

WSAC 2006 Legislative Priorities

Improve County Financial Health	
✓ Flexibility and Efficiency	Broaden use of local revenue authorities, such as REET. Expand construction management options. Streamline outdated management statutes such as personal bond requirements.
✓ Sales tax streamlining benefiting all counties	Monitor negotiations at national level to resolve conflicts over taxation of medical equipment. Continue to advocate for destination sourcing.
✓ Additional funding options for counties	Continue to advocate for state funding for low tax base counties. To enable counties to maintain services, adjust the one percent cap on property tax revenue to be equivalent to the rate of inflation. Address the fiscal consequences of annexation and incorporation.
✓ Sustain state public health funding	Ensure that <u>HCR 4410</u> Task Force identify a permanent funding source that will grow to meet public health needs.
✓ Pension contributions	Allow counties to phase-in over time employer contributions to meet projected higher contribution rates.
✓ Mental Health	Seek additional funding to increase Medicaid rates to the mid-range point and provide adequate state match to draw down all available federal funds.
Reform Law and Justice Funding	
✓ Indigent defense funding and structure	Increase and institutionalize state funding. Continue phasing in state defense of indigent parents in dependency and termination cases.
✓ Trial court funding	Increase state contribution for district court funding.
Limit County Civil Liability	Continue to work to limit governmental liability in civil suits through clarification of public duty doctrine, revision of joint and several liability, and allowing evidence of seat belt use. Ensure that state contracted services properly allocate liability.
Improve Transportation Funding	Re-authorize and enhance local government funding measures, including the RTID structure for all counties. Provide additional local transportation funding tools and efficiencies.
Reform Growth Management Act	Ensure that Governor's 2006 GMA package amend GMA requirements and timelines to reduce county implementation costs, neutralize GMA tax consequences, and reduce litigation.
Improve Water Resource Management	Ensure available domestic water supply for rural areas. Provide funding and tools for future water supply and water quality needs.
Protect and Enhance the Agricultural Economy	Support policies and programs that ensure a long-term, profitable agricultural economy throughout the state.

WSAC 2006 Legislative Priorities

2006 Legislative Pkg - Courts, Public Safety, Law and Justice				
Issue/Background	2003 Position	2004 Position	2005 Position	2006 Recommendation
County/Tribal Relations: Tribal Law Enforcement Act. The most recent version of the bill from 2004 would have granted tribal officers authority to arrest non-tribal members on tribal lands when tribal police are participating in a multi-agency drug task force or other mutual aid agreement, or when commissioned to do so by the county sheriff, or when the tribal police have satisfied certain state and county agreements.	Opposed.	Opposed.	Opposed -- based on potential joint liability issues.	Monitor. A bill was not introduced in 2005.
Courts: Bills in 2003 and 2004 attempted to address cities' concerns regarding their authority to contract with each other rather than the county district court for municipal court services. Expected to re-surface in 2006 as part of broader review of courts of limited jurisdiction.	Monitored	Monitored	Monitored.	AOC is working on a re-write of Title 3 RCW. Monitor and take recommendations to Issue Team & LSC as appropriate.
Earned Early Release for Jail Inmates. Bills in 2003, 2004 and 2005 would have allowed local jails to offer inmates earned early release time on par with DOC – up to 50 percent off total sentence, though limited to 10 percent for inmates convicted of violent or sex crimes. This would be a local option.	Supported	Supported.	Supported	Support, with comments that SGC pursue “truth in sentencing” policies.
Criminal Indigent Defense.			Supported HB 1542 , which passed but without the requested \$25 million funding for widespread state assistance. However, 05-07 state budget established a \$1 million pilot project and paid for “county liaisons” in OPD budget.	Support expansion of the pilot project and full state funding to implement HB 1542 .
Indigent Defense – parent’s	Supported	Supported	Supported full	Support

WSAC 2006 Legislative Priorities

2006 Legislative Pkg - Courts, Public Safety, Law and Justice				
Issue/Background	2003 Position	2004 Position	2005 Position	2006 Recommendation
representation in dependency/termination actions:	OPD pilot project in Pierce and Benton-Franklin.	continuation of OPD pilot.	state funding for defense services for indigent parents in dependency actions. State budget appropriated \$7 million, which is funding a 10-county expansion.	supplemental budget request for continued expansion of state funding for defense services for indigent parents. OPD is requesting funding to add Kitsap and Clark counties.
Court Funding, District Court Judge Salaries, etc.			Supported SB 5454 , which passed. It increases civil filing fee revenue to county general fund, requires state contribution to district court judge salaries, and requires local "trial court improvement accounts."	Support increase in state contribution to 50% of district court judge salaries.
Intrastate Mutual Aid. Establish an all-hazard program to coordinate and expedite sharing local and state agency resources during emergency exercises and disasters.	N/A	N/A	N/A	Support the concept and work with drafters to protect county interests.

