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All that's left is for the lady to sing...

Prepared by Marie Sullivan, WSPTA Legislative Consultant, legconsultant@wastatepta.org

Only one week remains in the 67th legislative session, and there is actually **a lot** that's left to do before that *famous* lady sings the final song: budgets, the climate commitment act, a capital gains tax, and a transportation revenue package, just to name a few of the topics still to be resolved by sine die (April 25).

Starting April 12, lawmakers began the reconciliation process – this has a couple of different parts:

- Bills that were changed in the opposite chamber must return to their original chamber for concurrence or dispute with those changes.
- Budget reconciliation, including differences in language when the dollar amounts are the same and differences in the funding amounts.
- Requests for conference committees, which are used to resolve major differences in bill versions.

Bills that are in “dispute” are when the original chamber refuses to agree to the changes made in the opposite chamber and asks the other body to recede from its changes. While bills can go back and forth, most bills in dispute will be resolved this week or they will die for the session. Most conference committees have been requested – remember that when a bill comes out of a conference committee it can't be changed (except in rare situations), and the only vote members can take is a Yes or No vote.

Budget negotiations

Following bill cutoff on April 11, budget negotiators were able to dig deeper into the differences between the operating, capital, and transportation budgets. It is likely that agreed-to budgets will be available mid- to late-week to give members in both chambers the time to review and discuss with their respective caucuses and put the bills before members to vote, again likely on April 24 or 25. No one is tipping their hand yet, but there seems to be agreement that lawmakers would like to wrap up session on time.

One hiccup could be that Republicans are threatening to withhold their votes from the very important capital budget “bond” bill – this is the bill that needs a two-thirds vote to pass and that authorizes the State Treasurer to issue bonds to fund most of the 2021-23 capital budget. The holdout this session would be over HB 1557 (or a similar bill), which would limit the Governor's powers in times of emergencies.

All session long, Republicans in both the House and Senate have floated amendments and bills to limit the Governor’s emergency powers. At this point in session, their withholding crucial votes on the bond bill could mean that the Legislature adjourns without adopting a two-year construction budget. The last time this occurred was in 2017, when Republicans refused to support the bond bill unless they got certain concessions over the “Hirst” water issue. And, since they have done it before without voter backlash, they may do it again.

Climate Commitment Act bi-cameral priority before end of session

[E2SSB 5126](#) is Governor Jay Inslee’s “cap and invest” bill. As it has been amended, first in the Senate and most recently in the House Environment & Energy Committee, the bill has morphed significantly, and now includes priorities from the Washington Strong proposal (a competing cap and bond measure) and priorities to satisfy various interests, including those requested by many of Washington’s federally recognized Indian tribes. The bill has a public hearing in the House Appropriations Committee Monday, is scheduled for executive action on Tuesday, and likely will come up for a House floor vote on Thursday. With the focus in the House, WSPTA members who are interested in supporting the bill should focus their advocacy on House Democrats. House Republicans voted against the bill in the policy committee and are unlikely to vote Yes on the House floor.

Find any of the bills listed below [here](#):

Governor’s bill action

Bill signings are virtual again this session, but Governor Inslee has been very busy the past two weeks signing bills that are coming his way. Any bill that arrives on his desk before Tuesday will be a five-day bill – i.e., the Governor will need to sign within five days of its arrival on his desk. However, any bill that is delivered after is considered a 20-day bill – which means the Governor has 20 days after April 25 to sign or veto bills that have passed the Legislature.

Bills that have been signed by Governor Inslee include:

- SHB 1085, promoting a safe learning environment for students with seizure disorders.
- EHB 1121, concerning the emergency waiver of graduation requirements.
- ESHB 1214, providing K-12 public school safety and security services by classified staff or contractors.
- ESHB 1372, replacing the Marcus Whitman statue in the national statuary hall collection with a statue of Billy Frank Jr.
- SB 5322, prohibiting dual enrollment between SEBB and PEBB health insurance programs.

Bills that have been delivered to the Governor, and now are five-day bills, include:

- HB 1143, authorizing the placement of water rights banked under the Walla Walla Partnership into the Department of Ecology trust water rights program through June 30, 2023.
- SHB 1208, modifying the learning assistance program.
- SHB 1225, creating a school-based health center grant program.
- SHB 1302, concerning College in the High School programs.
- EHB 1342, eliminating lunch copays for students who qualify for reduced-price lunches.
- ESHB 1426, specifying minimum continuing education requirements for administrator and teacher certificate renewals that focus on equity-based school and classroom practices.
- SB 5184, establishing a building point of contact in all K-12 public schools for students in foster care.

Bills in dispute

- 2SHB 1028, concerning evaluation and recommendation of candidates for residency teacher certification.
- ESHB 1476, stabilizing funding to address enrollment declines due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Bills in conference committee

- ESHB 1054, establishing requirements for tactics and equipment used by peace officers.
- E2SHB 1310, concerning permissible uses of force by law enforcement and correctional officers.
- ESSB 5092, making 2021-23 operating budget appropriations, and 2021 supplemental operating appropriations.
- SSB 5165, making 2021-23 transportation appropriations and 2021 supplemental transportation appropriations.