the Paid Family Leave law in 2007, Farm Bureau pleaded with lawmakers to integrate the new law with the existing Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA), so that workers would not be able to "stack" leaves.

They did not listen. Due to a flaw in the paid leave law (one of many technical problems) workers may be able to take **six weeks of paid** family leave, and then transition into **12 weeks of unpaid FMLA leave**, all in the same year.

It gets worse. In addition to the Washington paid leave law and the Washington FMLA leave, there is a regulation that has been adopted by the Washington Human Rights Commission (HRC) which designates pregnancy as a "disability" and therefore allows more unpaid time off. Finally, the federal FMLA law closely matches the Washington counterpart, except that Washington's FMLA provides more generous pregnancy benefits.

Are you confused yet? You should be. Farm Bureau is working with legislators to align all of the various leaves, but progress is slow, and lawmakers continue to add new 'family leave style' laws for military families, victims of domestic violence, etc.

In the meantime, beginning October 1, 2009, workers will be eligible for a \$250 per week stipend, for five weeks, after a one week waiting period, under the new paid family leave law.

Farm Bureau policy provides that we will not oppose the program, **provided that** the paid leave is solely a monetary benefit that is funded by voluntary worker contributions and there are no new employment regulations. We will be working hard next session to achieve our policy.

- ***Enact legislation that will force workers' compensation trust funds to be used for purposes that are related to workers' compensation; and,***

Progress Report: When the session began, no one in Olympia thought that we would make any progress on this issue, which is a Farm Bureau policy priority. However, through the efforts of Rep. Cary Condotta,

R-Wenatchee, we received a hearing on a bill to eliminate the diversions, and then, through a parliamentary procedure, a floor vote wherein lawmakers were forced to vote in favor of misappropriating workers' comp premiums!

House Speaker Frank Chopp, D-Seattle, has committed to help solve this problem, and the House Labor and Commerce committee has promised that the issue will appear on its interim work schedule.

- ***Encourage migrant workers by providing vouchers of \$25 per week to migrant workers who stay in decent housing.***

Progress Report: Although we did not get a voucher program, we presented the plan at a work session of the House Housing Committee, and the Committee gave a solid commitment to work on the issue – provided that we can come up with an integrated plan of action for migrant housing in at least one county. In addition, lawmakers allocated \$2 million in new funding to build on-farm housing.

HEALTH CARE

To promote and protect access to affordable, quality health insurance options for individuals and employers, Farm Bureau will:

- ***Support efforts to increase the number of and competition among insurers offering health care plans in Washington state;***

Progress Report: This session, the Legislature continued down the path of increasing the regulatory and financial burden on insurers, further eroding any likelihood of new insurance carriers entering the market.

- ESB 5261, granting the Insurance Commissioner authority to review individual health benefit plan rates, has been sent to the Governor for approval. The bill, sponsored by Sen. Karen Keiser, D-Des Moines, at the request of the Insurance Commissioner, unravels a compromise struck nearly a decade ago that had allowed insurers flexibility to adjust rates for plans offered in the individual market in exchange for guaranteeing a minimum percentage of premiums would be paid out in health care benefits.
 - Also awaiting action by the Governor is 2SSB 5596, requiring fair payment for chiropractic services. The bill, sponsored by Sen. Rosa Franklin, D-Tacoma, would require insurers to pay chiropractors – who are not medical doctors – the same rates for physical medicine and rehabilitation payment codes, and evaluation and management codes, as they do orthopedic surgeons and other specialists with advanced medical training. This will increase costs to every person who buys health insurance for the sole benefit of a specific health care provider group without improving patient outcomes or access to health care. Farm Bureau has asked the Governor to veto the bill.
- ***Support greater flexibility and variety in health insurance plans, including the use of Health Savings Accounts;***

Progress Report: The Legislature offered token gestures toward eventually allowing modest flexibility and variety in the types of health insurance plans and benefits carriers are allowed to offer.

- Sen. Cheryl Pflug, R-Maple Valley, successfully amended 2SHB 2537, modifications to the health insurance partnership act, to require that at least one plan offered by the Health Insurance Partnership (HIP) be a high-deductible policy with an accompanying health savings account (HSA). The Legislature funded less than 1 percent of the premium assistance dollars needed to reach HIP's goal of enrolling 9,000 people over five years. At best, some low-wage employees of participating small businesses may be eligible to select an HSA plan through HIP sometime in 2009.
- In its original form, SB 6030, sponsored by Sen. Linda Evans Parlette, R-Wenatchee, would have allowed insurers to offer one core benefits plan targeted specifically at the needs of young adults, ages 19-34. That group accounts for slightly more than half of the state's uninsured and is responsible for a significant share of state-paid emergency room visits. The Senate Health & Long-Term Care Committee heard the bill, but did not take action before cutoff.

