

CHRISTINE O. GREGOIRE
Governor



STATE OF WASHINGTON
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

P.O. Box 40002 · Olympia, Washington 98504-0002 · (360) 753-6780 · www.governor.wa.gov

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To the Honorable Speaker and Members,
The House of Representatives of the State of Washington

Ladies and Gentlemen:

I am returning, without my approval as to Section 2, Second Substitute House Bill 1656 entitled:

"AN ACT Relating to establishing a Puget Sound scientific research account."

This legislation creates a new Puget Sound research account, and assigns tasks to the Puget Sound Leadership Council created in Engrossed Second Substitute Senate Bill 5372 (Puget Sound Partnership bill).

Section 2 of Second Substitute House Bill No. 1656 would assign to the Puget Sound Leadership Council the responsibility for identifying research gaps, and for competitive selection, prioritization, peer review, and funding for science projects. However, several of these responsibilities are assigned to the Puget Sound science panel created in the Puget Sound Partnership bill.

The Puget Sound Partnership will be a new agency with many challenging tasks and issues related to Puget Sound restoration. Good science is fundamental to the Partnership's success. Inconsistent responsibility assignments for scientific research would complicate the agency's ability to establish and carry out a sound, efficient science program.

I can see the value to the Puget Sound restoration effort of having a separate account for expenditures related to scientific research. As a result, I direct the Puget Sound Partnership to work with the Legislature to develop a legislative proposal for consideration during the 2008 session that harmonizes the remaining provisions of Second Substitute House Bill 1656 with those contained in Engrossed Substitute Senate Bill 5372.

For these reasons, I am vetoing Section 2 of Second Substitute House Bill 1656.

With the exception of Section 2, Second Substitute House Bill 1656 is approved.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/
Christine O. Gregoire
Governor