STATE LEGISLATIVE
AGENDA
2020
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As the Spokane area’s business development organization, GSI brings regional partners together to advocate for our community’s priorities with a strong, unified voice. Together, we have a greater voice for the future of our region.
Gathered from leaders and employers in business, education, health care, local and county governments and Fairchild Air Force Base, GSI’s 2020 State Legislative Agenda vocalizes prioritized issues for our region.

Based on feedback from a variety of constituencies, including our Board of Trustees, legislators and GSI’s Public Policy Council, there was a need to focus on a targeted list of employer issues that both support GSI's mission as a business development organization and impact our region's ability to sustain a healthy business climate. As a result, GSI categorizes its agenda into three parts: Drive, Partner and Support.

**CAPITAL PROJECTS:** GSI supports infrastructure investment that drives job creation and economic development throughout the county.

Issues that we **DRIVE** are GSI's top priorities, which means GSI – along with others in the community – will drive dialogue, advocacy, tracking, testimony, messaging and a variety of other support, including letter generation, mobilization, calls and in-person meetings with legislators.

Issues that we **PARTNER** on are the issues being driven by other organizations that align directly with GSI’s mission. We will work with these organizations, providing tracking and messaging for community leaders engaging directly on these topics.

Issues that we **SUPPORT** are broadly defined as community issues. We care deeply about these issues and provide messaging and advocacy support when asked, taking direction from community members on needed support.
POINT 09 – INVESTING IN WASHINGTON

- Pass SB 5899, which expands RCW 82.14.370, Sales and use tax for public facilities in rural counties to include border counties, which retains .09 percent sales and use tax dollars in the County to use for economic development purposes.

TRANSPORTATION

The Spokane region collaboratively developed a coordinated list of transportation projects of all types (safety, preservation, mobility, congestion, transit). We are committed to finding sustainable funding to invest, protect and maintain our system.

- As the existing multi-modal transportation system is a primary driver for the health of our region’s economy, rightly fund the maintenance and preservation needs in a long-term, sustainable manner.

- Protect committed funding and established timelines for transportation infrastructure projects of all types: safety, preservation, mobility, congestion, transit.

- Authorize local transportation funding mechanisms to create sustainable solutions for bridging the funding gap.

- Preserve programs with a primary mission of investing in community-level transportation projects, including Freight Mobility Strategic Investment Board (FMSIB), Transportation Improvement Board (TIB), County Road Administration Board (CRAB) and Community Economic Revitalization Board (CERB).

HOUSING REFORM

- To facilitate additional condominium growth, GSI supports revisiting SB 5219 to exempt smaller condominium developments from implied warranties.

- Support new legislation to include “permanently affordable housing” as a qualifying public improvement under the Tax Increment Financing (TIF) local infrastructure housing tool and Local Revitalization Financing (LRF), which creates another financing tool to purchase land and construct affordable housing.

NURSE LICENSURE

- Pass legislation to add Washington State to the Nurse Licensure Compact (NLC), providing the opportunity for nurses in participating states to practice in all compact states under multi-state privileges authorized by the nurse’s state of residence.
BUSINESS CLIMATE

Tax fairness & predictability
• Enable business community dialogue around proposed tax increases – including capital gains – that may adversely affect an employers’ ability to remain a healthy and viable business in our region.

Regulatory Reform
• Support passage of SHB 1590, which allows city and county legislative authorities to use a new financing tool to pass a local sales and use tax of up to .1 percent to use for housing and mental and behavioral health treatment services.

Economic Development Investment
• Build on 2019 legislative investment and move to restore ADO funding from $3.3 million to $4.3 million per year, funded by the General Fund, for regional capacity to coordinate and deliver economic development services.

• Support to raise the $2 limit on the Tourism Promotion Areas (TPAs), which would allow communities to determine the appropriate level of funding needed to advance economic development opportunities through tourism.

• Restore the Economic Development Strategic Reserve Fund (SRF), which was reduced $2 million in the 2019 session.

• Support broadband capacity initiatives and investment with fully funding the State Broadband Office.

Workforce
• Support pathways to allow students a successful transition from high school to higher education to career and technical education.

• Reauthorize the Joint Center for Aerospace Technology Innovation (JCATI), which supports economic development and job creation in the state’s aerospace industry through collaborative research between business and academic partners.

