



Washington State National Organization for Women

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Legislative Update February 26, 2006

Legislative Hotline 1(800) 562-6000

Call to leave a message for your elected officials

There are two cutoff deadlines this week:

1. Monday, February 27, is the final day for any bill that is in the House or Senate fiscal committees to pass out to the Rules Committee so that they can be considered by the full House or Senate
2. All bills must pass out of their opposite house (i.e.: House bills out of the Senate and Senate bills out of the House) by the 5 PM on Friday, March 3rd. After this date the only bills that can be considered are the budget, matters related to the budget, and differences on bills passed by both houses.

Priority Message of the Week (If you can only do one thing, do this!), Call your representatives ask them to vote YES on SB 6185 Modifying the Family and Medical Leave bill. We need to have it passed and in law BEFORE the federal rule changes are made.

This bill would re-institute a state law on family leave to insure our state can maintain a strong benefit, even if the federal administration follows through with their proposed rule changes that would make utilizing this unpaid leave benefit much more difficult.

Budget

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The Senate supplemental budget passed the Senate on Friday, February 17th and the House version of the 2006 supplemental budget was unveiled this past week.

The House budget has \$2 million for community sexual assault programs, compared to the Senate's \$1 million. Finally, the House added three million more for both BHP and Children's Health care slots.

Status: The Senate Budget has passed the Senate and is now in the House Appropriations Committee.

Action: Call your representative on the House Appropriations Committee and ask them to support the \$3 million dollars in the Senate budget that would keep the child safety net in place for those on public assistance and prevent in the imposition of full family sanctions!

Also let your Representatives know that you support the funding for the community sexual assault programs that is in the House version of the budget. Also tell them that you the funding levels as proposed for the Basic Health Plan and Children's Health Insurance slots in the House version of the budget.

Health Care

Establishing the small employer health insurance partnership program HB 2572 SUPPORT

This bill is part of the "Fair Share" package of health insurance bills. This bill establishes a premium assistance program for small business through the Health Care Authority. The Department of Social and Health Services is directed to submit a request to the federal Department of Health and Human Services for a state Children's Health Insurance Program section 1115 demonstration waiver to seek authorization to draw down Washington's unspent state Children's Health Insurance Program allotment to finance Basic Health Plan coverage for parents of children enrolled in Medicaid or the state Children's Health Insurance Program.

Status: HB 2572 has passed the House and is in the Senate Ways and Means Committee where it must have a public hearing and executive session by Monday February 27.

Action: Call and leave a message for the Senate Ways and Means Committee and ask that they pass HB 2572 out of committee. Also leave a message for your Senator to vote YES on HB 2572,

Requiring health carriers to report certain information – HB 2500 & SB 6232 SUPPORT

This bill is part of the “Fair Share” package of health insurance bills. It requires that each health care coverage provider provide data annually to the insurance commissioner for 5 categories of recipients (total, individual contracts, small group contracts, large group contracts, & government contracts). The insurance commissioner on a searchable web site will then make this data available to the public.

Status: HB 2500 has passed the House and is now in the Senate Rules Committee where it can be sent to the full Senate for a vote.

SB 6232 is DEAD, as it did not pass out of the House Health Care Committee by the February 24th deadline.

Action:

Call and leave a message for your Senator to vote YES on HB 2500.

Requiring surveys of health professions work force supply and demographics. – SB 6193 SUPPORT

This bill is based on recommendations from the Joint Select Committee on Health Disparities established by the 2004 legislature, which looked at disparate health impacts on persons of color, and to a lesser extent on women. The committee identified a need to develop a workforce that is representative of the diversity of our state's population. In order to accomplish this relevant and accurate data on health care professionals, students in health care professions, and recipients of health care services must first be collected. This bill has now been amended and requires a voluntary, confidential survey of health care providers to collect at a minimum data related to age, gender, race, ethnicity, area of practice, zip code of practice location, years in practice, and type of facility where a provider practices.

Status: SB 6193 has passed the Senate and is now in the House Appropriations Committee where it has a hearing on Monday February 27.

Action: Call and leave a message for the House Appropriations Committee and ask that they pass SB 6193 out of committee. Also leave a message for your Representatives and ask that they vote YES on SB 6193.

Requiring multicultural education for health professions – SB 6194 SUPPORT

This bill was also based on recommendations from the Joint Select Committee on Health Disparities. A multicultural health course would be required as part of basic education preparation for programs with a curriculum for training health professionals. Training in multi-cultural health would be included as part of continuing education programs required for health professionals.

