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WACD Legislative Update

March 06, 2023

This is WACD's eighth week of legislative updates for 2023. We are officially past the halfway point of the 105 day legislative session. We continue to provide these weekly updates containing timely information about legislative activities affecting conservation districts in Washington State for the benefits of our membership.

1. Budget Letter Template

As budget conversations begin to consolidate, WACD encourages CDs to remind legislators about your district's priorities. WACD is offering a template for any district wishing to remind their senator and representatives this month about local conservation priorities and what funding sources are the most impactful for you. Feel free to modify or tailor the language to suit your needs as this should simply serve as a potential starting point for your own outreach. [Legislator email addresses](#) are available online and you can follow this link for the [Budget Letter Template](#).

2. Bills Still on the Rails

From February 25th through March 8th, both the House and Senate are focused on voting on legislation to send across the Capital Rotunda to the other chamber. Bills with wide support are typically voted on first, so many of the bills on WACD's Watch List are already through to the other body. Examples include:

- [HB 1216](#) (concerning clean energy siting) passed the House 75-20.
- [HB 1322](#) (on the Walla Walla water 2050 plan) passed the House 96-0.

- [SB 5353](#) (on the voluntary stewardship program) passed the Senate 49-0

3. Bills Losing Steam

Less than 48 hours remain before the 5 PM deadline on Wednesday cuts off every bill not voted on by either the House or the Senate. [WACD's Legislative Watch List](#) includes all these bills watching the clock. Bills we're tracking that are waiting for a vote include:

- [HB 1285](#) – Modifying the scope of locations to which a water right established as a family farm permit may be transferred.
- [HB 1567](#) – Commissioning a study on conservation district election costs under Title 29A RCW.
- [SB 5390](#) – Establishing a programmatic safe harbor agreement on forestlands.

4. Legislative Overview

As part of her services, WACD lobbyist Brynn Brady writes a summary of the week's major legislative activities, giving us a wide view of legislative interests. This week's coverage includes:

- Reducing plastic use
- Revenue forecasts
- Employment proposals

You can read [her full review](#) on the WACD Hub website.

5. Looking Ahead

After Wednesday, the various legislative committees will be considering the bills adopted by the other chamber (House bills in the Senate and vice versa) until the end of March. This means all the conversations, disagreements, and compromises which have already occurred in this session will be rehashed with new legislators. Some bills which sailed smoothly up to this point will crash on the rocks, and other proposals will see major face-lifts as they continue through the legislative process.



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