

# Pay raises coming, a vote on vehicle pursuit reform may not

It's Day 33. Here's what's happening in the 2023 session of the Washington Legislature

By [Jerry Cornfield](#)

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## 2023 Washington Legislature, Day 33 of 105

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OLYMPIA, Feb. 10, 2023 — It's Friday. Ring up another week.

Lawmakers are smiling, looking forward to the weekend, possibly pondering a menu for the Super Bowl.

They may also be happy because they will get a 4 percent raise July 1 to push their base annual salary to \$60,191. Gov. Jay Inslee along with statewide executives and Supreme Court justices are getting pay hikes too.

A citizen salary-setting panel on Wednesday approved across-the-board increases for elected members of the state's executive, legislative and judicial branches of 4 percent in 2023 and 3 percent in 2024.

Some jobs are getting even larger hikes courtesy of the Washington Citizens' Commission on Salaries for Elected Officials.

Attorney General Bob Ferguson will get another 3 percent this July. Justices and judges will get an additional 3 percent this year and 2 percent in 2024 for a collective 12 percent rise in the next two years.

And the panel decided the secretary of state and state auditor should be paid the same as insurance commissioner. For Auditor Pat McCarthy it's an 8.3 percent bump and for Secretary of State Steve Hobbs it is a notch above 6 percent.

Here's [the chart](#) with the adopted salary schedules.

**A nickname for all?**

Many refer to Washington as the “The Evergreen State.” Maybe this year the Legislature will pass a law to make the nickname official.

Senate Bill 5595 would do that. Forty of 49 senators are signed on. And it glided out of the Senate State Government and Elections Committee on Friday morning.

“This is a rare opportunity to have a fun bill. And an important bill,” Sen. Jeff Wilson, R-Longview, the bill’s lead sponsor, said prior to the vote.

Sen. Sam Hunt, D-Olympia, the committee chair, concurred. “How can we vote against the Evergreen State?” he said.

Ask House Democrats.

When the Senate approved a similar bill 48-0 last session, it seemed destined for the finish line. It never made it, dying in House Rules Committee.

### **On the clock: vehicle pursuit**

Odds are slim the bill rewriting the state’s vehicle pursuit will emerge from the House Community Safety, Justice and Reentry Committee before next Friday’s cut-off.

But they aren’t quite done. Rep. Roger Goodman, D-Kirkland, the committee chair, penciled it in for possible action next Tuesday and Thursday, the last two meetings before cut-off.

There are 9 committee members and a majority must back House Bill 1363 to move it out. That’s the basic math.

It’s the political math that counts. There are 6 Democrats and 3 Republicans. Goodman needs to know at least five Democrats will support the bill before it gets a vote.

You may wonder why can’t it be passed by the Republicans plus two Democrats on the committee who are bill co-sponsors, Reps. Lauren Davis and Tarra Simmons? It certainly could but most would be shocked if it did.

Deciding what legislation advances is a huge perk of power for a majority party. Goodman’s hands seem tied until it’s clear the panel’s Democrats are fully on board. They’re not today.

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