

MEMORANDUM

To: City Council Members
From: Communications & Public Affairs Director Randy Beehler
Subject: 2016 State Legislative Report
Date: Thursday, September 15th, 2016

Council members,

At a Yakima City Council study session conducted on Tuesday, August 30th, a request was made to provide Council members with a report regarding the status of legislation the City was actively pursuing, supporting, monitoring, or otherwise tracking during the 2016 session of the Washington State Legislature.

Attached is a "City of Yakima Detail Report" produced by City of Yakima Olympia lobbyist Jim Justin. The report was completed after the legislature completed its 60-day regular session. Also attached is a PowerPoint report produced by City of Yakima Olympia lobbyist Jennifer Ziegler summarizing the 2016 session. The legislature did reconvene for a special session from March 11th to March 29th of this year for the specific purpose of adopting a supplemental budget. Mrs. Ziegler's report was completed following adjournment of the special session. Additionally, a 2016 session recap written by Association of Washington Cities Government Relations Director Dave Williams is attached.

As the detail report, PowerPoint report, and session recap indicate, some of the items of interest to the City during the 2016 session ended up stalled at some point in the committee process, whether that be in the House or the Senate. Because the legislature was facing funding challenges related to court rulings concerning education investments, mental health care, etc. as well as record-setting wildfires, legislation related to projects and/or programs not directly related to education, mental health, etc. or wildfires faced a difficult uphill battle to make it through the legislature.

Local government did achieve some important success during the 2016 state legislative session. All major state-shared revenue sources were preserved, although a hoped-for elimination of the cap on liquor profits was not lifted by the legislature. Funding was restored to provide two additional training classes during 2016 at the state's Basic Law Enforcement Academy, but it its estimated eight more annual classes are needed to meet demand. At risk at one point, full funding for the Municipal Research Services Center was preserved.

On the downside, an additional \$154 million was swept from the Public Works Trust Fund, a funding source cities in general and the City of Yakima in specific have long relied on to assist in the building of critical local infrastructure. In previous sessions, \$77 million had been swept from the fund to pay other state government expenses. A work group authorized by the legislature is currently working on a recommendation regarding the future of the fund, which will be presented to the legislature during the 2017 session.

Progress was made during the 2016 session on some items of particular interest to the City, even though the legislature did not take final action on them. Progress was made regarding public records and police body cameras, and more work will be done on those issues during the 2017 session. Issues related to homelessness and affordable housing also gained traction during the 2016 session and will continue to be pursued during the upcoming session of the legislature.

Please let me know if you have any questions about the 2016 state legislative session. I can be contacted by phone (901-1142) or e-mail (randy.beehler@yakimawa.gov).