



WASHINGTON PUBLIC PORTS ASSOCIATION

2016 LEGISLATIVE AGENDA

November 19, 2015
Renaissance Hotel, Seattle WA

PRIORITY ISSUES

- **MTCA Funding Preservation:** WPPA will support Ecology's \$36 million budget request to fill the shortfall caused by the revenue downturn in the MTCA accounts. In addition, we are exploring how best to ensure that the legislature addresses the structural problems in these accounts that magnify the effects of the revenue shortfall on Remedial Action Grants.
- **Dredging:** Current state environmental regulations are preventing all in-water disposal of dredge material in Puget Sound. WPPA will propose legislation to maintain the ability of ports and others to engage in environmentally appropriate dredging and disposal.
- **Re-Focusing Freight Mobility:** The WPPA is assessing legislative options to consolidate the state's freight mobility focus within a single agency by transferring the Department of Transportation's short line rail and other freight programs to the *Freight Mobility Strategic Investment Board*.

ISSUES WPPA WILL SUPPORT

- **B&O Tax preference for Fishing Fleet Vessels:** A bill, introduced late in the session in 2015, would provide a preferential B&O tax rate for fishing vessels and their components. The Washington Maritime Federation will be supporting the efforts to get this legislation passed.
- **Tourism Funding:** The Washington Tourism Alliance put forward a proposal in the 2015 legislative session for coordinated statewide tourism marketing paid for by the businesses that benefit from tourism. This proposal is likely to be back, largely unchanged, in 2016. Not all the funding partners supported the proposal last session. It is unclear whether any positions have changed since then. But WPPA continues to support the concept of a coordinated statewide tourism marketing program.
- **Derelict Vessel Demolition Grants:** WPPA is scoping a proposal to fund two vessel demolition facilities in Washington, one in Puget Sound and one on the Columbia River.

- **Public Records Act:** As local governments continue to struggle with the problem of harassing public records requests, there may be efforts to find ways to allow entities to better manage those requests. Also the proposal to allow for recouping some costs of commercial requests will be back. Additionally there will likely be a proposal clarifying that advisory committees are subject to the PRA and OPMA.
- **Contracting Out for Port Audits:** The WPPA is working with other public entity associations to put forward legislation that would broaden the authority for ports to hire private sector auditors to perform port audits.

ISSUES WPPA WILL WATCH

- **CERB Reform:** The Community Economic Revitalization Board bill to allow 25% of the funds to be available for projects that do not meet the median wage requirement of the program will be alive again in 2016.
- **Water Quality Regulations:** WPPA is evaluating the effect of the Governor's new water quality standards rule-making. At this stage, it is not clear whether these regulations will spark legislation.
- **Voting Rights Act:** The proposal to provide protected classes of citizens a cause of action in local government elections, and create a process by which local governments can be compelled to impose or amend boundaries to accommodate protected classes of citizens in order to give them an improved chance of getting elected to office in that local government, is going to return again in 2016.