EDUCATION

Early Learning
• Support access to childcare by increasing Working Connections Child Care subsidy rates, particularly for infants and toddlers, and align 12-month authorization for Working Connections Child Care for all eligible families.

K-12
• Adjust the regionalization factors to eliminate inequities that adversely affect property-poor districts in our region.

• Support school facilities by updating the funding formulas to reflect actual construction costs and creating policy to allow school district bonds to be passed at a percentage less than the current 60 percent threshold.

College Readiness & Post-Secondary Access
• Support expansion of MESA to 11th and 12th grade, connecting 9th and 10th graders to college-level programming.

• Additional funding for College Success Foundation to expand high school programming and its college advising and support programs.
HIGHER EDUCATION
- Protect state funding supporting 60 University of Washington medical school students (per class) in partnership with Gonzaga University. The new medical education building (funded with private development partners), will facilitate future growth of the medical school.
- Protect and reaffirm the legislature’s commitment to affordability in the post-secondary system to maintain university affordability by keeping tuition reasonable and stable.

HEALTH CARE
- Address the needs of long-length-of-stay patients by passing legislation and budget to remove some of the barriers to being able to safely release patients from the hospital who no longer have a medical need to be in the hospital.
- Add two new psychiatric residency slots at Providence Sacred Heart in partnership with the University of Washington.

COMMUNITY PROJECTS
- Fully fund the Washington State Department of Licensing to both increase the public’s awareness about and to equip and train staff for the issuance of Enhanced Driver’s Licenses for citizens traveling with a Washington State driver’s license.
- Support the Northwest Museum of Arts and Culture's (the MAC) request for $333,000 to reinstate Director of Exhibitions and Program Director positions and to replace outdated software and hardware.
- Support SB 5748, which provides a process to secure capital investment for Washington’s military communities to address encroachment and other BRAC-related issues.
- Request funding for Indigent Defense, which is the single most important action the State can take to lessen the financial burden on Spokane County.
- Spokane Airports seeks state support of $500,000 of the total $1 million to improve the entrance to Felts Field, enhance wayfinding and improve overall safety and aesthetics.
- Fund cost to reopen the Euclid railroad bridge, which is closed for safety reasons and impacts the operations of the 336th Survival, Evasion, Resistance and Escape (SERE) Training Group at Fairchild Air Force Base and the emergency response times and quality of life for local residents.
• Allocate $7.8 million to the Pines Road/BNSF Grade Separation project through the Bridging the Valley project.

• Invest $413,000 to install a water line to Sullivan Park in the Spokane Valley.

• The Spokane PFD requests $1 million to complete and finalize funding for the Spokane Sportsplex, which is an integral element of economic development and is expected to provide direct economic impact to the Spokane region from major national sporting events and related spending.

• Spokane International Airport requests $1.5 million to fund Phase II of the rail truck and transload infrastructure, which includes a .2-mile access road.

• Spokane International Airport seeks state support of $5 million of the total $16.4 million for safety improvements along U.S. Hwy 2 and realigning Spotted Road.

• Spokane International Airport requests $30 million of an estimated $152 million for the airport’s expansion and modernization project due to a lack of funding and the inability to raise the cap on the Passenger Facility Charge (PFC).
ABOUT GREATER SPOKANE INC.’S WORK IN PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Greater Spokane Inc. is the Spokane region’s business development organization. GSI works year-round with business, civic, and community partners to provide a GREATER VOICE on behalf of employers and the community at the local, state, and federal level.

STATE GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS REPRESENTING SPOKANE

Jay Inslee
Washington State Governor (D)

Andy Billig
3rd District
Senator (D)

Mike Padden
4th District
Senator (R)

Jeff Holy
6th District
Senator (R)

Shelly Short
7th District
Senator (R)

Mark Schoesler
9th District
Senator (R)

Timm Ormsby
3rd District
Representative (D)

Bob McCaslin
4th District
Representative (R)

Jenny Graham
6th District
Representative (R)

Joel Kretz
7th District
Representative (R)

Mary Dye
9th District
Representative (R)

Marcus Riccelli
3rd District
Representative (D)

Matt Shea
4th District
Representative (R)

Mike Volz
6th District
Representative (R)

Jacquelin Maycumber
7th District
Representative (R)

Joe Schmick
9th District
Representative (R)