

This is KPTZ 91.9 FM in Port Townsend, Washington. I'm Diane Walker with your local news and commentary for Thursday, November 14, 2024.

The Port Townsend *Leader* reports that Port Townsend Mayor David Faber has been vindicated on claims he violated city and state ethics rules, following a November 4 ruling from Phil Olbrechts, the city's ethics hearing officer. "Judgement is rendered in favor of Mayor Faber," Olbrechts wrote. "No violations of the City of Port Townsend ethics code are found." Faber is quoted as saying that Crystal Cox's ethics complaint was without merit, and that it was a spurious attempt to attack his credibility because Cox was angry with him for rising to the defense of a transgender teen in 2022. He vowed to continue fighting for the dignity of everyone in our community, saying he would not be cowed by threats, lawsuits, or other forms of negative attention.

The *Leader* also reports that the Port Townsend City Council has unanimously approved a one percent increase to its property tax levy. The increase will bring in \$25,989 for the city's general fund and \$12,190 for its library levy, according to Jodi Adams, the city's financial director. "The increase is just taking the tiniest bite toward trying to keep up with inflation at the city level," according to Port Townsend Mayor David Faber. "Our budget is dependent on us approving this."

For those who are watching the actions of our president-elect, the *Washington State Standard* has suggested four policy areas where Trump-backed plans could have an effect in Washington.

The first is immigration: Washington is home to an estimated 246,000 immigrants (<https://www.migrationpolicy.org/data/ unauthorized-immigrant-population/state/WA>) who are in the U.S. without legal authorization and about 13,500 people (<https://www.migrationpolicy.org/programs/data-hub/deferred-action-childhood-arrivals-daca-profiles>) covered by the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals – or DACA – program, according to the Migration Policy Institute. Those who qualify for DACA were brought into the country as children without legal authorization but allowed to stay and work here. During his campaign, Trump repeatedly promised to "begin the largest deportation operation in American history" on his first day and to "eliminate every open borders policy of the Biden administration." He also said he wants to end DACA.

The second area of concern is the environment: Washington is known for stringent environmental laws and aggressive policies to combat climate change. These are areas where the state clashed with Trump during his first term. Federal decisions can significantly affect land, water, and air quality, and wildlife in the state, and there's plenty to watch on this front as Trump takes office. The federal government's role as a land manager alone is substantial: about 12.1 million acres, or roughly a quarter of Washington's lands, are managed by federal agencies (<https://crsreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/r/r42346#:~:text=The%20federal%20government%20owns%20roughly,of%20September%2030%2C%202018>).

The third area of concern deals with LGBTQ+ rights. In Washington, state law explicitly prohibits discrimination on the basis of gender identity or sexual orientation in restaurants, hotels, and other spaces serving the public. And the state's shield law prevents less LGBTQ+ friendly states (<https://www.texastribune.org/2023/12/21/texas-attorney-general-trans-seattle-childrens/>) from being able to access medical records for patients seeking care in Washington. And just this year, the state required inclusion (<https://www.cascadepbs.org/politics/2024/03/legislature-decides-wa-schools-should-include-lgbtq-history>) of

LGBTQ+ history and perspectives in public school curriculum. But Trump has promised to ban federal funding of gender-affirming care the first day he takes office. That could potentially affect whether Medicaid patients in Washington will be covered, even though the state's Gender Affirming Treatment Act requires health insurers to cover that care. He is also threatening to cut federal funding (<https://www.donaldjtrump.com/agenda47/president-trumps-plan-to-save-american-education-and-give-power-back-to-parents>) for schools that teach "gender ideology" and has vowed to roll back updated Title IX regulations (<https://www.newsfromthestates.com/article/much-attacked-final-title-ix-rule-goes-effect-while-still-blocked-26-states>) under the Biden administration that extend federal protections for LGBTQ+ students.

And finally, Housing advocates in Washington are worried about potential cuts to federal funding that helps state and local governments build and repair affordable housing. During his first administration, all of Trump's budget proposals would have severely cut or eliminated many programs (<https://apnews.com/united-states-government-ff2ef5fbc29342749d2e1946dede6563>) run by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. At the time, Congress rebuffed many of Trump's cuts (<https://www.route-fifty.com/finance/2018/02/wh-budget-draft/145912/>) and none of these proposals passed, but now that Congress has a Republican majority, that could change.

KPTZ 91.9 FM broadcasts your local news Monday through Friday at noon and 5pm and at noon on Saturday. You can contact to us at news@kptz.org. I'm Diane Walker. Thank you for listening.