WSAC 2006 Legislative Priorities

2006 Legislative Pkg - General Government, Budget and Finance

Issue/Background	2003 Position	2004 Position	2005 Position	2006 Recommended Position
<p>Tax Increment Finance: Expand the community revitalization program to allow local governments to finance public improvements within an increment area using increases in local sales and use tax revenues, as well as matching state sales and use tax revenues.</p>	Neutral if county not required to participate	Support – If county not required to participate.	Support – If county tax base is protected, if TIF district boundaries limited, and if county can choose whether to participate in TIF district.	Support – If county tax base is protected and TIF district boundaries are limited. Keep agreement of taxing districts that levy at least 75% of property taxes within the increment area.
<p>Economic Development: Authorize any city, town, or county to transfer or loan to the state, any city, county, special purpose district, public development authority or other political subdivision or instrumentality, or the federal government or any Indian tribe, any funds, real or personal property, property interests, or services.</p>	Support	Support	Do not advance.	Support if introduced.
<p>Sales Tax Streamlining: For a number of years, state and local governments have been working at the national level to streamline sales tax administration and clear the way for collecting state and local taxes on catalogue, internet and other remote sales. Taxing sales at the point of delivery rather than the point of sale results in gains and losses for various local jurisdictions.</p>	N/A	Support sourcing with adequate mitigation	Support sourcing that benefits counties	Same as 2005.
<p>Historic Courthouse Funding. Establish a \$40 million matching fund from the capital budget for preservation of the historic features of the 28 county courthouses that would be eligible for historic landmark status.</p>	N/A	Support and also seek assistance for non-historic courthouse improvement	Support.	Support continuation of program and expanded funding.
<p>Property tax rate freeze: Allow voters to approve a six-year property tax rate freeze.</p>	N/A	N/A	Oppose.	Oppose
<p>New REET for Impact Fees: Allow the option for a county or city to adopt a new, additional REET that would replace impact fees as a funding source for new infrastructure, including transportation infrastructure.</p>	N/A	N/A	Support if no loss of SEPA mitigation authority and no requirement that use of new REET satisfies concurrency.	Same as 2005.

WSAC 2006 Legislative Priorities

2006 Legislative Pkg - General Government, Budget and Finance

Issue/Background	2003 Position	2004 Position	2005 Position	2006 Recommended Position
<p>Pension Enhancements: The state decides the level of benefits and rates to be paid by employers and employees. This impacts counties with employees in the state retirement system.</p> <p>In 2005, proposals authorized service purchase or credit for veterans whose public employment is interrupted by military service and post-retirement employment options. For instance, the current provisions in plan 2 systems, allow reservists to purchase service credit for periods of active service if they return to public employment. This option is denied if they are killed or disabled in action.</p>	Oppose any benefit increases that would result in increased cost for employers.	Oppose any benefit increases that would result in increased cost for employers.	Support technical improvements for guard and reserve members with service interruptions. Oppose benefit improvements that would have a significant fiscal impact on counties.	Oppose benefit enhancements that would have a significant fiscal impact on counties.
<p>Tax Exemptions: The 2004 Tri-Association Package included support for a review of tax exemptions. This issue is gaining quiet support in business and legislative circles. This is not a proposal for the repeal or modification of any individual exemption.</p>	N/A	Support	Support	Support.
<p>Tribal sales tax authority: Allow a tribal government with a "federally-recognized city" to impose and collect local sales tax as a city.</p>	N/A	N/A	Oppose.	Oppose.
<p>Countywide utility tax. Authorize a county to impose a countywide utility tax to raise revenue for law and justice services.</p>	N/A	N/A	Monitor	Support and attempt to broaden uses.
<p>County-wide schools levy. Allow school districts within a county to request a countywide levy for school improvements.</p>	N/A	N/A	Monitor	Oppose
<p>Extend campaign finance requirements to counties over 200,000 population.</p>	N/A	N/A	Oppose	Oppose
<p>County Operations: Explore options for counties to reorganize or restructure county government to further efficiency, cost savings, and improved services.</p>	N/A	Support, but only if optional.	Same as 2004.	Same as 2004.
<p>County Reorganization: Establish a process to allow consolidation of existing counties or creation of new counties.</p>	Oppose	Oppose	Oppose	Oppose.
<p>District Election: Establish procedures to elect commissioners by district.</p>	Oppose	Oppose	Oppose	Oppose.

