

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

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The financial committee cutoff is now behind us, so nominally all bills that did not pass their house-of-origin finance committee cannot proceed (Appropriations, Ways & Means, Finance, Capital Budget). Nevertheless, the Legislature can declare a bill “*necessary to implement the budget*” and keep it alive past the cutoffs. The next cutoff date is March 8 when bills must pass a floor vote in their chamber of origin, so This week, we will focus on the bills on the floor calendar.

Priority Bills Needing Action This Week

Make sure you complete the [Action Alert](#) on [HB 1329](#) Preventing utility shutoffs for nonpayment during extreme heat. By responding to this alert you will send a message directly to your House representatives in Olympia. This bill is a priority of the organizations in the area advocating for environmental justice. Please support **Pro** position. You may also send the link to the alert to your friends.

Additional Action Opportunities

You may send a comment of support to your representatives on the following bills that we are pressing to have a vote on the House floor within the next 2 weeks. Follow the *Comment here* link and 1] Enter your address to find your district. 2] Enter your name and email; the message will come from you. 3] Craft a short message or comment of support for the bill. You may use the *points of support* included below for each bill to craft a personal message to your representatives. If you can, let them know why this is important to you. And ask them to vote for the bill.

[HB1012](#) Creating an extreme weather response grant program. The legislature recognizes the increasing risks and threats to socially vulnerable people (including pets) from extreme weather events such as heat, cold, smoke, and flooding. This bill will provide funding for communities with a demonstrated lack of resources, to meet the costs of responding to community needs during such periods for cities, counties, towns, and tribes that have emergency management organizations. [Comment here](#).

Points of support: We expect climate change to exacerbate emergencies in communities such as heat events, smoke, and flooding. This bill will provide funding for small communities and

tribes to respond to the needs of their households and keep them safe and resilient. Please vote for the bill when it reaches the floor.

[HB 1170](#) Integrated Climate Response Strategy updates for climate resilience. The Climate Response Strategy enables state and local agencies, public and private businesses, nongovernmental organizations, and individuals to prepare for, address, and adapt to the impacts of climate change. The current Strategy was completed in 2012, so is due for an update. This bill increases the focus on climate justice considerations, requires a coordinated and strategic approach to climate resilience, requires an update every 4 years. [Comment here](#).

Points of support: A comprehensive climate strategy will enable business and state agencies to plan with confidence. As we face the changes caused by climate change, we must ensure that focus on relief for communities overburdened with pollution and weather events. We must ensure that we use the best available science in planning our response .

Find bill descriptions on the [Climate & Energy](#) web page or detailed information at the bill number links.

You can also comment at [any time](#) to your district’s legislators. Select the bill number link to open the bill information page, then select the box “**Comment on this bill**.” Fill in your information and verify your district, then craft your comments. Tell them why the content of the bill, good or bad, is important to you.

In all cases please speak for yourself, not the League. A powerful statement is made when many constituents express their own opinion and tell their own story.

Why We Focus Attention on These Bills

The League believes that climate change is a serious threat facing our nation and planet. ... Individuals, communities, and governments must continue to address this issue, while considering the ramifications of their decisions, at all levels — local, state, regional, national, and global. Approved by the LWVUS Board at the January 2019 meeting.

We cannot fully evaluate or track all the bills, so we will focus on those most related to [League positions](#), positively or negatively. We may also suggest revisions (amendments) to bills that need revision to make a positive influence.

A recent [Rhodium Group study](#) suggests that economic incentives, standards, and regulations will be all necessary, and this must occur at all government levels. It is our privilege to freely participate in our democracy.

How You Can Be Involved

- If you would like to receive periodic news of environmental presentations, projects, and updates, join the LWVWA Environment Affinity Group. Contact Martin Gibbins, Climate Issue Chair, mgibbins@lwvwa.org
- 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.