

WA State NOW - Legislative Update January 27, 2002

Legislative Hotline 1(800) 562-6000

Call to leave a message for your elected officials

Priority Message of the Week (If you can only do one thing, do this!)

Call all House members in Support of Substitute House Bill 1444 the Anti-Bullying Bill.

Family Leave – HB 2364/SB6426 Support

Taking unpaid time off to care for a sick and aging parent or child, a newborn or newly adopted child, or even for personal health reasons is a luxury many people can not afford. WA State NOW supports family leave insurance and expanding the Family and Medical Leave Act to create family friendly policies in the workplace.

Status: The bill has had hearings in House Commerce and Labor and Senate Labor, Commerce and Financial Institutions.

Action: Call committee members in support

Medicaid Waiver – HB 2431, HB 2461 & SB 6368

Washington State's Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) is preparing a Medicaid demonstration waiver proposal to send to the federal government. This waiver will result in dramatic changes in the state's Medicaid program and could shut out many thousands of current and future low-income families and individuals from needed health care. DSHS is seeking blanket authority to override many federal protections and has provided limited information on the changes that would introduce one these protections are lifted. WA State NOW is in opposition to the waiver until there are safe-guards to replace the federal protections.

Status: HB 2461 is the Sunshine Bill has a hearing on Tuesday the 29th at 1:30 in House Health Care. We support this bill because it spells out a process for the legislature and DSHS to follow before adopting/pursuing the Medicaid Waivers.

Action: Call committee members in support

Work-search Exemption for New Moms – HB 1144 Support

WA State NOW supports legislation that would extend the exemption for new moms from the work-search requirement of welfare reform from the current 3 months to 12 months.

Status: Eligible for executive action in House Children and Family Services

Action: Call committee members in support

Emergency Contraception in ER – HB 2690 SB 6537 Support

WA State NOW supports legislation that requires all emergency rooms to proactively offer emergency contraception to victims of sexual assault. Such a requirement would ensure that women are informed about emergency contraception and that they have ready access to emergency contraception, regardless of where they receive care.

Status: SB6537 will be heard in Senate Health on Monday the 28th at 8am

HB 2690 will be heard on 2/5

Action: Call Committee members in support

Trafficking of Women and Children – HB 2381 & SB 6407 Support

At least seven hundred thousand persons annually, primarily women and children, are trafficked within or across international borders; with approximately fifty thousand women and children trafficked into the United States each year. Traffickers primarily target women and girls, who are disproportionately affected by poverty, the lack of access to education, chronic unemployment, discrimination, and the lack of economic opportunities in countries of origin. WA State NOW supports legislation that provides assistance to victims of trafficking.

Status: SB 6407 will be heard in Senate Judiciary on 1/29 at 8am HB 2381 will be heard on 1/30 at 1:30 House Criminal Justice and Corrections

Action:

Unemployment Insurance for Victims of Domestic Violence and Stalking - HB 1248 (Support) & HB 2211

HB – 1248 bill allows individuals to qualify for unemployment insurance when the unemployment is necessary to protect the claimant or a member of their immediate family from domestic violence or stalking. HB 2211 gives victims access to the Crime Victims Compensation Fund. NOW supports HB 1248.

Status: SB 5189 is in Senate Rules, and 1248 is eligible for exec in House Commerce and Labor; 2211 is in House Appropriations

Action:

Bullying –HB 1444 and SB 5528 Support

These bills require schools to develop policies to prohibit harassment, intimidation and bullying on school grounds and at school activities. Substitute bill provides some flexibility to local school districts and is widely supported.

Status: Hearing on 1/28, 1:30 House Education

Action: Call both of your representatives in support!

3rd Party Visitation - HB 2322 Support

Sets standards and circumstances for 3rd party visitations (i.e. grandparents, significant others, etc.)

Status: House Rules

Action:

Increasing Access to Education for Recipients of TANF - SB 5201 Support

The Higher Education for Lifelong Progress (HELP) program allows qualified welfare recipients to attend college on a full-time basis as their required TANF work activity.

Status: Senate Ways & Means

Action:

The Friendly Parent Bill – SB 5511 Oppose

Determination of whether a parent has taken greater responsibility for performing parenting functions relating to the daily needs of a child and which parent is more likely to allow and encourage the child frequent and continuing contact with the other parent are in the list of eight other factors that the court may consider.

Status: Senate Rules 3rd Reading

Action:

Chemically Dependant Pregnant Women - SB 5416 Oppose

Sets up procedures for identifying and screening pregnant and lactating women to determine whether an infant is at risk of drug affected due to the mother's use of non-prescriptive addictive drugs.

Status: Senate Rules 3rd Reading

Action:

Mental Health & Minor's Consent – HB 2371 Oppose

Changing the age of consent for minors receiving chemical dependency and mental health treatment from 13 to 16.

Status: Hearing 1/20, 6pm, House Juvenile Justice and Family Law

Action:

Modifying Initiative 200 – SB 6295 Support

Exempts public universities and school districts from the anti-affirmative action requirements of Initiative 200

Status: Senate Judiciary

Action: Call committee members to support

Changing Requirements for Health Insurance Plans Offered to Small Businesses – HB 2430 Oppose

Requires the standard health plans to represent a range of health plans sufficiently diverse to meet the needs of small employer groups seeking health insurance coverage in Washington state. Finds that pilot projects should be established to determine whether it is appropriate to use basic health plan and medical assistance funds to subsidize premium shares for employer-sponsored health insurance when such a subsidy would be cost-effective for the state.

Status: House Health Care

Action: Call Committee Members to oppose

Budget Cuts –

In response to the state budget crisis caused by the national economic downturn, the Governor, in his proposed budget has a large number of budget cuts that effect the most vulnerable individuals and working families in our state. WA State NOW calls on the legislature to solve this budget crisis by finding new revenue sources, passing an economic stimulus package and to preserve state services that meet the needs of those that rely on health & human services and public safety programs.

Status:**Action:**

For more information regarding WA State NOW's political positions, please refer to the web page at www.wa-now.org or call 206-788-0843. To find your district, who represents you, and any additional information about the legislature and the legislative process go to www.leg.wa.gov.