



OTHER ISSUES OF CONCERN

Oppose New Lawsuits Against Designers & Agencies

Oppose SB 5310 (Sponsors: Sen. Kline, Pflug & Keiser)

Oppose SB 5379 (Sponsors: Sen. Benton, Hewitt, Stevens & Carrell)

These bills would allow for third party lawsuits against government contractors for errors in their bills for services or “false claims.” The Washington Attorney General’s Office has evaluated similar bills and found that they “will not achieve the recoveries anticipated and will cost the state more money than it will receive pursuant to the proposed Act.” The AGO found that there are “hidden administrative, investigative and litigation costs necessary initially to determine the viability of claims.” The AGO also is concerned about the “large payment” to the filer of the claim.

These “false claims” laws create an undue burden on design professionals who have to manage hundreds of change orders in the course of a project; anyone of which could result in steep penalties if not managed perfectly.

Protect Public Art Projects

Oppose SB 5100 (Sponsors: Senators Carrell, Schoesler, Swecker, Benton, Stevens, Morton, King & Zarelli)

Oppose SB 5109 (Sponsors: Benton, Carrell, Schoesler, Morton & Hewitt)

State law requires that one-half of one percent of each building project be used for art projects that enhance the users understanding and enjoyment of the building. When managed well, art becomes integral to a successful project. Washington’s commitment to public art enhances our public spaces. It also helps keep Washington’s artist community healthy. Eliminating the art requirement will not save the state any money, but will hurt the state’s artists and their materials suppliers.

Support Intrastate Disaster Assistance

Support HB 1406 (Sponsors: Reps. Hunt, Ross, Appleton, Armstrong, Hurst, & Stanford)

Support SB 5221 (Sponsors: Sens. Swecker, Prentice, Shin, King, Kastama, Nelson, & Chase)

In the aftermath of a disaster, it is vital to get building damaged assessed quickly. The quicker buildings are checked for safety, the quicker owners can repair and re-occupy them. HB 1406/SB 5221 facilitates local governments sending aid to other areas of the state in response to disasters.

The floods of recent years in our rural community have exposed a need for local and state government agencies to pool their resources in response to disasters. Current state law hinders one local agency from going to the aid of another agency in a neighboring community. These bills will allow local governments to send immediate disaster assistance to impacted community, without lengthy and laborious negotiations and interlocal agreements. When disaster strikes, we need everyone pulling together to help impacted communities. We don’t need our building inspectors tied up in legal red tape when homes and businesses are sitting empty waiting for damage assessments.

KEY POINTS

- *“False Claims” acts result is greater cost to government and consultants than is recovered.*
- *False claims laws hit architects especially hard because they manage hundreds of change orders on every project.*
- *Art enhances public spaces and promotes a healthy artist community in our state.*
- *Eliminating art on public projects will not save the state money, but will lower the quality of projects.*
- *In the wake of disaster, red tape should not hinder intergovernmental assistance efforts.*

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