Status: SB 6194 has passed the Senate and is now in the House Rules Committee where it can be sent to the full House for a vote.

Action: Call and leave a message for your Representatives and ask that they vote YES on SB 6194.

Requiring health impact assessments – SB 6195 SUPPORT

This bill was also based on recommendations from the Joint Select Committee on Health Disparities. This bill requires a systematic review a legislative or budgetary proposal or other public policy, program, or practice to determine the extent to which such proposal, policy, program, or practice improves or exacerbates health disparities. Such an assessment can be initiated by any member of the legislature or a member of Governor's Interagency Council on Health Disparities

Status: SB 6195 is DEAD as it did not pass out of committee by the February 24th deadline

Action:

Creating the governor's interagency coordinating council on health disparities – SB 6197 SUPPORT

This bill is related to SB 6195 and creates the Governor's Interagency Council on Health Disparities. The Council must design an action plan to eliminate health disparities in Washington State by 2012 and present progress reports to the Legislature every two years beginning on January 15, 2008, until completion of the plan in 2012.

Status: SB 6197 has passed the Senate and is now in the House Appropriations Committee where is scheduled for an executive session on Monday, February 27.

Action: Call and leave a message for the House Appropriations Committee and ask that they pass SB 6197 out of committee. Also leave a message for your Representatives to vote YES on SB 6197

Regulating Body Piercing – HB 2335 SUPPORT WITH NO AMENDMENTS

This bill requires the Secretary of Health to establish sterilization and disease prevention standards for body art and body piercing procedures.

Status: SHB 2335 passed the House and is the Senate Ways & Means Committee where it must be heard and voted on by Monday February 27.

Action: Call and leave a message for the Senate Ways & Means Committee and tell them you support HB 2335 with no amendments. Also leave a message for your Senator letting them know you support HB 2335 with no amendments.

Establishing an early detection breast and cervical cancer screening program – SB 5714 SUPPORT

The Department of Health must administer a state-supported early detection breast and cervical cancer screening program to assist eligible women with preventative health services. Eligible women are defined as women aged 40-64, with income at or below 250 percent of the federal poverty level.

The funding from the state must not be used to replace federally funded breast and cervical cancer early detection programs, but will be used to operate Department of Health approved programs or to increase access to existing state-approved programs.

Status: SB 5714 has passed the Senate and is in the House Rules Committee where it can be sent to the floor for a full vote by the House

Action: Call and leave a message for your Representatives tell them you support SB 5714.

Reproductive Rights

Insuring victims of crimes – HB2481 SUPPORT

HB 2481 is designed to try to protect businesses, such as the Olympia women's clinic, from being unable to acquire reasonably priced liability insurance because they have been victimized by a crime, such as arson.

Status: HB 2481 passed the House and is now in the Senate Rules Committee where it can be sent to the floor for a full vote by the Senate

Action: Call and leave a message for your Senator to vote YES on HB 2481

Equal Protection Under the Law

Expand the jurisdiction of the state Human Rights Commission to cover lesbians, gays, bi-sexuals and transgender individuals – HB 2661

This bill would expand the jurisdiction the state Human Rights Commission to include discrimination due to an individual's sexual orientation.

Status: HB 2661 has passed the House and the Senate and has been signed by Governor Christine Gregoire on January 31. The law is effective June 8, 2006.

Action: CELEBRATE! And leave a thank you message for **Senators** Berkey, Brown, Doumit, Eide, Fairley, Finkbeiner, Franklin, Fraser, Haugen, Jacobsen, Kastama, Keiser, Kline, Kohl-Welles, McAuliffe, Poulsen, Prentice, Pridemore, Rasmussen, Regala, Rockefeller, Shin, Spanel, Thibaudeau, and Weinstein AND **Representatives** Appleton, Blake, Chase, Clibborn, Cody, Conway, Darneille, Dickerson, Dunshee, Eickmeyer, Ericks, Flannigan, Fromhold, Grant, Green, Haigh, Hankins, Hasegawa, Hudgins, Hunt, Hunter, Jarrett, Kagi, Kenney, Kessler, Kilmer, Kirby, Lantz, Linville, Lovick, McCoy, McDermott, McIntire, Miloscia, Moeller, Morrell, Morris, Murray, O'Brien, Ormsby, Pettigrew, Priest, Quall, Roberts, Santos, Schual-Berke, Sells, Shabro, Simpson, Sommers, Springer, Sullivan, B., Sullivan, P., Takko, Tom, Upthegrove, Wallace, Walsh, Williams, Wood, and Mr. Speaker. Also thank **Governor** Gregoire for signing HB 2661 into law.

