

Weekly Legislative Update: **Climate Change & Energy**

Issue Team Chair: Martin Gibbins

Contact: mgibbins@lwvwa.org, (425) 361-5007

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We testified in many committee hearings over the first 2 weeks of the session. Several of the bills passed their committees and a few are in line to be called for floor votes. The popular [committee sign](#) in process continues to attract residents participation in committee action. In addition to the climate change and energy bills, we will cover bills to reduce and better handle our waste stream, important in reducing our greenhouse gas production and improving our environment.

Priority Bills Needing Action This Week

None this week. Many of our priority bills are moving. Expect more action next week.

Bills We Support

[HB 1619](#) - Appliance efficiency standards. Energy saved through increasing efficiency is equivalent to green energy generated, and saves money so we must continue to invest in improved appliances. We cannot depend on federal policy to take action, so the states must act and work to align regulation with other states. A substitute bill adjusted some of the exemptions, and that passed the House Committee on Environment & Energy 9 to 4 and was referred to the Rules Committee where it will be considered for a floor vote in the House.

[HB 1682](#) – Emissions-intensive, trade-exposed businesses. This is a refinement of the Climate Commitment Act, cap and trade and invest, which will require almost continuous adjustment to maximize effectiveness and prevent unintended consequences. This bill focuses on policies and administration enterprise allowances. Our long delay in reducing the driving forces of climate change leaves us with difficult choices. Hearing held on Jan 18 in the House Committee on Environment & Energy.

[HB 1623](#) – Risk assessment of power supply inadequacy events. A substitute bill adjusted reporting requirements, and that passed the House Committee on Environment & Energy unanimously and was referred to the Rules Committee where it will be considered for a floor vote in the House.

[HB 1663](#) - Reducing methane emissions from landfills. Methane releases are an increasing concern due to their 25 times greater GHG effect than CO2. The most significant sources is leakage from drilling and transport, including right up to the building of use, so the most

effective way to reduce releases is to phase out using methane. A smaller source is from bio material decay in landfills. This bill requires monitoring landfill leakage and to encourage elimination through capture and redirection or even flame-off because the carbon dioxide created is less harmful than the methane. A substitute bill passed the House Committee on Environment & Energy.

[HB 1767](#) / [SB 5666](#) – Targeted electrification through outreach and investment in system conversion. Authorizes the governing body of municipal electric utilities and public utility districts (PUDs) to adopt a targeted electrification plan, including incentives, once they establish that utility outreach and investment in the electrification of customers' end use equipment in residential and commercial buildings will provide net benefits to the utility. Passed the House Committee on Environment & Energy on Jan 20.

[HB 1792](#) – Green Hydrogen production. Hydrogen gas may have a significant role to play in energy storage for and alternative fuels for bridging generation service gaps and for uses difficult to electrify with current technology such as aviation and long-haul trucking. Challenges remain so success will depend on technology development. The hydrogen must be produced without fossil fuels to make progress on reducing climate change. Unanimously passed the House Committee on Environment & Energy on Jan 21.

[HB 1799](#) – Organic materials management to reduce methane. Requires waste management systems to direct more organic matter toward composting facilities, reduces legal liability in the donation of edible food, encourages development of more applications for compost products, improve standards for the labeling and color coding of compostable food-ware products, and applies additional requirements on non-compostable items. Public hearing on Jan 21 in the House Committee on Environment & Energy.

[HB 1814](#) – Community solar projects. Enables residents, whose housing is not easily or efficiently retrofitted for solar panels, to join a community solar project installation and enjoy the benefits. Public hearing on Jan 21 in the House Committee on Environment & Energy.

[SB 5492](#) – Wind turbine blade recycling. The blades of a wind turbine contain fibers of carbon and glass for strength and stiffness and a plastic binder. Unless severely damaged, they should have useful lives of 30 or more years, but the materials are difficult to recycle. Some options for repurposing may be available. The bipartisan bill directs the Department of Ecology to develop guidance for a self-directed program for manufacturers to take-back and recycle or safely dispose of the wind turbine blades. In the past, our energy systems have created unanticipated and unacknowledged problems and pollution. We must do our best to prevent that for our clean energy systems. Public hearing on Jan 19 in the Senate Committee on Environment, Energy & Technology.

[SB 5543](#) – A zero-emission landscaping equipment transition incentive program. Scheduled for a vote in the Senate Environment, Energy, and Technology Committee on 1/20. Fuel-powered landscaping equipment is a source of GHG release, air pollutants, and community noise. This bill proposes rebates for new, electrical-powered equipment when the fuel-powered equipment is traded in and disposed. On Jan 20 passed the Senate Committee on Environment, Energy & Technology, and was referred to Ways & Means.

[SB 5666](#) – Targeted small-scale fossil fuels to electricity conversions for net benefits to the utility. Authorizes the municipal electric to adopt targeted electrification plans that establishes a finding that utility outreach to offer incentives accelerating targeted electrification of homes and buildings for their customers. Requires the resulting plans and programs to ensure all customers benefit from the transition to clean energy through the equitable distribution of energy and non-energy benefits and reduction of burdens to vulnerable populations and highly impacted communities. Public hearing on Jan 19 in the Senate Committee on Environment, Energy & Technology.

[SB 5697](#) – Renewing Washington’s recycling system and reducing waste – RENEW Act. Our waste stream affects climate and the accumulation of refuse. This bill covers product stewardship for packaging and printed paper, including recycling and reuse targets, accurate labeling provisions and requirements for post-consumer recycled content in plastic tubs, thermoform containers (e.g., clamshells), and single-use cups. It implements the top recommendations in the Department of Ecology’s Plastics Study ([October 2020](#)) which was required by SB 5397 in 2019 to address our recycling crisis and the increasing amount of plastic pollution. Public hearing on Jan 18 in the Senate Committee on Environment, Energy & Technology.

[SB 5722](#) - Reducing greenhouse gas emissions in buildings. Greenhouse gas release from buildings, primarily in heating systems, is second only to transportation in Washington. This bill is a step toward adjusting building codes to design more new buildings, including multifamily housing, to incorporate more carbon-free energy sources. Public hearing on Jan 13 in the Senate Committee on Environment, Energy & Technology.

[SB 5744](#) / [HB 1988](#)– Tax deferrals for investment projects in clean technology manufacturing, clean alternative fuels production, and renewable energy storage. Public hearing on Jan 19 in the Senate Committee on Environment, Energy & Technology.

How You Can Be Involved

- You may express support for bills in hearings with the [online process](#). Select House or Senate then the committee and the date and time of the meeting, then follow the menus. Detailed instructions are in this week’s Legislative Newsletter. Remember, only

authorized members can speak for the League; the Issue Chairs will do that, so please leave the "Organization" box blank. A more powerful influence is many voices speaking for themselves rather than many voices speaking for the League.

Your committee hearing sign-ins are effective in showing interest and support for these issues. Sign-ins are accepted until 1 hour before the committee hearing begins.

- Local Leagues in Washington have Action Chairs who coordinate action teams. Some Local Leagues have Environment or Climate teams to take action locally. Contact your local league Action Chair to find out and join.
- You may also express your opinion on legislation with the LWVWA Issue Chairs. We will take your perspectives under considerations as we determine our support for legislation and prepare testimony. Martin Gibbins, Climate Issue Chair, mgibbins@lwvwa.org