



## 2021 SESSION – GENERAL LEGISLATIVE RECAP

### WEEK OF APRIL 10, 2021

This is the **90<sup>th</sup>** day of the **105-day** session.  
We are only 15 days away from the end of the first virtual Legislative Session.

This **Sunday April 11 at 5:00 p.m.** is the cutoff for bills to **pass out of the Opposite House** and finally the **last day** of the 2021 legislative session is on **Sunday, April 25**. From April 12 to April 25 the Operating, Capital and Transportation budgets will be further negotiated and finalized, and bills will be concurred that passed with amendments in the opposite House.

Bills that are concerned NTIB, or "needed to implement budget," which fiscal bills often are, then such legislation can still come up for a hearing at any time.

### INSLEE UPDATES HEALTHY WASHINGTON CRITERIA FOR COUNTY PHASES

#### Inslee Updates Healthy Washington Criteria for County Phases

On Friday, April 9<sup>th</sup>, Governor Jay Inslee gave an [update](#) on his criteria for county phases in regards to COVID-19. Currently, counties are individually evaluated every three weeks. The first evaluation occurs on Monday, April 12<sup>th</sup> and changes to a county's phase status would take effect Friday, April 16<sup>th</sup>. In addition to being individually evaluated, large and small counties have different sets of appropriate criteria based on case counts and hospitalizations.

Now, in advance of each county's evaluation on Monday to determine its phase, the governor has proclaimed that **in order to move down one phase a county must fail both metrics for case counts and hospitalizations**. Under the previous plan, a county only needed to fail one metric to move back one phase.

Governor Inslee stated, *“Given the incredible progress on vaccinations and our focus protecting people from severe illness, we believe analyzing and requiring both metrics together is the right approach to make sure we’re considering the connection between COVID cases and our medical system and hospitalizations.”*

## ADDRESSING THE STATE V. BLAKE DECISION

[SB 5476](#) is one of many bills introduced in response to the Washington State Supreme Court's February decision, *State v. Blake* which was the ruling that struck down the law criminalizing drug possession in Washington State. A public hearing was held on April 5<sup>th</sup> in Senate Ways and Means with executive action scheduled for April 10<sup>th</sup>.

This bill will establish personal use amounts for controlled substances and removes criminal penalties for the possession of a controlled or counterfeit substance or a legend drug that does not exceed the personal use amount. It also authorizes law enforcement to refer individuals possessing a personal use amount of a controlled substance, counterfeit substance, or legend drug to a forensic navigator for the purpose of evaluation and treatment.

## INCREASING HOUSING SUPPLY

Freshman Representative Jessica Bateman's [HB 1157](#) passed off the House Floor last Sunday, March 28<sup>th</sup> with a 93-4 vote. This is the bill that authorizes counties and cities to establish a real estate excise tax density incentive zone within urban growth areas and provides for the distribution of state real estate excise tax revenues within such incentive zones.

A qualified residential dwelling is either an individual residential dwelling unit or a residential building of two or more dwelling units constructed within an incentive zone that achieves a net increase in the total number of residential dwelling units compared to the maximum number of residential dwelling units that could have been built prior to the adoption of zoning and development regulations creating the incentive zone. To be included as qualified residential dwelling units, the units must be restricted from being offered as short-term rentals for more than 30 days a year for the first 15 years after construction, and the county or city must determine how the residential dwelling units are to be restricted from being short-term rentals within their respective jurisdictions.

This bill is moving fairly quickly as we head into the final stretch of session. It was heard in Senate Ways and Means on April 5<sup>th</sup> and is scheduled for executive session on April 10<sup>th</sup>.