Revising the privilege for sexual assault advocates - HB 2454 SUPPORT

HB 2454 will clarify that the privileged communication between a sexual assault victim and her sexual assault program advocate is protected when the advocate is communicating with the victim NOT just when the victim is communicating to the advocate

Status: HB 2454 passed the House and is in the Senate Rules Committee where it can be sent to the floor for a full vote by the Senate

Action: Call and leave a message for your Senator to vote YES on HB 2454.

Creating sexual assault protection orders – HB 2576 & SB 6478 SUPPORT

This bill allows for a sexual assault protection order to be filed by a victim of sexual assault or on behalf of a minor child, vulnerable adult or any other adult who because of age, disability or health or inaccessibility cannot file for his or her own protection order. This would create a useable protection order for victims of stranger rape and would not require that the individual have been prosecuted.

Status: SHB 2576 has passed the House and is in the Senate Rules Committee where it can be sent to the floor for a full vote by the Senate

SB 6478 is DEAD, as it did not pass out of committee by the February 24th deadline.

Action: Call and leave a message for your Senator to vote YES on HB 2576.

Prohibiting sellers of travel from promoting travel for sex tourism – SB 6731 SUPPORT

This bill establishes the crime of promoting travel for prostitution if the person knowingly sells or offers to sell travel services for sex tourism.

Status: SB 6731 has passed the Senate and is now in the House Rules Committee where it can be sent to the floor for a full vote by the House.

Action: Call and leave a message for your Representatives to voter YES on SB 6731.

Economic Equity

Modifying the Family and Medical Leave - SB 6185 SUPPORT

This bill would re-institute a state law on family leave to insure our state can maintain a strong benefit, even if the federal administration follows through with their proposed rule changes that would make utilizing this unpaid leave benefit much more difficult. The original bills also expanded the number of employers covered by

applying it to those who employ 25 or more (the current law covers only those with 50 or more employees). In addition, the bill extends the right to take unpaid family leave to domestic partners. The House & Senate bills have now been amended to cover employers with 50 or more employees and domestic partners have been eliminated from eligibility for Family and Medical Leave.

Status: SB 6185 has passed the Senate and is now in the House Rules Committee where it can be sent to the floor for a full vote by the House.

Action: Call your representatives ask them to vote YES on SB 6185 Modifying the Family and Medical Leave bill. We need to have it passed and in law BEFORE the federal rule changes are made.

Providing Collective Bargaining for Family Child Care Providers – HB 2353 SUPPORT

Declares that the purpose of this act is to improve access to and the quality of family childcare services. It also declares that in order to ensure that children receive the highest quality services from these providers, it is necessary to achieve and maintain a stable, well-trained work force. To accomplish these goals, this bill would allow family childcare providers and licensees to have a voice in the development of childcare assistance and other programs through collective bargaining.

Status: HB 2353 has passed the House and is in the Senate Ways and Means Committee where it must be heard and passed out by Monday, February 27.

Action: Call and leave a message the Senate Ways & Means Committee and let them know you support passage of HB 2353. Also leave a message for your Senator to vote YES on HB 2353.

Establishes the Department of Early Learning – HB 2964 SUPPORT

This bill consolidates all Early Learning Programs in the state of Washington into one Department. The Department's primary duties are to implement early learning policy, to coordinate, consolidate, and integrate child-care and early learning programs to promote an efficient use of funds, and to collaborate with the K-12 school system to improve transitions from pre-kindergarten environments to kindergarten.

Status: HB 2964 has passed the House and is now in the Senate Rules Committee where it can be sent to the floor for a full vote by the Senate.

Action: Call and leave a message for your Senator to vote YES on HB 2964.

An act relating to studying the minimum wage in Washington State – SB 5551 OPPOSE

This bill requires the Washington Institute for Public Policy to conduct a study to address the impact of the minimum wage and its annual increases

Status: SB 5551 is DEAD, as it did not pass out of committee by the February 24th deadline.

Action: Celebrate.

Creating the opportunity grant program –HB 2630 SUPPORT

This bill creates the opportunity grant fund to assist low income residents to go to two year and four year college or vocational/technical schools

Status: HB 2630 has passed the House and is now in the Senate Ways & Means Committee where it must have a hearing and pass out of committee by Monday, February 27.

Action: Call and leave a message for the Senate Ways & Means Committee and ask that they pass HB 2630 out of committee. Also leave a message for your Senator to vote YES on HB 2630,