

WILD 2022 Legislative Agenda

Health Accessibility

***[**Rationale**] The ASWWU recognizes the right, for all communities on and off WWU's campus, to equitable access for affordable health care and services. Members of marginalized communities, specifically BIPOC, LGBTQ+, and disabled communities are disproportionately affected by adverse health outcomes. The on-going COVID-19 pandemic has increased the ever-growing pressure these individuals carry. However, these communities lack the necessary resources to survive in the current atmosphere. Legislation must proactively address the needs of these communities, regardless of their race, economic status, sexual, and gender identity. The history of traumatic experiences these communities have experienced at the lack accessible health care has created distrust, deterring them from accessing medical care. Their fear of discrimination and stigma control them. Not to mention, inequalities in socioeconomic status and health insurance are large factors in the quality of care provided; these communities are largely from lower socioeconomic status and lack insurance overall.

To ensure the trust of these marginalized communities, information about changes to their health care and protection for the services they are looking for is necessary. Therefore, the ASWWU asks the legislature to support:

- **HB 1851**: authorizes more health care providers to perform abortions and prohibits the state from penalizing any pregnant individual or approved healthcare provider for the outcome of an abortion.
 - Grants specific statutory authorization for physician assistants, advanced registered nurse practitioners and certain other providers acting within their scopes of practice to perform abortions
 - Prohibits the state from acting against an individual based on pregnancy outcomes or for assisting a pregnant individual in exercising the right to reproductive freedom
 - Executive action taken and moving forward in process
 - Companion bill SB 5766 in committee
- SB 5723: improving diversity in clinical trials
 - Requires Washington state institutional review board to establish a diversity in clinical trial programs
 - Adopting a policy for identifying and recruiting participants from underrepresented demographic groups

Incarcerated Populations

***[**Rationale**] Historically, incarcerated individuals are disproportionately marginalized communities, such as BIPOC and intellectually and developmentally disabled individuals (IDD). This is due the systemic marginalization these communities cannot avoid or escape. While work is being done to put an end to these discriminatory behaviors, these individuals are still in prison, a place where they will often be treated less than human, considerably more than they already are. The ASWWU recognizes incarcerated individuals and their need for increased

human rights. Currently, these people are being treated, not with the intent of rehabilitating them back into society, but the idea they will never change and will always be criminals. Behaviors such as this continue to uphold the system that prevents them from creating better lives for themselves, regardless of if they are incarcerated or in society.

Therefore, the ASWWU asks that the legislature support:

- **SB 5588:** Works to improve the discharge and reentry plans for incarcerated individuals leaving facilities. Reentry plans would include
 - Plans to maintain contact with family and children when appropriate
 - Determine whether parenting classes will be necessary before reunification
 - Portfolio for each incarcerated individual that is comprised of their education, certifications, achievements, employment, work experience, skills, and any training received prior to and during incarceration
 - A plan that addresses the needs of the individual such as education, employment, substance abuse treatment, mental health treatment, family reunification, and other areas that they may need help in for a successful reentry.
- **HB 1756:** Restricting the use of solitary confinement
 - State correctional facilities currently hold almost 600 individuals in solitary confinement.
 - This practice has been shown to have devastating and lasting psychological impacts and those directly released into the community from solitary confinement are more likely to reoffend.

Equity & Justice

*** **[Rationale]** The ASWWU recognizes the right to fair and accurate measures when achieving justice. Feminine presenting individuals, specifically black and indigenous feminine presenting individuals, are disproportionately affected by human trafficking, humans' rights violations, and sexual assault. As of 2016, the National Crime Information Center has reported over 5000 cases of missing indigenous feminine presenting people and kids. This is unacceptable. There must be necessary actions taken to prevent crimes like these to continue.

