

AG's law enforcement bills still alive - for now

Local News

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OLYMPIA, Wash. - Washington State Attorney General Rob McKenna's law enforcement bills have survived the first major hurdle of the 2010 legislative process.

The AG's proposals to update the state's domestic violence protections, restrict access to child pornography to fight child sexual abuse and assault, and bolster protections for seniors facing physical abuse or financial exploitation have all received enough support to continue past the Legislature's first committee cut-off date.

"I'm grateful that even in the toughest of years, lawmakers recognize the need to protect the vulnerable," McKenna said. "Kids who are sexually assaulted, victims of domestic violence and seniors facing physical or financial exploitation can't afford to wait for a better budget year."

McKenna added that he's grateful to legislators, both Democrat and Republican alike, who have sponsored his bills, and thanks the chairpersons who sped the bills through their committees. Those committee chairs include:

- Rep. Jeannie Darneille, D-Tacoma, who took executive action yesterday on the AG's [domestic violence bill](#), where it was unanimously passed out of her Government Appropriations Committee.
- Sen. Margarita Prentice, D- Renton, who expedited the domestic violence [bill](#) through her Senate Ways & Means Committee. The AG's domestic violence [bills](#), which get tougher on repeat, felony abusers, are prime-sponsored by Sen. Dale Brandland, R-Bellingham, and Rep. Kirk Pearson, R-Monroe.
- Sen. Adam Kline, D-Seattle, for adopting the language from the AG's bill restricting child pornography into a new bill, and sending that [bill](#) through his Judiciary Committee. AG McKenna's proposal upgrades the state's ability to combat the rape and molestation of children by pursuing abusers who photograph or video-record their crimes, and the underground market that trades in the resulting images.
- Sen. James Hargrove, D-Hoquiam, for sponsoring the AG's [bill](#) to streamline the state's ability to protect seniors and the disabled from physical abuse or financial exploitation — and for sending the legislation through his Senate Human Services & Corrections Committee.

AG McKenna is also pleased that his consumer protection bills have made it through the committee process so far. A [fix](#) to the state's Lemon Law and a [bill](#) combating foreclosure scammers will both advance to the next phase of the legislative session.

On a less positive note, two bills to protect property owners were not allowed to receive a public hearing and are dead for the year.

"I regret that even though our eminent domain bills are supported by legislators across the

political spectrum – from urban Democrats to Eastern Washington Republicans – those bills weren't allowed to receive public hearings," said McKenna.

One of McKenna's property rights bills ([HB 2425/SB 6200](#)), would prohibit the taking of people's homes or businesses for economic development – for example, to build a mall or a hotel. The other, ([HB 2423/SB 6199](#)), reforms the state's Community Renewal Law to restrict government's ability to label entire neighborhoods as "blighted" in order to sell them to a private developer.

The property rights bills had widespread support among both parties. HB 2425, for example, has 14 co-sponsors from each party.

The next major legislative deadline is Feb. 16.

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