

February Legislative Update

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Board Staff Legislative Portfolio

- High point of staff bill tracking: 310 bills.
 - Now: Just 27% of those bills remain moving through the process.
- Reminder: Workforce Board legislative site includes:
 - List of bills and status.
 - Link to testimony from our staff.
 - Budget requests and links to decision package write-ups.
 - Follow along at <https://wtb.wa.gov/about-us/workforce-board-legislative-tracker/>.

Legislative Information
The Workforce Board advises the Governor and Legislature on workforce development policy to shape strategies and create and sustain a high-skill, high-wage economy.

2026 Legislative Tracker | Agency Budget Requests | TAP Legislative Agenda | Testimony | Federal Updates

Workforce Board Legislative Bill Tracker
Updated 1/15/2026

Bill No.	Abbreviated title	Status	Sponsor	Companion	Activity
SB 1036	Labor trustees/colleges	H Prof/Sec Ed & WK	Ortiz-Self		
SB 1170	AI content notices	H Tech, Econ Dev	Shavers		Jan 16 Scheduled for floor session in the House Technology, Economic Development, & Veterans at 10:30 AM (2/26)

SENATE BILL REPORT
SB 5821

As of January 14, 2026

Title: An act relating to integrating advanced nuclear energy into the state energy strategy.

Brief Description: Integrating advanced nuclear energy into the state energy strategy.

Sponsors: Senators Dixon, Shewinski, Iwolsky, Christian, Conway, Kruse, Gibson, Hilly, Nadeau, Russell, Salomon, Short, Warren, Wolfman and Wilson, J.

Brief Summary:
Competitive Activity: Environment, Energy & Technology 1/14/26

Brief Summary of Bill

- Requires the Department of Commerce to implement the state energy strategy by developing a nuclear power strategic framework by December 2026.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT, ENERGY & TECHNOLOGY
South: Kathleen Crowley (736-7421)

Senate Environment, Energy & Technology 01/16/26 11:45:51



State Operating Budget Update

- Both House and Senate budgets are tentatively estimated to be released on Sunday 2/22.
- 2/16 Revenue Forecast – Up approx. \$1.9B over four years since November, w/ an additional \$827M for next fiscal year.

Biennium	Forecast revenue	Change from Nov. forecast	% change
2025–27 (current)	\$75.28B	\$827M	1.1%
2027–29	\$80.38B	\$1.028B	1.3%
2029–31	\$86.57B	N/A	N/A
Total		\$1.855B	

Revenue table courtesy of OFM. Accessed 2/16/26.



A Selection of Workforce Bills of Interest

Bills we will be reviewing today:

- 2492/6282 (Nance/Nobles) – Apprenticeship/wellness
- 5963/2586 (Nobles/Timmons, WSAC Request) – Passport to careers program.
- 2523/6275 (Reeves/Nobles) – Community reinvestment program.
- 6289 (Kauffman) – Economic development strategic plan.
- 1128/5062 (Fosse/Stanford) – Child care workforce board.
- 2410 (Fey) – Commercial truck council.
- 1923 (Nance) – Passenger-only ferries.

Reminder: Bills highlighted in this presentation do not indicate a position on any legislation.

Please contact me if you'd like more information on any bills before the Legislature.



2492 – Apprenticeships/Wellness

2492/6282 (Nance/Nobles) – Requiring state registered apprenticeships in the building and construction trades to provide behavioral health and wellness training.

Status: 2/20 – Executive session in Senate Labor and Commerce.

- Bill would add a two-hour behavioral health training component in building trade registered apprenticeship programs.
- Committee amendment extended the training requirement to journey-level building trades workers.



5963 – Passport to Careers Program

5963/2586 (Nobles/Timmons, WSAC Request) – Modifying funding for passport to careers program and eligibility for WA College Grant.

Status: 2/24 – Executive session in House Postsecondary Education & Workforce.

- Workforce Board legislative agenda item.
- Allows any student who qualifies for Passport to Careers (unaccompanied homeless or foster youth) to be automatically eligible for the WA College Grant.
- No fiscal impact – most are already eligible.



2523 – Community Reinvestment Program

2523/6275 (Reeves/Nobles) – Concerning the community reinvestment program.

Status: Referred to Ways and Means.

- Maintaining investment in the Community Reinvestment Program (CRP) is a Workforce Board legislative agenda item.
- Transitions the program to joint ownership with Commerce and the Office of Equity by 7/1/27. Report due 11/1/26.
- CRP must prioritize funding for five categories: Economic development, legal assistance, reentry services, violence intervention/prevention, and agriculture and economic services.



6289 – Economic Development Plan

6289 (Kauffman) – Creating a statewide economic development and competitiveness strategic plan.

Status: 2/24 – Public hearing in House Technology, Economic Development, & Veterans.

- By 6/30/27, the Department of Commerce is directed to create an Economic Development and Competitiveness Strategic Plan.
- Plan must, using economic and industry data, include goals for state-supported economic development, an economic profile (including workforce), metrics, and more.



1128 – Child Care Workforce Board

1128/5062 (Fosse/Stanford) – Establishing a child care workforce standards board.

Status: 2/20 – Public hearing in Senate Labor & Commerce.

- Creates a Child Care Workforce Standards Board at Dept. of Labor and Industries to make recommendations on employment standards for childcare workers.
 - Early priorities are staffing, recruitment, retention, and staffing ratios. May also review wages and compensation, and other areas impacting working conditions.
- Governor-appointed membership: Includes child care workers, employers, DCYF and LNI, and more.



2410 – Commercial Truck Council

2410 (Fey) – Establishing a commercial truck safety and education council.

Status: 2/26 Public hearing in Senate Transportation.

- Establishes a Council at the Traffic Safety commission responsible for recommendations on enhancing safety and training for the commercial trucking industry.
- Workforce Board is named as a member on the Council, along with SBCTC, industry partners, and state agencies.
- First report due 12/31/27.



1923 – Passenger-Only Ferries

1923 (Nance) – Increasing the availability of passenger-only ferries by establishing the mosquito fleet act.

Status: Referred to Senate Transportation.

- Expands the opportunity for passenger-only ferry districts for jurisdictions throughout the Puget Sound and Grays Harbor.
- Intent in the bill is increased transportation access and more opportunities for workforce growth in shipbuilding and creating a pipeline of mariners to train up for future ferry workforce needs.

QUESTIONS?

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