- As part of ESSB 6333, establishing a citizens' work group on health care, a proposal similar to SB 6030 would be studied. As explained below, Farm Bureau opposes the bill, sponsored by Sen. Keiser, and has asked the Governor to veto it.

- **Oppose regulatory or legislative efforts that would adversely affect association health plans;**

Success: Farm Bureau and other business groups vehemently opposed SB 6365, a bill by Sen. Chris Marr, D-Spokane, that would have required disclosure of proprietary business information to the Insurance Commissioner about how association health plans operate. The bill died in committee. Rep. Eileen Cody's, D-Seattle, companion bill, HB 2689, did not receive a hearing in the House Health & Wellness Committee.

- **Oppose legislation to mandate employer-provided health insurance benefits for employees; and,**

Success: During the interim, Farm Bureau participated in a work group that studied so-called "pay or play" or "fair share" legislation. As a result of the work group's findings, Rep. Steve Conway, D-Tacoma, decided not to pursue legislation he had previously introduced to force employers to provide health insurance benefits or repay the state for the cost of health benefits provided to employees of those businesses.

- **Oppose legislative efforts to enact single-payer or mandatory "universal coverage" systems.**

Progress Report: The Legislature chose to study, rather than enact, sweeping health care reform legislation this year. But, the stage is set for major battles in the Legislature and likely at the ballot box in 2009 over health care reform.

- ESSB 6333, establishing a citizens' work group on health care, would have the Governor appoint nine citizens and four Legislators who would travel the state seeking citizen input about various health care reform models including: the Insurance Commissioner's proposed catastrophic benefit plan; a comprehensive, standardized benefits package (Wisconsin plan); Massachusetts' system; and a Canadian-style system. The supplemental budget includes nearly \$1.3 million for a consultant's study and the work group road show. If signed, this would be the 16th health care study conducted since Governor Gregoire has been in office. Farm Bureau opposes the bill, sponsored by Sen. Keiser, and has asked the Governor to veto both it and the related supplemental budget appropriations.
- The Legislature also approved 2SHB 2537, modifications to the health insurance partnership act, sponsored by Rep. Cody. The "Partnership" or HIP was created last year as a first step in bringing the private health insurance market under a state-run umbrella. After a few months of study, the HIP board determined the program would not work as enacted. The bill sent to the Governor gives HIP a two-year exemption from earlier requirements to offer a variety of plan choices, allow workers to pool premium contributions from multiple employers and provide plan portability. It also directs that once HIP is operational, small employers of uninsured, low-wage workers be given priority for enrollment. While the amended version is far better than the original bill, HIP is still poised to become "the exclusive small-group market, competing only with association coverage ... [and] the exclusive market for individuals ..." according to its consultant. Moreover, taxpayers will subsidize health insurance premiums – to the tune of \$750,000 in 2009 - if the supplemental budget appropriation is approved. Consequently, small businesses already providing health insurance will see their tax dollars used to subsidize their competitors. Farm Bureau will continue to oppose HIP's expansion.

TAX & FISCAL

In an effort to enhance the viability of agriculture in Washington, Farm Bureau will:

- **Support legislation to exempt propane purchased for on-farm use from sales and use taxes;**

Progress Report: Faced with \$423 million less revenue than expected, the Legislature was very frugal in approving tax exemptions this year. Consequently, HB 1376 by Rep. Mark Ericks, D-Bothell, and SB 5077 by Sen. Jim Honeyford, R-Sunnyside, which would have provided a sales and use tax exemption for propane purchased for on-farm consumption, were not acted upon this year.

However, two other farm-related exemptions were sent to the Governor for approval:

- Temporary tax relief would be offered to beekeepers to help off-set losses from colony collapse disorder, if the Governor signs 2SSB 6468, sponsored by Sen. Curtis King, R-Yakima.
 - Anaerobic digesters would be exempt from property and leasehold taxes for six years from the date of construction if the Governor signs SSB 6806, sponsored by Sen. Mary Margaret Haugen, D-Camano Island.
- ***Oppose new/increased taxes or fees that would affect the cost of transporting agricultural products or jeopardize the ability of Washington's agricultural producers to compete in international trade.***

Success: Preliminary results of an interim work group study on a proposed handling fee for marine shipping containers confirmed what Farm Bureau and other business groups claimed all along – competition for marine cargo is so intense that this fee would likely result in cargo being shipped through ports outside our state. Farm Bureau will continue to monitor this study and related legislative action.

