



2019 Legislative Session Report #1

2.4.19

We are three weeks into the 2019 legislation session; bill introductions, committee work sessions, public hearings and citizen lobby days continue to dominate the work in Olympia—including AIA|WA’s own lobby day, Capitol Connections, on Jan 24. Over 1,600 bills have been introduced on a wide range of issues. We are still three weeks away from the first cut-off date, Feb. 22, when non-financial bills must be passed out of committee or they are dead for the year.

Twenty-eight new legislators were sworn into office (soon to be 29 after Democrats name a replacement for Sen. Kevin Ranker [D-Orcas], who resigned during week one in expectation of findings of harassment). This new class of legislators is the most diverse in Washington's history, including 14 women, eight members of color, six millennials and one refugee.

Governor Inslee’s climate package and a variety of other environmental proposals continue to dominate the early part of the session. The primary four items—[clean energy](#), [clean buildings](#), [clean transportation](#), and [banning HFCs](#)—each have substantial momentum. AIA|WA testified in support of the governor’s clean buildings bill; although AIA|WA’s Climate Committee has some technical concerns centered around maximizing the impact of the programs, we support the overall energy efficiency package and, should the legislation pass, expect to work with the Dept. of Commerce as it develops rules to implement the provisions.

Architects’ Practice Act

AIA|WA’s [bill](#) to amend the Architects’ Practice Act was unanimously approved by the House Consumer Protection and Business Committee and will be considered by the full House in the next few weeks. The bill addresses NCARB-approved changes to the path to licensure, including eliminating a year of AXP electives and allowing all candidates to complete the education, experience and testing portions of licensure non-sequentially. In addition, the bill removes the use of the word “intern” for associate architects with degrees (per AIA National policy) and adds language to clarify the definition of the practice of architecture to reduce the possibility that non-architects are allowed to stamp architecture plans. You can read a summary of the legislation [here](#).

B&O Tax

Governor Inslee’s budget bill was heard during the first week of the session. It includes a 22.3% increase from current spending, including a 9% capital gains tax and a 67% increase in the B&O tax on service businesses, including architecture (from 1.5% to 2.5%). AIA|WA testified in opposition to the B&O increase, calling for structural tax reform instead of one-off tax increases to an already flawed B&O tax structure. Budget discussions will begin in earnest in March. Generally, the budget bills are not finalized until the end of the session—this year, April 28.

Condo Liability Reform

[Legislation](#) to address issues related to condo liability by defining condo warranties is moving along quickly with wide support; in the Senate, it was heard in committee and passed unanimously last week. AIA|WA has supported the bill although warranties are not applicable to architects. Additional [legislation](#) has been introduced by Rep. Tana Senn (D-Mercer Island/Bellevue) to require 50% of HOA members to approve the filing of a lawsuit related to construction; this bill did not win support last year and may not this year, either. AIA|WA would like to see further legislation related to HOAs, but this may be a multi-year effort.

School construction

This week AIA|WA will testify on [legislation](#) that would lower the threshold for voters to approve school bonds to 55% from 60% and [a bill](#) to address school safety through design.

Capital budget & alternative project delivery

AIA|WA is supporting [legislation](#) requested by the Capital Projects Advisory Review Board to make adjustments to design-build and job order contracting statute language. This bill will be voted on in the House Capital Budget Committee this week. You can read a summary of the provisions [here](#).

Contracting

AIA|WA testified on [legislation](#) that would require state contracts to be evaluated for moving the work in-house, repeating our message from the previous two sessions that architectural and engineering contracts should not be included. The bill would now exempt architects, engineers and land surveyors for contracts over \$1 million but would continue to impact projects between \$10,000 and \$999,999. AIA|WA will continue to push for an amendment that would offer architects full exemption from the bill—something we expect to see introduced shortly.

More Info

View AIA|WA's bill tracking report [here](#).

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Get involved

We need your participation to make sure we are accurately representing your interests. Here are some ways you can get involved:

- Let us know what you think – we always want to hear from you!
- Join an AIA|WA [policy committee](#)
- Communicate with your legislators about issues that are important to you.
- Interested in following the Legislature from afar? The Spokesman-Review has great tips, [here](#).