

Expanded Rights for Incarcerated People

The ASWWU recognizes our need to extend our missions to the greater community as there are over 2.3 million people in the US who are currently incarcerated. Washington State alone has 12 prisons with 17,000 confined people, this does not include the Northwest Detention Center. A for-profit private prison business model depends on return rates of incarceration and keeping facilities full. There have been numerous documented abuses of people in private detention facilities and this type of institution has an impact on rates of recidivism. In order to ensure the welfare and safety of all we recommend the passing of these bills that includes ending contracts with private prisons, creating educational pathways, and automatically restoring voting rights. With all this mind, the ASWWU recommends the legislature

- Support & passing of [Senate Bill 6442](#)(HB [2576](#)) and [Senate Bill 6558](#) to end the operation of private detention facilities contracting them for transfers and placement.
- Automatically restoring voter eligibility for all persons convicted of a felony offense who are not in total confinement under the jurisdiction of the department of corrections with the passing of [SB 6228](#).
- Creating prison to postsecondary education pathways with [SB 2299](#) that requires the DOC to implement these educational programs. This will ensure people in prisons are able to access higher education by providing special education, post secondary education degrees and certificates, and access to their unofficial transcripts.

Support for Native American Students

The ASWWU recognizes the need for increased Native American Student support and the work set forth by these students. In 2016, WWU's Native American Student Union (NASU) sent a letter to then incoming President Sabah Randhawa's office advocating for changes to be made to help support Indigenous students at Western Washington University. Among those asks was the construction of a Coastal Salish Longhouse to "honor the historic importance of place which WWU occupies." [1] Native American Students at Western have also advocated for a Tribal Sovereignty Curriculum to educate students at WWU about the history of tribal governments. Along with The Washington Student Association, we are advocating for tuition waivers for Native students in addition to changing Columbus Day to Indigenous People's Day.

Solutions for these issues facing Native American students, both present and historic, the ASWWU recommends:

- Providing \$4.9 million out of the capital budget to be used for the construction of a Coastal Salish Longhouse to be built on or near WWU's campus
 - Allocate \$500,000 to WWU per year to create a Tribal Sovereignty Curriculum at Western that is approved by all federally recognized tribes
 - Waive tuition and fees for Native American students in Washington State's Federally Recognized Tribes
 - Enact a law changing "Columbus Day" to "Indigenous People's Day" in Washington State
 - Establishing the Native American opportunity scholarship program with [SB 5709](#) as Native Students are one of the most underrepresented in Universities.
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[1] WWU Administration's One-Pager for the Coast Salish Longhouse