WATER MANAGEMENT

Farm Bureau will:

- ***Support efforts to repeal or at least modify the relinquishment statute through means such as eliminating partial relinquishment, in order to encourage voluntary conservation and wise water use;***

Progress Report: The House Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee heard two bills on relinquishment this year, HB 2245 and HB 3072, both sponsored by Rep. Bill Grant, D-Walla Walla.

HB 2245 would have limited the review period for a water right such that the only usage subject to relinquishment would be the most recent 15 years. Similar to the notion of only needing to keep IRS records for the most recent seven years, water users would only need to prove usage of water during the last 15 years. This would provide certainty for water users and make recordkeeping much more manageable.

HB 3072 would have eliminated the policy of partial relinquishment. Under this policy, water users who continue to exercise any portion of their right would retain the whole right and would not need to worry about proving full use every five years or risk losing the unused portion of the right. This would provide greater certainty to water users and would provide incentive to be more efficient and use only the amount of water absolutely necessary. This would obviously be good for the environment by leaving unused water in the ground or stream, benefitting instream resources. It would also help existing water supplies stretch further until new water supplies are developed.

Testimony was brief and mixed, but Chairman Brian Blake, D-Aberdeen, indicated the Committee is very interested in finding a resolution to the problems raised by this issue, evidence that our efforts to educate members regarding water issues is bearing fruit. Farm Bureau remains firmly in support of relinquishment reform and has placed a high priority on both bills.

The Senate Water, Energy, and Telecommunications Committee held a workshop on relinquishment. After the State Department of Ecology presented its information, Washington Farm Bureau was invited to provide background information on the impacts of relinquishment. While the Senate did not hear any bills on the subject, a high level of interest was expressed by the Committee members.

Legislators are beginning to see that relinquishment is a policy that hinders efficient use of water. We hope that this will translate into statutory change. In a world in which new water rights are hard to come by, we need to ensure that agriculture does not lose what it already has and so desperately needs to provide the food, feed, and fuel for our nation.

- ***Support the implementation of the Columbia River water package passed last session to ensure the creation of new water storage projects and the allocation of that water to meet the needs of in-stream and out-of-stream uses;***

Success: Engrossed Second Substitute Senate Bill 6874, sponsored by Sen. Lisa Brown, D-Spokane, was signed by the Governor on March 20. The measure implements the agreements made with affected parties to facilitate a drawdown of Lake Roosevelt by up to one foot. The operating budget also includes funding to facilitate this package.

Farm Bureau supported and vigorously worked this issue as a means of addressing current critical needs in the basin. This drawdown represents the first new water to be delivered under the Columbia River Water Supply Development program adopted in 2006. While only a “down payment” on the development and delivery of new water, it is a critical first step in meeting the water supply demand of the Columbia River Basin.

The water made available through the agreement will help ease current demand in the basin by providing some water to help the declining Odessa aquifer, meet nearly two-thirds of the municipal demand, provide water for instream needs, and provide some drought relief for holders of interruptible water rights on the mainstem. All areas of the basin will benefit from this package because it provides new water to meet demand without transferring existing water rights.

While not a complete solution to water needs in the basin, it is exciting to see that we are so close to having new water supplies made available.

and,

- **Support retaining the present exempt well statute, especially as the exemption relates to stock water as affirmed by the 2005 Attorney General’s Opinion.**

No legislation was introduced on this topic.

Bills of Interest

The following is a list of bills of agricultural interest that passed the Legislature.

- Bill column – E = Engrossed (i.e., amendments have been adopted), S (preceding HB or SB) = Substitute bill, HB = House Bill, SB = Senate Bill, JM = Joint Memorial, JR = Joint Resolution.
- Status column - C = Chapter, L = Law
- Position column - S = Support, M = Monitor, N = Neutral, C = Concerns, O = Oppose.
- Lobbyist column - C = Patrick Connor, F = Dan Fazio, S = John Stuhlmiller, W = Dan Wood.
- **Bold** indicates a priority bill.

