WASHINGTON STATE SENATE DEMOCRATS

COVID-19 RELIEF and RECOVERY

Washington legislature approves $2.2 billion in COVID-19 relief

State Senate passes $1.7 billion in unemployment insurance tax relief

It's pedal to the metal as Democrats in Olympia push ahead with pandemic-era agenda

- $2.2 billion in immediate pandemic relief to help our state defeat the virus and support people in need -- the initial step in the 2021 session to build back a stronger and more resilient Washington. (HB 1368)
- $2.2 billion in unemployment tax relief for businesses and an increase in unemployment benefits for workers. (SB 5061 and SB 5478)
- Greater protections for frontline workers during pandemics through workers' compensation benefits, including health care and wage replacement for the employee. (SB 5115 and SB 5190)
- Access to extended unemployment benefits during the pandemic. (SB 5425)
- Allowing employees to wear PPE (regardless of workplace) during a public health emergency. (SB 5254)
- Helping renters stay in their homes and helping landlords pay their bills. (SB 5160)
- Improving medical access to personal protective equipment. (SB 5169)
- Increasing the number of trained adjudicators to improve the response of the state's unemployment benefits system. (SB 5193)
- Waiving liquor licensing fees paid by businesses hurt by closures during the pandemic. (SB 5272)
- Strengthening oversight and accountability within our state's Employment Security Department so that workers who are laid off are able to access benefits more quickly and smoothly. (SB 5193)

CLIMATE ACTION and RESILIENCY

A law to reduce plastic waste, ban plastic foam statewide is advancing in Legislature

Putting a price on polluting: Washington Senate OKs carbon-cap and clean-fuels bills

- Adopting the Climate Commitment Act to steadily reduce carbon emissions within a market-based framework that will empower Washington to build a 21st century, net-zero-emissions economy. (SB 5254)
- Establishing a clean fuel standard, joining Oregon, California and British Columbia in this common-sense effort to limit CO2 emissions. (HB 1091)
- Addressing disproportionate exposure to environmental hazards suffered by communities of color and low-income communities that results in a higher risk of adverse health outcomes. (SB 5141)
- Establishng thresholds to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from fluorinated gases and address refrigerant emissions. (HB 1050)
- Increasing investments for forest health and wildfire suppression and prevention. (HB 1168)
- Improving our recycling system and eliminating tons of Styrofoam from our waste stream. (SB 5022)
- Preparing for a zero-emissions future by planning upgrades to electricity supply and charging infrastructure. (HB1287)
- Protecting pollinator habitat. (SB 5253)
- Banning seabed mining, a destructive industrial process that literally sucks up the ocean floor, wreaking havoc on habitat and marine life. (SB 5145)
- Maximizing salmon recovery funds to reach restoration goals. (SB 5220)

WASHINGTON STATE SENATE DEMOCRATS

POLICE ACCOUNTABILITY and JUSTICE REFORM

Washington state Senate passes police arbitration bill — KIRO 7

The State Senate passed a bill to overhaul the decertification process for police officers. Here's what's in it — The Spokesman-Review

BILL TO REPLACE 'DRIVING WHILE POOR' LAW MOVES THROUGH STATE SENATE — Emerald

Bill to expand state's reentry program for prisoners passes Washington Senate — The Spokesman-Review

Police officers who witness excessive force must intervene, Washington state Senate votes — The Seattle Times

■ Providing timely and effective enforcement of state standards for law enforcement officers, allowing the Criminal Justice Training Commission to discipline officers unfit to carry a badge and gun. (SB 5051)

■ Creating a new office to conduct independent investigations of deadly uses of force, custodial deaths, and other officer-involved incidents. (HB 1267)

■ Protecting the community from officers who are not credible witnesses because of previous conduct. (HB 1088)

■ Bannning the use of chokeholds, neck restraints, unleashed police dogs, no-knock warrants, military equipment, and the intentional concealment of badges. (HB 1054)

■ Bringing transparency to investigations into police use of deadly force. (HB 1089)

■ Establishing a civil standard for police officer use of force. (HB 1310)