WSAC 2006 Legislative Priorities

2006 Legislative Pkg - General Government, Budget and Finance

Issue/Background	2003 Position	2004 Position	2005 Position	2006 Recommended Position
Open Meetings Act: Add new notice requirements to Open Meetings Act.	N/A	Oppose	Oppose	Oppose.
Public Disclosure Act: The Washington Supreme Court has upheld the attorney-client privilege in the Public Disclosure Act and has allowed denial of requests as "overbroad." Legislation will be introduced to reverse this decision.	N/A	N/A	Oppose.	Overbreadth defense narrowed by 2005 Legislature. Oppose further efforts to narrow attorney-client privilege.
Election Funding: Seek state assistance for even-year elections.	Support	Support	Support	Support

WSAC 2006 Legislative Priorities

2006 Legislative Pkg - Public Health and Human Services

Issue/Background	2003 Position	2004 Position	2005 Position	2006 Recommendation
<p>County Impacts of DSHS Budget Cuts: Significant budget cuts to the state Department of Social and Health Services directly impact county-administered programs in both human services and public health and indirectly impact the local economy and criminal justice and emergency systems. We will continue to support efforts to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimize reductions in human services funding across the board of DSHS programs, focusing on those programs with a direct county impact such as mental health, developmental disabilities, and chemical dependency and/or those whose reduction will impact other county systems such as criminal justice and emergency services. • Reduce state and local duplication, unnecessary regulatory requirements, and fragmentation of service delivery systems. • Create new human services programs, requirements, or enhancements only if sufficient funding based on local fiscal note estimates is authorized or other requirements are reduced. 	N/A	Support	Support	Support
<p>Closure of Fircrest School and other residential habilitation centers: Continue downsizing Fircrest Residential Habilitation Center (RHC) and other RHCs for individuals with developmental disabilities. Support timely completion of the work of the 2005 Residential Task Force.</p>	Support	Support	Support	Support
<p>Mental Health: Scrutinize the Request for Qualifications and Request for Proposal processes to protect county interests.</p>	Support	Support	Support	Support
<p>Employment and Day Programs for Individuals with Developmental Disabilities: The 2005 budget included additional funding for employment services. A request for additional funds will be made in 2006. Support state mandated funding for post school employment for individuals with developmental disabilities exiting the state's special education system.</p>	Support	Support	Support	Support

WSAC 2006 Legislative Priorities

2006 Legislative Pkg - Public Health and Human Services

Issue/Background	2003 Position	2004 Position	2005 Position	2006 Recommendation
<p>Chemical Dependency Residential Treatment Reimbursement Rates: Additional funding was appropriated for increased residential rates in 2005. In 2006, additional funds will be sought for both inpatient and outpatient rates.</p>	N/A	Support	Support	Support
<p>Increase Substance Abuse Funding: In 2006 support increased substance abuse funding for substance abuse overall, and where appropriate, support the findings of the Attorney General's Methamphetamine Initiative and other initiatives dealing with the prevention, treatment, and interdiction of methamphetamine abuse and manufacture.</p>	Support	Support	Support	Support
<p>Participation of All School Districts in 0 – 3 Programs for Youngsters with Developmental Disabilities/Delays: Only about ½ the state's school districts access funding to support 0 – 3 programs.</p>	N/A	Support	Support	Support
<p>Washington Medicaid Integration Partnership: Continue efforts to delay or terminate the Washington Medicaid Integration Partnership pilot in Snohomish County as long as it interferes with the delivery of county human services programs to vulnerable adults and children</p>	Support	Support	Support	Support
<p>Prohibit Smoking in Public Places: Tobacco use is the leading cause of death and chronic disease in Washington. Tobacco caused disease extracts a great cost to society and to employers in increased illness, reduced productivity, and a large burden on the health care system. Recognition of that led to prohibition of smoking in office workplaces. Prohibiting smoking in all indoor public places recognizes that second-hand smoke is a health hazard and protecting all workers from the effects of second-hand smoke is good public health policy. Protecting workers is a responsibility of government. The industries affected have indicated that if a smoking ban is going to happen, they would prefer that it be a statewide ban, rather than jurisdiction by jurisdiction because it provides a more level playing field for affected businesses.</p>	N/A	Support legislation that prohibits smoking in indoor public places.	Support legislation that prohibits smoking in indoor public places.	<p>An initiative to ban smoking in all public places will be before the voters in November 2005.</p> <p>No action recommended.</p>
<p>Restrict Youth Access to Tobacco Support legislation to prohibit tobacco sampling – a known source of tobacco products for youth with a lack of enforcement of age requirements.</p>	Support	Support	Support	Support