Energy/Environment

Bill	Title	Status	Sponsor	Position	Lobbyist
E2SHB 2815	Climate change, cap & trade, green collar jobs	C 14 L 08	Dunshee	O	S
SSB 6231	Marine protected areas	C 243 L 08	Jacobsen	M	S
ESSB 6308	Climate Change Adaptation Work Group	Did Not Pass	Rockefeller	M	S
SSB 6309	Climate Change - tailpipe emission disclosure	C 32 L 08	Rockefeller	M	S
SSB 6607	Exempting Dairies from Shellfish District Assessments	C 250 L 08	Spanel	S	S

Health Care

Bill	Title	Status	Sponsor	Position	Lobbyist
2SHB 2537	Allowing govt's Health Ins. Partnership to compete w/ private plans	C 143 L 08	Cody	O	C
SHB 2560	Small employer insurance	C 144 L 08	Van De Wege	M	C
ESSB 5261	OIC intrusion in individual health insurance market	C 303 L 08	Keiser	O	C
2SSB 5596	Preferential payment system for chiros	C 304 L 08	Franklin	O	C
ESSB 6333	Promoting single-payer health care systems	C 311 L 08	Keiser	O	C

Labor/Employment

Bill	Title	Status	Sponsor	Position	Lobbyist
E2SHB 2082	Tuition assistance for students who work on farms	Did Not Pass	Chandler	S	F
HB 2233	Workers' Comp Use of funds	Did Not Pass	Condotta	S	F
SHB 2602	Requires leave and reinstatement for certain victims	C 286 L 08	Kessler	O	F
SHB 2963	Collective bargaining for WSU graduate students	C 203 L 08	Conway	M	F
ESHB 3122	Changing independent contractor test for construction	C 102 L 08	Conway	M	F
E2SHB 3139	Workers' Comp benefits paid during appeal	C 280 L 08	Conway	M	F
SHB 3305	Paid Family Leave "Fix"	Did Not Pass	Dickerson	O	F
HB 3387	Ends diversions of workers' comp trust funds	Did Not Pass	Condotta	S	F
SSB 6280	Paid Family Leave "Fix"	Did Not Pass	Keiser	O	F
SB 6447	Unpaid leave for spouse of service member	C 71 L 08	Hobbs	M	F
SB 6839	Workers' comp coverage for out of state work	C 88 L 08	Marr	M	F

Land Use

Bill	Title	Status	Sponsor	Position	Lobbyist
SHB 2525	Flood damage	C 272 L 08	Pearson	S	W
E2SHB 2844	Urban forestry	C 299 L 08	Kagi	M	W
HB 2909	Forest product resources	Did Not Pass	Orcutt	M	S
ESSB 6580	Adding climate change element to GMA	C 289 L 08	Marr	O	W
SSB 6609	Agricultural structures	Did Not Pass	Fairley	S	W
SSB 6805	Conservation markets	C 133 L 08	Haugen	S	W

Taxes and Budget

Bill	Title	Status	Sponsor	Position	Lobbyist
ESHB 2687	Operating budget	C 329 L 08	Sommers	M	C
ESHB 2765	Capital budget	C 328 L 08	Fromhold	M	C
ESHB 2878	Transportation budget	C 121 L 08	Clibborn	M	C
HB 2923	Processor weight tickets ok	C 26 L 08	Hinkle	S	C
EHB 3137	Tax relief for 2007 floods	Did Not Pass	DeBolt	S	C
2SSB 6468	Beekeeper tax exemptions	C 314 L 08	King	S	C
ESB 6641	Ballot information/HB 2545	C 319 L 08	Regala	M	C
SSB 6806	Anaerobic digester tax exemption	C 268 L 08	Haugen	S	C

Water Management

Bill	Title	Status	Sponsor	Position	Lobbyist
ESHB 1453	Providing point of diversion flexibility for water rights	Did Not Pass	Grant	S	S
SB 6204	Dividing WRIA 14	C 210 L 08	Sheldon	M	S
E2SSB 6874	Funding for Lake Roosevelt Drawdown	C 82 L 08	Brown	S	S

Other

Bill	Title	Status	Sponsor	Position	Lobbyist
ESHB 2438	Cougar hunting pilot project	C 8 L 08	Kretz	S	F
HB 2448	Campaign finance report	C 73 L 08	Hunt	M	W
HB 2467	Fertilizer regulations	C 292 L 08	Warnick	M	S
EHB 2476	Tribal police officers	C 224 L 08	McCoy	M	F
SHB 2858	Metal property	C 233 L 08	Morrell	S	W
SB 6187	Food animal veterinarians	C 208 L 08	Shin	M	W
SSB 6273	Farm implements on highways	C 76 L 08	Haugen	S	C
SB 6283	Apple commission membership	C 11 L 08	Rasmussen	S	S
SB 6284	Dairy products commission	C 12 L 08	Schoesler	S	S
2SSB 6483	Local Farms - Healthy Kids	C 215 L 08	Hatfield	S	S