

## Session ends on time, special session may be needed.

The 2009 legislative session ended Monday morning at 12:58 AM. Thank you for being part of the Mount Vernon Chamber network. Your e-mails, letters and calls to state lawmakers throughout the 105 day session made a difference. Together, the chambers across the state along with our partners sent over 4,500 letters to legislators asking them to support Washington business and legislation that impacts the health of the private sector. Enterprise Washington's GROW Program was an invaluable tool for our members and for the chamber staff. As only one part of the broader business community, GROW worked together with other business organizations and local chambers across from the state to speak with one voice about what helps Washington businesses keep the doors open in a tough economy.

While legislators did finish the session with the majority of work complete, there are still some loose ends. In yesterday's press conference, Governor Gregoire said that she would call a special session to give legislators the chance to address unfinished "budget items", only if legislative leaders are in agreement. She said she will not call a special session only to debate.

Below, please find a recap of the legislation the chamber followed during this session. Legislators heard from you and it's because of your voice, that we as a private sector were effective. Thank you again!

Paul Pickering, GAC Chair  
Whitener, President/CEO  
Max Dales Steak & Chop house  
Vernon Chamber of Commerce

Kristen  
Mount

[Take Action!: Thank your legislators for their hard work.](#)

## Legislative Results for Business 2009:

### **Budget: Responsible Budget & No New Tax Hikes:**

With such large budget deficits looming over this year's session, Washington's business community communicated a clear message that this was not the time for new taxes. The GROW network sent over **2,500 letters to legislators** to encourage responsible state budgeting.

### **Cap & Trade, [SB 5735](#): DIED IN SENATE RULES.**

Cap & trade legislation would have been very expensive and left Washington's businesses at a competitive disadvantage in the nation. If

taken up in a special session, it could move fast through the Senate and be signed into law very quickly.

**Employee Free Choice Act or Employer Gag Rule, [HB 1528](#) / [SB 5446](#) : LEGISLATION DIED, PULLED BY LEADERSHIP.**

The most harmful legislation to be introduced in state legislature this year, was also the most contentious. These union backed bills would have silenced employers during union organizing campaigns and denied employees a secret ballot when the work force voted on forming a union.

**Extending Taxing Authority to Counties, [SB 5433](#): PASSED BOTH HOUSES.**

The original piece of legislation was opposed by the business community, but through the process our legislators amended the legislation, taking out bad business provisions.

**Gas Tax, [HB 1614](#) : DIED IN THE SENATE.**

A proposed fee that would have resulted in a 4 cent/gallon tax at the pumps never left the Senate Way & Means committee after passing out of the House.

**Retro-Insurance, [ESSB 6035](#) : DIED BEFORE THE HOUSE FLOOR, DID NOT MAKE LEGISLATIVE CUT OFF.**

This legislation would have added unnecessary reporting and administrative costs and would have imposed unconstitutional limits on the use of member refunds.

**State Sponsored 401 K plans: [SB 5791](#): DIED IN SENATE RULES.**

This legislation that would have required employers to offer state run savings plans to employees.

**Tax Hikes on Restaurants: [SB 6119](#): NOT PASSED.**

This legislation would have added \$72M in costs to the 12,500 restaurants in our state through an added liquor taxes.

**Unemployment Insurance: [SB 5963](#): PASSED.**

After several contentious votes, the state legislature finally passed a good version of UI legislation that was necessary to bring Washington State into compliance with federal regulations. The bill has been delivered to the Governor for signature.