

2021-22_House Standing Committees/Issue Areas

Please note: This is a general description of issue areas considered by committees; not a definitive or exhaustive listing. It is provided solely to assist the public in understanding the general roles of House committees.

Appropriations

The House Appropriations Committee considers the operating budget bill and related legislation; budget processes; and fiscal issues such as pension policy and compensation. The committee also considers bills with operating budget fiscal impacts.

Capital Budget

The House Capital Budget Committee considers the state capital budget which approves money for the construction and repair of public buildings and for other long-term investments, such as land acquisitions and transfers. In addition, the committee considers grants and loans to local governments or nonprofit organizations for infrastructure, broadband, housing, and cultural and heritage facilities. The committee also considers bills relating to public works contracting; state buildings and land; and the authorization of state debt.

Children, Youth & Families

The House Children, Youth & Families Committee considers a broad array of issues and services affecting children and families, including early learning; child care; child and youth development; child welfare services; children's mental health; at-risk and homeless youth; and juvenile justice.

Civil Rights & Judiciary

The House Civil Rights & Judiciary Committee considers a wide variety of legal issues, including constitutional law; privacy rights; anti-discrimination measures; commercial law; torts; probate; guardianships; civil commitment; forensic mental health; firearms; and eminent domain. The committee also considers issues relating to courts and judicial administration; and family law issues such as marriage, marriage dissolution, child support and adoption.

College & Workforce Development

The House College & Workforce Development Committee considers issues relating to the state's public and independent baccalaureate colleges and universities; public community and technical colleges; and private career schools. Issues include governance and coordination of higher education; financial aid; tuition; distance learning; workforce development and lifelong learning; apprenticeships; and the licensing of private colleges and career schools.

Commerce & Gaming

The House Commerce & Gaming Committee considers issues relating to the regulation of commerce in alcohol, tobacco and cannabis, as well as issues relating to the regulation and oversight of gaming, including tribal compacts.

Community & Economic Development

The House Community & Economic Development Committee considers issues relating to community development; community investment programs; and underrepresented communities. The committee also considers issues relating to economic development and economic resiliency, including small business assistance; business financing; international trade; tourism; parks and recreation; telecommunications; and broadband; as well as emergency preparedness, response and resiliency.

Consumer Protection & Business

The House Consumer Protection & Business Committee considers consumer protection issues and the licensing and regulation of businesses and professions (except for health care and law-related professions). The committee also considers issues relating to the activities of the Office of the Insurance Commissioner and the Pollution Liability Insurance Agency; the solvency of insurance companies; and the rates and practices of insurance companies. Financial services issues include the safety and soundness of state banks and credit unions; the regulation of consumer credit and lending; and the regulation of securities and investments.

Education

The House Education Committee considers issues relating to kindergarten through twelfth grade (K-12) education.

Environment & Energy

The House Environment & Energy Committee considers issues relating to air quality; aquatic lands; oil spill prevention; solid waste; hazardous waste; toxics; climate change; energy; Puget Sound; and land use impacts to environmental quality.

Finance

The House Finance Committee considers issues relating to state and local revenues, such as increases or decreases in taxes; exemptions from taxes; and changes in the administration of taxes. (Note: Issues involving revenue for transportation purposes, such as gasoline taxes, are usually considered by the House Transportation Committee.)

Health Care & Wellness

The House Health Care & Wellness Committee considers a broad range of issues relating to the provision of physical and behavioral health care services; long-term care; and strategies to promote better health. Health care service issues include the licensing and regulation of health care facilities and the credentialing of health care providers. The committee also regulates pharmacies and pharmaceutical drugs, and has oversight and regulatory responsibility for state public health programs. The committee also considers issues relating to the accessibility and affordability of health care in both the private health insurance market and public health programs such as Medicaid and the state health exchange.

Housing, Human Services & Veterans

The House Housing, Human Services & Veterans Committee considers a broad array of issues relating to housing, including the accessibility and affordability of housing; landlord-tenant law; homelessness; farmworker housing; manufactured housing; housing authorities; and the Housing Finance Commission. The committee also considers issues relating to housing assistance, economic assistance programs; developmental disabilities; and veterans' programs.

Labor & Workplace Standards

The House Labor & Workplace Standards Committee considers issues relating to industrial insurance; unemployment compensation; collective bargaining; family leave; safety and health standards; occupational health; and employment standards such as wage laws and employment discrimination. The committee also considers issues relating to the building and construction trades.

Local Government

The House Local Government Committee considers a broad array of issues relating to local government entities, including the structure, governance, and operations of counties, cities, and special purpose districts; local government procurement standards; local government open meeting and public records obligations; and the administration of local land use, zoning, building, energy, and health codes.

Public Safety

The House Public Safety Committee considers a broad array of issues relating to the criminal legal system, including policing; crisis response; crime prevention; criminal penalties and sentencing; impaired driving; adult correctional programs, including rehabilitation and reentry; and adult correctional institutions. The committee also considers issues relating to the registration and civil commitment of sex offenders.

Rules

The House Rules Committee considers all bills reported from policy and fiscal committees and determines whether, and in what order, to schedule their consideration on the floor of the House. The Rules Committee also reviews, adopts and schedules consideration of floor resolutions.

Rural Development, Agriculture, & Natural Resources

The House Rural Development, Agriculture, & Natural Resources Committee considers issues relating to agricultural production, marketing, and sales; food policy; animal and plant disease control; fisheries and wildlife; forest practices and forest fire protection; water; mining; and rural economic development and resiliency. The committee also considers the management of certain state-owned lands.

State Government & Tribal Relations

The House State Government & Tribal Relations Committee considers a broad array of issues relating to state government, including state agency structure; rulemaking; procurement standards; performance audits; state information technology; and public employment. The committee also considers issues relating to elections; campaign finance; public disclosure; ethics in government; and the government-to-government relationship of the state and Indian tribes.

Transportation

The House Transportation Committee considers the transportation budget; revenue sources for transportation funding; and issues relating to transportation policy and transportation agencies, including the Department of Transportation and the Washington State Patrol.