■ Collecting and publishing data on law enforcement use-of-force incidents. (SB 5259)

■ Reducing the potential for abuse in the police arbitration process and increasing transparency to the public. (SB 5055)

■ Empowering officers to intervene when fellow officers use force unjustly. (SB 5066)

■ Giving families that have had a loved one killed by police a better chance to have their day in court. (SB 5263)

■ Restoring voting rights to people who were previously incarcerated and are reintegrating back into the community. (HB 1078)

■ De-linking the inability to pay a traffic ticket from the criminal justice system. (SB 5226)

■ Protecting people from the misuse of 911 calls to summon police with the intent to intimidate or discriminate. (SB 5135)

■ Expanding the application of a law passed in 2019 amending the state's three-strikes law. This will allow dozens of incarcerated people a chance at a more appropriate sentence. (SB 5164)

■ Eliminating marriage as a legal defense for rape — a defense that creates a loophole allowing sex offenders who move into the state to avoid registering here. (SB 5177)

■ Modernizing access to the courts for civil protection orders. (HB 1320)

■ Helping youth return to their communities as they are released from detention. (SB 5118)

■ Giving people the tools they need to access Medicaid and services that can help them be successful when they exit incarceration. (SB 5304)

■ Making it easier for survivors to wipe their records of sentences received for offenses that were the result of being a victim of sex trafficking, domestic violence or sexual assault. (SB 5180)

■ Requiring the DOC and jails to conduct fatality reviews any time an incarcerated individual dies unexpectedly. (SB 5119)

■ Giving survivors of strangulation access to medical assistance, and collecting evidence to help in court cases that will prevent further abuse and fatalities. (SB 5183)

■ Banning for-profit private prison companies from operating detention facilities in our state. The legislation will shut down Tacoma's ICE detention center in 2025 upon the expiration of its contract. (HB1090)

■ Expanding the graduated reentry program that helps people leaving prison successfully transition back into the community. (SB 5121)

■ Allowing court discretion and victim input on whether a mental health sentencing alternative should be imposed. (SB 5293)

KUOW npr — WA state Senate passes bill to ban private, for-profit prisons

CNN politics — Washington governor signs bill restoring voting rights after prison release

EDUCATION and OPPORTUNITY

The Seattle Times

Legislators in Washington state sink their teeth into pandemic-era issues for schools

The Chronicle

State Senate Bill Provides a Boost to College Bound Scholarship

- Helping more first-generation and underrepresented students of color earn degrees and certificates, and further diversifying our state's CTC educator workforce. (SB 5194)
- Ensuring students have adequate access to school counselors, not only for career guidance but to address trauma and mental health needs during these stressful times. (SB 5030)
- Allowing Washington's community and technical colleges to offer bachelor's degrees in computer science. (SB 5401)
- Adding antiracism training, equity, diversity and inclusion curricula to professional development opportunities for K-12 educators. (SB 5044)
- Making menstrual hygiene products available for students in public schools.
- Expanding access to the College Bound Scholarship. (SB 5321)
- Building diversity, equity, inclusion and antiracism training into medical school curricula. (SB 5228)
- Requiring schools to provide designated points of contact for students in foster care. (SB 5184)
- Establishing a legislative internship scholarship in the name of former Sen. Rosa Franklin. (SB 5431)
- Honoring Billy Frank Jr. in the Statuary Hall Collection at the Capitol in Washington, D.C. (HB 1372)
- Giving financial flexibility to Seattle's Pacific Science Center so it can continue to provide valuable science education. (SB 5080)

CHILDCARE and EARLY LEARNING

- Adopting the Fair Start Act – historic investments to make high-quality childcare more affordable and accessible for families across Washington. (SB 5237)
- Supporting children and families by suspending licensefees for childcare to support the industry during economic recovery, allowing nature-based pre-K programs, and creating child-specific foster care licenses to provide more resources for kinship caregivers. (SB 5151)

The Chronicle

Sweeping Childcare Reform Moving in Washington Legislature

The Seattle Times

Washington lawmakers announce new $59 billion state budget that boosts public health, child care

