



STATE OF WASHINGTON
— OFFICE OF GOVERNOR JAY INSLEE —

March 29, 2024

To the Honorable President and Members,
The Senate of the State of Washington

Ladies and Gentlemen:

I am returning herewith, without my approval as to Sections 114(10), 133(22), 222(27), 223(1)(k), 223(1)(l), 223(2)(v), 311(32), 522(3)(y), 602(105), 118(3), 202(33), 302(70), 502(4) and 507(11), Engrossed Substitute Senate Bill No. 5950 entitled:

"AN ACT Relating to fiscal matters."

Section 114(10), page 23, Office of Public Defense, Pilot of Social Service Workers for Child Welfare Cases

This section directs the Office of Public Defense to contract for a social service workers pilot program to provide support and advocacy to indigent parents in dependency and termination cases. This pilot is duplicative of the casework currently performed by social workers at the Department of Children, Youth, and Families. This duplication may confuse and delay family participation in the services and supports needed to ensure safe and timely reunification. For these reasons, I have vetoed Section 114(10).

Section 133(22), pages 174-175, Office of Financial Management, Elections Staff Study

This section directs the Office of Financial Management to conduct a study related to the hiring and retention of county elections staff, including staff members of a county auditor's office. In addition to inadequate funding, this proviso is administratively burdensome for the Secretary of State's Office and local elections offices especially during a presidential election year. It also does not provide sufficient time for this comprehensive study to be completed. For these reasons, I have vetoed Section 133(22).

Section 222(27), page 463, Department of Health, Climate Commitment Act Funding for Environmental Justice Council

This section increases funding to implement the Healthy Environment for All (HEAL) Act at the Department of Health by \$1.2 million. Language is also added that stops access to the new and existing funds if Initiative 2117 is approved by the voters. By vetoing this proviso, the department will retain the use of its original appropriation regardless of the outcome of the ballot measure. For these reasons, I have vetoed Section 222(27).

However, in recognition of the importance of this work, I encourage the Department of Health and the Environmental Justice Council, to the extent possible, to begin the enhanced activities intended with the supplemental funding.

Section 223(1)(k), pages 499-501, Department of Corrections, Healthcare and Solitary Studies

This section directs the Department of Corrections to complete two reports: (1) a study of existing health care response with a proposed staffing model to ensure a 48-hour maximum response time, and (2) a review of solitary confinement including information about the amount of time individuals spend inside and outside their cells. The funding is insufficient to produce the reports, and much of the information about solitary confinement conditions and resource needs is already included in the department's 2023 Solitary Confinement Transformation Plan. We are making consistent investments to reduce the use of solitary confinement and to alleviate its known negative impacts. For these reasons, I have vetoed Section 223(1)(k).

However, because the health of individuals in the care of the state is so important, I am directing the Department of Corrections to assess medical request response times for incarcerated individuals and to request funding in the next budget to address outcomes from this assessment.

Section 223(1)(l), pages 501-502, Department of Corrections, Staffing Review

This section directs the Department of Corrections to post monthly detailed staffing data to its external website and provide additional justification when making budget requests for additional funding and positions. This proviso is administratively burdensome. The department complies with existing requirements related to staffing information and budget requests. For these reasons, I have vetoed Section 223(1)(l).

Section 223(2)(v), page 507, Department of Corrections, Juvenile Points Review

This section directs the Department of Corrections to review the conviction records of all offenders in confinement as of April 1, 2024 to determine whether juvenile convictions increased the person's offender score. The department would also be required to provide the information to the offenders' counties. The department does not have the legal expertise and access to court records necessary to make this determination for all individuals in confinement. In addition, the timeline and funding provided are insufficient. For these reasons, I have vetoed Section 223(2)(v). However, I support continued efforts to ensure incarcerated individuals who were sentenced under laws that have since changed to have access to a resentencing review.

Section 311(32), pages 643-644, Department of Agriculture, Review of Department of Health Commercial Shellfish Fees

This section requires the Department of Agriculture to review how the Department of Health establishes commercial shellfish regulatory fees. The section is similar to a Department of Health proviso to review the same regulatory fees. The approach established in Section 222 (132) is preferable because it provides more prescriptive language, directs the fee assessment to be completed by an independent third party, and includes funding for a LEAN management review of the shellfish licensing and certification program. For these reasons, I have vetoed Section 311(32).

Section 522(3)(y), page 742, Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, Sexual Assault Training

While the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction and I fully support this policy, it was inadvertently added to the budget twice, once in Section 127 and again in Section 522. Vetoing this duplicate appropriation will not impact the grant program and will keep the appropriation to the Department of Commerce intact. For this reason, I have vetoed Section 522(3)(y).

Section 602(105), page 793, University of Washington, Ranked Choice Voting Study

This section requires the University of Washington Evans School of Public Policy and Governance to conduct a study on ranked choice voting and to provide guidance for implementation by local jurisdictions by June 1, 2025. In addition to inadequate funding, not enough time is provided for local elections staff, who may be tasked as subject matter experts, to be able to properly dedicate the time that this comprehensive study would require, especially in a presidential election year. For this reason, I have vetoed Section 602(105).

The following sections provide funding to agencies to implement bills which did not pass the Legislature. Because the funding has lapsed, I have vetoed Section 118(3), Section 202(33), Section 302(70), Section 502(4), and Section 507(11).

Section 118(3), pages 33-34, Public Disclosure Commission, Second Engrossed Substitute Senate Bill 5284, Campaign Finance Disclosure

Section 202(33), page 244, Department of Social and Health Services, Engrossed Substitute Senate Bill 5690, Conditional Release Transition Teams

Section 302(70), page 595, Department of Ecology, Engrossed Substitute Senate Bill 6061, Exemptions for Housing Development/SEPA

Section 502(4), page 677, Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, Substitute House Bill 1915, Financial Education Instruction

Section 507(11), page 701, Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, Engrossed Substitute Senate Bill 6031, Student Transportation Allocation

For these reasons I have vetoed Sections 114(10), 133(22), 222(27), 223(1)(k), 223(1)(l), 223(2)(v), 311(32), 522(3)(y), 602(105), 118(3), 202(33), 302(70), 502(4) and 507(11) of Engrossed Substitute Senate Bill No. 5950.

With the exception of Sections 114(10), 133(22), 222(27), 223(1)(k), 223(1)(l), 223(2)(v), 311(32), 522(3)(y), 602(105), 118(3), 202(33), 302(70), 502(4) and 507(11), Engrossed Substitute Senate Bill No. 5950 is approved.

ESSB 5950
January 9, 2025
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Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jay Inslee". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "J" and a long, sweeping underline.

Jay Inslee
Governor