

## 2013 LEGISLATIVE SESSION & BUDGET UPDATE

### The Top 4 Things Clean Cities Members Need to Know

#### 1) Government Fleets Biofuels/Electricity Requirement Amended

ESB 5099 - Amending RCW 43.19.648 *Concerning fuel usage of publicly owned vehicles, vessels and construction equipment.*

**Synopsis:** This bill amends RCW 43.19.648, the law adopted in 2007 requiring government agencies in Washington to satisfy 100 percent of their fuel usage from electricity or biofuel, “to the extent practicable.” Of relevance, the amended language:

- Requires the Department of Commerce to convene an advisory committee to develop the rules that will define and determine what will be considered “practicable.”
- Adds an exemption for engine retrofits that would void warranties.
- Provides authority for local governments to exempt police, fire and other emergency response vehicles.

**WWCC Commentary:** Overall this bill helps our state show public sector leadership in embracing alternatively fueled vehicles. Earlier concerns about the “100 percent” requirement should be eased with the requirement that the Department of Commerce lead an advisory committee to develop the rules around what qualifies as “practicable.” At the helm of this committee is the very level-headed Peter Moulton, working alongside a large team of experienced fleet managers, and yours truly. We will represent your collective voice and experience, and you may contact me any time to discuss the process. I want to encourage local government fleets to continue to make sound economic and environmental procurement and fleet management decisions until these “practicable” guidelines are established later this year.

#### Additional information:

- [ESB 5099 – 2013-2014](#) Concerning fuel usage of publicly owned vehicles, vessels and construction equipment
- [RCW 43.325.080](#) – Electricity and biofuel usage goals – Rules

#### 2) Capital Budget Includes Funding for Clean Energy & Energy Freedom Program

**Synopsis:** Section 1074 of the 2013-15 Capital Budget appropriates \$40 million for the Department of Commerce’s Clean Energy and Energy Freedom Program. These monies will help establish a Clean Energy Fund, intended to leverage investment in high-value, clean energy technologies, as envisioned by Governor Inslee (see February Policy Brief, linked below.)

**WWCC Commentary:** This is good news for the Coalition. The Clean Energy Fund earmarks \$15 million to create a revolving loan fund to help develop renewable energy and energy efficiency technologies. Eligible technologies are likely to include anaerobic digesters, among others. The fund also includes \$6 million “solely” for grants to match federal R&D funds used to develop and demonstrate clean energy technologies. And, there’s an additional \$4 million available for loans and grants that “encourage the

establishment of innovative and sustainable industries for renewable energy.” Projects under these programs must have a useful life of greater than 13 years and at least a 1:1 funding match. The Coalition expects projects involving advanced biofuels, renewable natural gas, renewable electricity, and dimethyl ether will be quite competitive for this funding. Commerce hopes to have the loan program underway by September.

**Additional information:**

- [2013-2015 Capital Budget](#) (See Section 1074)
- [Clean energy, climate action and plentiful water](#). February 2013 Policy Brief, Office of Governor Jay Inslee.

### 3) Transportation Package & Related Budget Initiatives Fail to Make the Cut

**WWCC Commentary:** There were a lot of goodies in here relevant to Clean Cities members including millions of dollars for EV Charging Infrastructure, Biofuels Distribution and Storage Infrastructure, and Innovative Biofuels Production. For those of you who heard through the grapevine (or from me) that this type of funding may be coming from the state, this is now off the books, and we’ll continue to look to US DOE, US EPA, and US DOT for similar grants, though admittedly they are also diminishing.

### 4) Climate Change Bill Passes

SB 5802 – *An Act relating to developing recommendations to achieve the state’s greenhouse gas emissions targets, etc.*

**Synopsis:** SB 5802 directs the Office of Financial Management to commission and deliver a “credible evaluation” of approaches to reducing greenhouse gas emissions to the Governor by October 15, 2013.

**WWCC Commentary:** Most view this as Step 1 toward getting our state on the path to a low carbon fuel standard, carbon trading, or some other carbon market mechanism. If we can make it to Step 2 (transportation-related carbon regulations), it will be a gigantic win for the efforts of Clean Cities, given how much carbon is emitted from traditional petroleum fuels in our region. The consultant selected, SAIC, has provided a [list of strategies](#) to examine, and will be expected to prioritize strategies that are the most effective and provide the greatest environmental benefit for the money spent. In the meantime, a [recent report](#) from ICF suggests the low carbon fuel standard in California is doing what it intended, which is a good omen for us!

**Additional information:**

- [SB 5802](#) – Review bill history.