WASHINGTON STATE SENATE DEMOCRATS

HEALTHY FAMILIES and COMMUNITIES

The Seattle Times

Washington Legislature approves ban of open carry of guns at demonstrations, state Capitol

- Banning the open carry of deadly weapons on the Washington State Capitol Campus and at or near permitted demonstrations. (SB 5038)
- Extending postpartum coverage from 60 days to 1 year. (SB 5068)
- Creating a universal healthcare commission. (SB 5399)
- Expanding coverage of the paid family and medical leave program. (SB 5097 and HB 1073)
- Ensuring pregnant patients won't find their lives in jeopardy from the denial or delay of urgent medical care. (SB 5140)
- Adopting the Gender Affirming Treatment Act to improve health equity for transgender people and help end healthcare discrimination against trans and gender fluid Washingtonians. (SB 5313)
- Enabling the state to partner with other states, state agencies and nonprofits to produce, distribute or purchase generic drugs to reduce the costs of prescription medications. (SB 5203)
- Expanding access to mental health services for Washingtonians. (SB 5328)
- Ensuring patients from diverse cultures, groups and communities receive equal access to care by requiring health equity continuing education training. (SB 5229)
- Providing flexibility for hospitals to continue to expand capacity and care for patients in need of mental health treatment. (SB 5236)
- Addressing health disparities in communities of color by creating Health Equity Zones to focus public health efforts on building trust, community outreach, capacity building and increased health care access. (SB 5052)
- Prohibiting local governments from enacting arbitrary housing regulations that effectively oppress and discriminate against people of color and low-income people. (SB 5235)

THE NEWS TRIBUNE

Lawmakers pass bill to protect right to medical care for transgender residents

Crosscut.

Prescription prices could push Washington state into the drug business

Responding to federal inaction on pharmaceutical costs, lawmakers appear poised to give the state broad authority to buy or make generic drugs.

WASHINGTON STATE SENATE DEMOCRATS

A JUST ECONOMY FOR ALL

THE NEWS TRIBUNE

Washington state Senate narrowly approves capital gains tax after marathon debate

- Establishing a state capital gains tax on extreme profits from the sale of stocks and bonds -- ensuring the very wealthiest Washingtonians will pay their fair share. (SB 5096)

- Funding a Working Families Tax Credit to give tax relief to those who need it most. (HB 1287)

- Protecting residential tenants by penalizing the inclusion of unlawful lease provisions and limiting the reasons for eviction, refusal to continue, and termination. (HB 1236)

- Becoming the first state in the nation to bring the 40-hour work week to agricultural workers, finally bringing them in line with the rest of American workers who are compensated for working overtime. (SB 5172)

- Eliminating the practice of paying subminimum wages to Washingtonians with disabilities. (SB 5284)

- Allowing more families to continue using TANF during times of high statewide unemployment. (SB 5214)

- Strengthening consumer protections and increasing the authority to prosecute and penalize businesses that attempt to scam or defraud our residents. (SB 5025)

- Creating a state Office of Cybersecurity to ensure Washingtonians' sensitive information such as social security numbers and bank account info is secure from cyber breaches like the recent third-party leak involving the state Auditor's Office. (SB 5432)

- Expanding broadband service by allowing PUDs and port districts to provide retail service to rural and unserved areas ignored by broadband corporations. (SB 5383)

- Helping give people hit by financial catastrophe a greater chance to stay in their own homes by updating our state's outdated laws that lead to too many bankruptcies. (SB 5408)

- Investing $59.2 billon in a robust pandemic response, support for working families and small business owners, and funds to implement new polices to address climate change and police accountability. (State Operating Budget SB 5092)

- Investing $6.3 billion for priority infrastructure across the state, the largest and most aggressive capital construction budget in state history. It will expand broadband internet access, grow the state's supply of affordable housing, improve behavioral health, safeguard natural resources, and invest in underserved communities. (State Construction Budget: SB 5083)

The Seattle Times

Senate approves expansion of low-income tax credit

YakimaHerald.com

Washington State Senate passes bill that would remove overtime exemption for ag workers