WSAC 2006 Legislative Priorities

2006 Legislative Pkg - Public Health and Human Services

Issue/Background	2003 Position	2004 Position	2005 Position	2006 Recommendation
<p>Nutrition and Fitness: WSAC supports legislation that promotes access to better nutrition and nutrition education and fitness and fitness education. WSAC further supports working with the federal government to draw attention to federal responsibility and ability to enhance access to good nutrition and nutrition education and fitness and fitness education.</p>	N/A	Support	Support	Support
<p>Coordinated Prevention Grants. Restore over \$4 million grant funds to assist local solid waste program efforts to prevent improper hazardous waste disposal and improve recycling.</p>	N/A	N/A	N/A	Support

WSAC 2006 Legislative Priorities

2006 Legislative Pkg - Transportation, Land Use & Resources

Issue/Background	2003 Position	2004 Position	2005 Position	2006 Recommendation
School Funding Alternatives: Allow a school district to make a one-time election requesting the county or counties in which the school district is located to impose an excise tax on the sale of real property in lieu of regulatory impact fees.	Oppose	No Position	Oppose	Oppose
Hydraulic Project Approval: Improve the HPA program by eliminating redundant requirements and allowing counties to issue some HPAs.	Support	Support	Support	Support
Hydraulic Project Approval: Eliminate the HPA Program	Support	No Position	No position	No position
Hazardous Waste Cleanup: Maintain all existing avenues for local governments to recover costs of remedial actions taken to clean up hazardous waste caused by or the responsibility of the state.	N/A	Support	Support	Support
Legacy Trust: Creates the legacy trust for conservation and recreation. Revenue from the trust must be used to support public recreation and conservation on DNR lands.	N/A	Support	No bill introduced	No bill expected
SEPA Lead Agency: Amends SEPA to prevent the project proponent or primary sponsor from being the lead agency.	N/A	Oppose	Oppose	Oppose
Electronic Waste: Reduce electronic waste through recycling.	N/A	Support	Monitor	Continue to monitor pilot projects and ongoing national efforts
Forest Land Conversion: Amend current law to provide a simpler approach to regulating conversion of timberland to other uses, impacting fewer counties while consistent with GMA planning.	N/A	Support	Support	Support
On-Site Septic Regulation: Place in statute regulatory requirements more stringent than those proposed by State Board of Health in 2005.	N/A	N/A	Oppose	Oppose
Eliminate Parking Fees for Day Use in State Parks	N/A	N/A	N/A	Neutral
Hearing Examiner for Open Space Classification: Amend current law to allow a county to establish procedures for a hearing examiner to act on current use valuation requests.	N/A	N/A	N/A	Support
Eliminate Motorcycle Sign Requirement	N/A	N/A	N/A	Support

WSAC 2006 Legislative Priorities

2006 Legislative Pkg - Transportation, Land Use & Resources				
Issue/Background	2003 Position	2004 Position	2005 Position	2006 Recommendation
Rest Area Demo Project: The Secretary of the WSDOT must solicit proposals from private and nonprofit entities for a joint safety rest area demonstration project. In implementing the demonstration project, the Secretary will negotiate and enter into agreements with private or nonprofit entities to provide safety rest area services.	Support	Support	Support	Support
HOV Lanes: Restricts HOV lanes only during rush hour workdays.	Oppose	Oppose	No position	No position
HOV Lanes: Opens high-occupancy vehicle lanes during non-peak hours.	Oppose	Oppose	No position	No position
Transportation Grant Board: Achieve streamlined operations and agency efficiencies whenever possible, including merger of transportation funding boards.	Oppose	Oppose	Oppose	Oppose
Transportation Benefit District: Expand the authority of transportation benefit districts.	Support	Support	Support actively	Continue to work to improve
Lead Agency Status: Requires the county to forfeit lead agency status and forfeit any funds provided if the county fails to meet specific deadlines.	N/A	Oppose	Oppose	Oppose
Motorized Scooters. Pursue uniform statewide standards.	N/A	N/A	Support	Support