

LWW

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®
OF WASHINGTON



CRIMINAL JUSTICE 2024

LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

How We Determine Legislative Priorities

- * League is non-partisan
- * Legislation must be supported by a League position
 - * League positions reflect membership understanding and agreement on a particular public policy issue
 - * Following studies and adoption at convention

Criminal Justice Positions

- * In 2021, LWVWA adopted, by concurrence, the LWV California Position on Criminal Justice
- * LWVUS adopted this same position in 2022
- * This new criminal justice position supports “a criminal justice system that is just, effective, equitable, transparent, and that fosters public trust at all stages”

Other LWVWA Criminal Justice Positions

- * LWVWA also has positions in the following areas:
 - * Adult Corrections (1981)
 - * Court System (1968-77)
 - * Juvenile Justice (1976)
 - * Drug Abuse (2005)
- * Many of these positions need to be updated!

Criminal Justice Focus Areas

- * Pretrial (includes police reform)
- * Trial/Sentencing
- * Prisons
- * Reentry
- * Juvenile Justice

Stakeholders

- * Families who have lost loved ones to police violence
- * Victims and survivors of crime
- * Incarcerated individuals
- * Researchers and policymakers
- * Legislators
- * Taxpayers

2024 Legislative Priorities

- * Traffic safety (HB 1513)
- * Attorney General civil rights (HB 1445)
- * Independent prosecutor (HB 1579)
- * Retroactive relief for juvenile points (HB 1324+)

HB 1513 - Traffic Safety

- * Efficient use of police resources – Officers would focus on stopping behaviors most likely to cause injury or death on the road.
- * Racial equity - Research shows that Black and brown folks are over at pulled disproportionate rates for minor violations.
- * Help for drivers - Creates a community fund to fix broken taillights and other defects.
- * 2023 status: Got stuck in House Rules Committee

HB 1445 – AG Civil Rights

- * Civil accountability for law enforcement agencies showing a pattern or practice of misconduct
- * Current federal pathway is slow
- * 2023 status: Got stuck in House Rules Committee

HB 1579 – Independent Investigations

- * Prosecuting officers for criminal misconduct involving deadly use of force
- * Takes cases from Office of Independent Investigations
- * 2023 status: Got stuck in House Rules Committee

Sentencing Reform

- * Several sentencing reform bills that we supported in 2023 will be reintroduced in 2024:
 - * Resentencing individuals whose juvenile points lengthened their sentences (HB 1324)
 - * Allowing certain people incarcerated before age 25 to seek review for release (HB 1325)
 - * Eliminate mandatory “stacking” of certain sentencing enhancements, permit earned release (HB 1268)

Improving Prison Conditions

- * Rep. Peterson plans to reintroduce 1087 to limit the use of solitary confinement in Washington prisons
- * The bill:
 - * Limits the time people can be held in solitary
 - * Improves the conditions of those being held in solitary
 - * Prohibits the use of solitary for vulnerable people

Improving Prison Conditions (cont'd)

- * Restoring the vote to incarcerated individuals (Rep. Simmons)

Defending against Rollbacks

- * Youth access to counsel
 - * HB 1140 took effect in 2022
 - * Created an attorney hotline for youth who have been detained by police
 - * Exception for imminent threats
- * Vehicle pursuits
 - * 2021 – Imposed strict limits on when police can pursue a vehicle, banning car chases for low-level crimes such as theft. Raised legal standard to pursue for violent and sex crimes.
 - * 2023 – Lowered legal standard back to reasonable suspicion for violent/sex crimes.
 - * 2024 – Initiative to the legislature would reduce legal standard to reasonable suspicion that person has broken the law, pursuit is necessary to apprehend them, and they threaten public safety

What's Happening in the Legislature

- * Committee Meeting:
 - * Dec. 5 at 10:30am - House Community Safety, Justice, and Re-Entry
 - * Report from the Office of Independent Investigations
 - * Current Crime Trends: Looking Beyond the Headlines
- * Pre-filing starts Dec. 4
- * Session starts Jan. 8 and ends March 7

Take Action!

- * Spread the word - Decline to sign I-2113 (vehicle pursuit rollback)
- * Urge lawmakers to take early action on HB 1445 (AG civil rights) – Link in chat!
- * Join our Google Group—email hkelly@lwwa.org or dcarstens@lwwa.org
- * Dec. 5 at 10:30am (virtual) - House Community Safety, Justice, and Re-Entry
- * Spokane area – Join a focus group on public safety data dashboard (Dec. 5 at WSU Spokane County Extension Office (2-3pm or 6:30-7:30pm))
- * Sign up for the Legislative Newsletter – Link in chat!

Questions?