



Staff Report

File #: 19-126

Version: 1

Date: 3/25/2019

Item #: 3.3 a.

TO: Mayor and City Council

THROUGH: Steve Powers, City Manager

FROM: Legislative Committee

SUBJECT:

Priority bills for 2019 Legislative Session

Ward(s): All Wards

Councilor(s): All Councilors

Neighborhood(s): All Neighborhoods

Result Area(s): Result Areas - Good Governance; Natural Environment Stewardship; Safe Community; Safe, Reliable and Efficient Infrastructure; Strong and Diverse Economy; Welcoming and Livable Community.

ISSUE:

Shall the City Council approve the City of Salem's positions on legislative bills, explore legislative methods to ensure protection of confidentiality of the victim and complainant in child abuse cases, and continue to watch Cap and Invest legislation for preservation of transportation funding and support for local government resilience programs in the 2019 Oregon Legislative Session?

RECOMMENDATION:

Approve the City of Salem's positions on the attached legislative bills, explore legislative methods to ensure protection of confidentiality of the victim and complainant in child abuse cases, and continue to watch Cap and Invest legislation for preservation of transportation funding and support for local government resilience programs in the 2019 Oregon Legislative Session.

SUMMARY:

During the regular session, when the subject of proposed legislation is outside the scope of the policy statements, the City's legislative bill review process includes three primary steps: (1) the City's position on individual bills of interest is proposed by staff; (2) the proposed position is reviewed and deliberated by the Council Legislative Committee, and (3) recommended to the City Council for ratification at the next City Council meeting. Staff bring updates to the Council throughout the 2019 Legislative Session and provide a summary report at the Session's end.

FACTS AND FINDINGS:

Bills reviewed by the Legislative Committee on March 8, 2019, and recommended to the City Council are attached (Attachment 1). As positions are developed for individual bills, staff continue the use of the numbering and lettering system adopted during previous sessions: O for oppose; S for support.

Prioritization of the bill is based on level of impact and engagement of the City of Salem: (1) Very High Priority - Major fiscal or policy impact. Mayor, councilors, and/or staff should work to support or oppose the bill; and (2) High Priority - Moderate Impact. Staff should be involved in supporting or opposing the bill. Those bills of lower to no priority are watched for changes during the session and brought forward to the Legislative Committee and City Council, as needed, should amendments change their anticipated impact to the City of Salem.

At the March 8, 2019 Legislative Committee meeting, members considered three broad issues including:

- (1) a proposal to protect confidentiality of the victim and complainant in child abuse cases following the outcome of a recent court case;
- (2) initial concepts related to cap and invest legislation; and
- (3) bills designed to increase funding or extend incentives, create more affordable housing, and dedicate resources to continued analysis for affordable housing.

Positions on bills related to affordable housing are incorporated in the list of bills for the Council's consideration (Attachment 1).

In the cap and invest framework, a price is placed on carbon by requiring emitters of greenhouse gases to purchase a permit from the state for each metric ton of carbon-equivalent emitted. Revenue generated from the sale of these permits would be directed into investments in clean energy, carbon-reducing transportation projects, and transition assistance for low-income households. The Legislative Committee recommends staff advocate to ensure:

- Outcome of legislation should preserve transportation revenues generated through a carbon tax on the transportation fuels sector, and local governments should retain flexibility in use of the revenues to account for needs of local communities.
- Revenue from the purchase of allowances be invested in evidence-based technologies to reduce emissions from regulated sectors to help these sectors become more efficient over time and less carbon intensive.
- Additional revenues should be dedicated to support local governments in climate adaption and resilience, programs to further greenhouse gas emissions, and efforts to incent clean energy job creation and economic development opportunities.

The outcome of a recent court case has increased concerns about whether confidentiality of the victim and complainant in child abuse cases can be protected, which may discourage future reporting. Following the Committee's consideration, staff will explore legislative methods to ensure the confidentiality of the victim and complainant in child abuse cases is protected. This may be achieved by attaching the issue to an existing piece of legislation.

To continue a coordinated and unified response during the upcoming session, the Mayor and Councilor are asked to communicate the nature of their legislative contacts to staff via an email to Courtney Knox Busch (cbusch@cityofsalem.net). The email should identify the date of the legislative contact, the legislator(s) with whom contact was made, bill(s) discussed, and a summary of the position(s) and comments shared. Staff will forward the communication to the City's lobbyist, the Legislative Committee, and City Council as appropriate.

BACKGROUND:

The Oregon State Legislature convened in January 2019. Before any official representing the City of Salem can attempt to influence legislation on a particular matter, during the interim or a legislative session, the City Council must adopt an official position related to that matter. To make the best use of Council and staff resources, and position the City to respond more expeditiously to moving legislation, the Council approves policy statements which are intended to guide public officials and the City's contracted lobbyist in responding to and formulating positions on issues expected to come before the Oregon Legislature.

On July 23, 2018, the City Council approved Legislative priorities to guide interim and 2019 legislative activities, following review of the Council's Legislative Committee. The Legislative Committee is comprised of Mayor Bennett and Councilors Andersen, Hoy, and Nanke with Councilor Kaser serving as alternate.

The 2019 Session has begun and the Legislative Committee has approved the following policy priorities from which staff or Salem's lobbyist may advocate including the following:

- Drinking water protections
 - o Emergency preparedness and resiliency funding
 - o Additional funding support for Oregon Health Authority's drinking water program
- Municipal broadband
 - o Protecting City right to manage rights of way
 - o Preserving right to develop municipal broadband
- Funding for affordable housing
- Legislative fix following court ruling regarding stolen vehicles
- Increasing revenue options for local government: 9-1-1 and property tax reform
- Preservation of Urban Renewal authorities

The legislative policy statements (Attachment 2) address broad topics of economic development, financing and revenue, human resources, telecommunications, public safety and land use. Adoption of the attached policy statements provides the overarching framework for public officials and contracted lobbyists to officially represent the City on bills in the absence of a specific recommendation on a particular legislative bill.

Courtney Knox Busch
Strategic Initiatives Manager

Attachments:

1. 2018-2019 Legislative Policy Statements
2. Bills Reviewed by Legislative Committee - March 8, 2019