



2021 SESSION – GENERAL LEGISLATIVE RECAP

WEEK OF FEBRUARY 12, 2021

This is the **33rd day** of the **105-day** session.

Monday, February 15 will be the first cutoff date of the 2021 session. It will be the **last day to pass bills out of committee and in house of origin**, except for House fiscal committees, Senate Ways & Means, and Transportation Committees. **Monday, February 22** is the cutoff of bills to pass the fiscal committees and **Tuesday, March 9** is the House of Origin cutoff, where bills must be voted out of the House and Senate.

Below is a summary of what occurred this week for your general update.

UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE BILL FIRST BILL SIGNED INTO LAW IN 2021 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The **first bill** of the 2021 Legislative Session **signed into law**, [ESSB 5061](#), lowers the immediate unemployment tax hit on businesses, and spreads those tax increases over the next five years. Total relief from taxes is about \$1.7 billion. This bill received bipartisan support and passed the Senate 42-7 and in the House 89-8. The Governor signed ESSB 5061 into law on February 8th and it took effect that same day. Governor Inslee stated right after signing the bill, “We just made some good law in the state of Washington.”

ELECTION OFFICIAL HARASSMENT

Senator Frockt prime sponsored [SB 5148](#), which **elevates the crime of harassment to a Class C felony** when the **harassment is directed at an election official** with the **Secretary of State or county auditor's office**. Election official includes any staff member of the office of the Secretary of State or staff member of the county auditor's office, regardless of whether the member is employed on a temporary or part-time basis, whose duties relate to voter registration or the processing of votes. Secretary of State Kim Wyman testified in support citing violence and harassment increasing tremendously across the nation during the 2020 elections. The bill passed out of Senate Law and Justice earlier this week with a unanimous vote and now sits in Rules.

UNIVERSAL HEALTH CARE COMMISSION

On February 8th, [SB 5399](#) received a Public Hearing in Senate Health and Longtime Care and two days later on February 10th it was passed out with a 7-4 party line vote. As the name suggests, this bill would **establish the universal health care commission**, which is spurred from the work of the universal health care work group from 2019. This commission would be tasked with developing a plan to be implemented by 2026, that provides comprehensive, equitable, and affordable health care coverage under a publicly financed and privately and publicly delivered health care system to all state residents. SB 5399 is now sitting in Senate Ways & Means Committee.

CYBER SECURITY

Senator Carlyle prime sponsored [SB 5432](#) (also a Governor's request bill) would create the Office of Cybersecurity (OCS) within the Office of the Chief Information Officer. The primary duties of the OCS are specified in the language, such as establishing security standards and policies and developing a centralized cybersecurity protocol for managing state IT assets. The OCS, in collaboration with the Office of Privacy and Data Protection and the Office of the Attorney General, shall research existing best practices for data governance and data protection, including model terms for data sharing contracts, and submit a report to the Legislature by December 1, 2021. SB 5432 passed out of Senate Environment, Energy & Technology on February 11th with Senator Eriksen being the lone no vote.