Thus, the ASWWU asks legislators support:

- **SB 5612:** ensuring survivors of domestic abuse and/or sexual assault are given opportunities to speak at conviction trials of their assaulters. Includes other rights for the victims:
 - a separate secure room to ensure they don't have to interact with the defendant and/or their relatives/friends.
 - Victims of domestic abuse get immediate medical attention and are not detained for unreasonably long periods of time.
 - Moving forward in process

- **Support HB 1725**, which works to address the lack of resources for missing, murdered, or trafficked Indigenous persons.
 - Creates a missing Indigenous women and persons alert designation for endangered missing person advisory (EMPA) alerts. EMPA alerts are for those who do not qualify for AMBER alerts (which is designated for children). EMPA alerts would notify law enforcement and government agencies, television, and radio stations of missing people so agents may cooperate to recover the person
- **Support HB 1571**, which increases communications between county officials and the families of missing Indigenous people, while also providing grants to aid human trafficking survivors' rehabilitation efforts.
 - It adds requirements for county coroners and medical examiners regarding spiritual practices, contacting family members, and returning remains.
 - Requires training for law enforcement about the traditions and customs
 - Requires a Red Thunder Alert as part of endangered missing person advisory plan
 - Requires notification if a missing person is later booked in jail
- Spearheaded by Filipino American grassroots orgs, the bill aims to limit U.S. military and police aid to the Philippines until the Philippine government addresses and stops the series of human rights violations it has committed against activists and anyone who questions/challenges them. This has been especially prevalent with the current administration under President Rodrigo Duterte.

Support for Undocumented and Mixed Status Families at WWU and Washington State

*** **[Rationale]** The ASWWU recognizes undocumented and mixed status families as individuals who have the right to benefits, regardless of their immigration status. These individuals are often refugees of war, or just trying to create a better life for themselves and their families. The ability to achieve citizenship is one of privilege that many cannot afford. This shouldn't bar them from receiving benefits. Especially considering these individuals were impacted to a great degree by the COVID-19 pandemic and the increase in unemployment.

Thus, the ASWWU asks legislators support:

- **SB 5438** would expand unemployment benefits to those who are unemployed due to the COVID-19 pandemic and are ineligible for unemployment benefits due to immigration status.

Resources and Infrastructure for Students

*** **[Rationale]** The ASWWU recognizes the need for sustainable resources for students. This means providing clean energy and increasing any resources providing economic support. Sustainable practices are most often the most effective in saving money when using energy. They often are long term investments that pay themselves off, not only in the money department, but making the cost of living more affordable and accessible to disenfranchised communities.....

- **Support HB 1770:** Strengthening Energy Codes

- This bill would make sure Washington’s building codes are energy efficient and are on target to meet statewide GHG emission targets, this is would also save people money in terms of cost saving for heating and electricity.
- **HB 1659**: Increases the Washington College Grant (WFG) aid award by fully funding the grant for students with a median family income (MFI) up to 70%. The bill would also create bridge grants to allow students to cover non-tuition related expenses.
- **HB 1723**: This bill works to close the digital divide by creating broadband assistance programs that allow low-income families to receive help in forms such as reduced cost of voice and broadband services.

DOC Insert: Disabled Communities

*** **[Rationale]** COVID-19 has created difficulties world-wide for many different communities. The inability to work and create an income has left many without means to pay for rent, and unfortunately, become homeless. The disabled community has been adversely effected by the pandemic, many becoming unable to access food and housing resources, along with dealing with ableist mandates directly effecting them. By providing disabled communities with access to equitable housing and means to thrive in the work field, legislation can help these individuals overcome the obstacles hindering them from living successful lives.

The ASWWU recognizes the disabled community and their need for support, not only in the pandemic, but for the foreseeable future. We ask legislatures to also recognize these communities and support:

- **Support HB 1724**, which ensures oversight and coordination of permanent supportive housing resources to ensure high quality housing opportunities for disabled individuals
 - Adds an operator of permanent supportive housing and services to the affordable housing advisory board
 - Creates an advisory committee on permanent supportive housing in the department of commerce.
- **Support HB 1802**: increasing opportunity for disabled individuals to participate in policy process.
 - It would require representation of disabled individuals of 3 or 30% (whichever higher) of any statutory body (work group, advisory board, ect.).
 - Would also require development of report and plans moving forward
 - Requires chief clerk of house of representatives and secretary of state to hold discussions on barriers to access in Legislature and stakeholder engagement processes
 - Requires Chief Clerk of House representatives and Secretary of state to ensure training materials to create barrier-free access to the legislature are provided
- **Support SB 5790**: increasing the support for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities by providing programs and services
 - Would include increasing support for employment and community inclusion Medicaid rates for 2023 and be adjusted beginning 2024

- The Department of social and health services would be required to establish a school to work program and statewide council to connect services provided by the developmental disability administration to high school students with IDD (intellectual and developmental disabilities)
- List of students receiving special education services must be submitted to state agencies working with individuals with IDD at least three years before they leave the school system