



# Legislative ACTION Newsletter

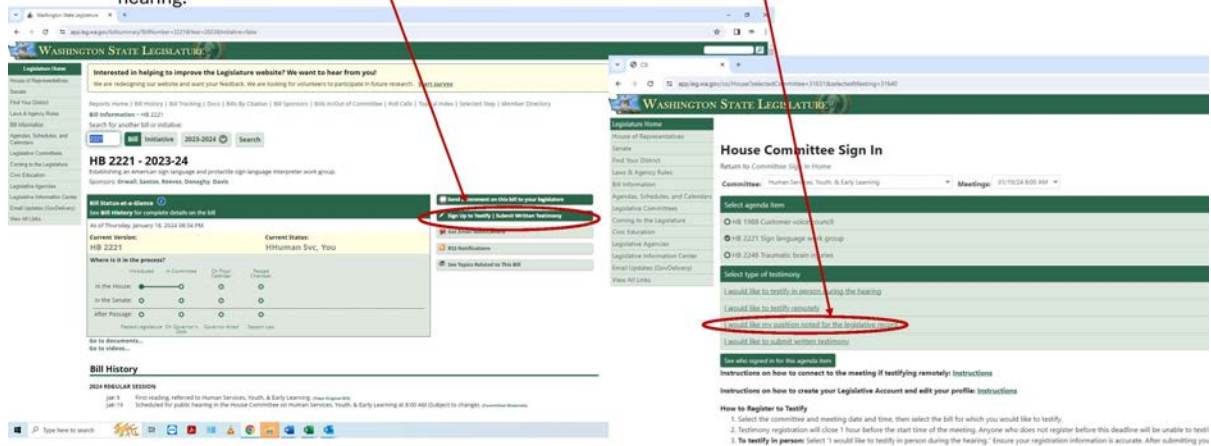
A Publication of the League of Women Voters of Washington



## Action Alerts

How to sign-in PRO on a bill if you find the link within this newsletter does not work

- Click on the bill number in the Action Alert
- Go to the right-hand column on that page, which says "Sign-up to Testify/Submit Written Testimony". This is the link that leads to the sign-on opportunity, even though it only refers to testimony
- At that link, click on "I would like my position noted for the legislative record". That is where you indicate "PRO" and give your contact information.
- Please note that this is only available after a bill has been scheduled for public hearing and is removed one hour before the hearing.



Click on the links below to learn more about bills currently being reviewed in the state legislature. You can "take action" on these most pressing bills by following the links below. **Please sign in as individuals and not as representing the League of Women Voters.** Thank you for taking action!

## Priority Actions

### Correct Past Sentencing Injustices

In 2023, the legislature passed [HB 1324](#), which provides that juvenile convictions, or "points," will no longer automatically be used to lengthen adult sentences. The legislature recognized that automatic addition of juvenile points has resulted in extreme racial disparities in sentencing, especially with respect to our Indigenous community members. And it does not reflect scientific research showing that our brains are not fully developed until age 25.

HB 1324 applies prospectively but does not help the 800+ people currently in prison whose sentences are longer because of crimes committed when they were children. [HB 2065](#) rectifies past harms by making HB 1324 retroactive.

**⚠ Sign in PRO on HB 2065 [here](#) by February 19 at 9:30 AM.**

### Help People Affected by Extreme Weather Events

In recent years, including this winter, there have been deaths of people who are unprepared for extreme weather events. People who are unhoused are particularly

vulnerable to the consequences of extreme hot and cold; and in some weather events lose their property to wind, moisture, etc.

**HB 1012**, Addressing the Response to Extreme Weather Events, would provide technical assistance and grant funding to local governments to assist them with planning strategies to protect people and property for extreme weather events.

HB 1012 passed the House with a healthy majority. It had a public hearing in the Senate State Government & Elections Committee but hasn't been scheduled for executive session and a vote to move it forward.

**⚠️ Ask the Senate State Government and Elections Committee to [move this bill out of committee with a Do Pass recommendation here](#) by February 27.**

### Help Conserve Mature Forests in Washington

Last year, the State Legislature used newly available funds from the Climate Commitment Act (CCA) to conserve 2,000 acres of carbon dense, structurally complex state forests and to buy replacement lands for rural counties. This resulted in some of our state's most beautiful older forests not being clearcut! However, the demand from counties across Western WA was much greater than anticipated, and thousands of acres of mature forests still need permanent protection.

Building on the momentum from last year's success, we are asking legislators to conserve additional forests in counties that wanted their mature forests to be conserved but weren't included in the initial 2,000 acres. [Learn more about this conservation effort here](#). Our mature forests are worth saving, and your support can make a difference! Let's work together to protect our natural treasures and ensure a sustainable future.

**⚠️ Ask your legislators to [continue to conserve mature forests and buy replacement lands for economically impacted rural counties here](#).**

[See All Action Alerts](#)



## This Week in the Legislature

There are only three weeks left in the 2024 60-day legislative session. Last week was a major "cutoff date"—February 13 was the date by which bills introduced in one house had to have passed out of that house to receive further consideration. It is significant to note that over 1,800 bills have been introduced this session but as of this cut-off, only 276 had passed through the House and the Senate had passed only 262.

At this point in the session, the process moves at lightning speed. February 21 is the cutoff for bills that passed one chamber to pass the policy committees of the opposite chamber. That is virtually one week to get all those bills heard in the opposite chamber; many will not make it.

This time constraint means that there is tension among legislators, lobbyists, and the public about what should get high priority attention and what can lapse. Everyone is working very hard and most people in the process are very tired. As last week wrapped up, most legislators returned home to their districts for the weekend to hear from their constituents at town halls, traditionally scheduled for the weekend after first floor cut-off.

The next big step is budget adoption. This began on Thursday, February 15, with release of the Senate Capital budget and a hearing on that budget the next day. The Operating and

Transportation budget proposals from the House and Senate are close behind, with hearings on the 19th and 20th, mostly the same day as the budgets are released.

The weekly updates from our Issue Chairs will tell you which bills the League is supporting that have moved ahead and which have not. **Your responses to Action Alerts will help move our priority bills forward.**

The League's Issue Chairs will be working hard at the beginning of the week ahead to understand what has been proposed in the respective House and Senate budgets and to send comments to each chamber reflecting League positions and what is needed. More on that to come in next week's newsletter.

You can also participate in the Monday morning ACT meetings, at which speakers talk in more depth about specific issues. [Register here](#).

Thank you for your interest and for taking action!

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## Breaking Down the Legislature

There are three weeks left in the 2024 legislative session. This is the time in the session when the work is compressed into much shorter timelines and there is an increased sense of urgency about getting bills passed.

In the week ahead, there are only three days by which policy bills passed by the opposite chamber must be passed from policy committees (by February 21), and then only five more days (by February 26) when any with fiscal implications must pass the House Appropriations and Senate Ways & Means Committee.

The coming week is also when House and Senate supplemental budgets will be released and discussed in public hearings.

Then there is even less time for floor action, when the House and Senate must pass bills. That deadline is March 1. The final week of session, between March 1 and March 7, is reserved for budget adoption and reconciliation of bills that pass both chambers but in different forms plus any work the Legislature chooses to do to respond to initiatives.

Given the large number of bills that passed in the last phase of the legislature (and even that number was small relative to the total introduced), relatively few will make it all the way to final passage and the Governor's desk for signature.

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## The 2024 Legislative Issues

### LWWA Legislative Issues From the 2024 Washington State Legislative Session

Click on an issue overview to learn more about the bills the League is following and "This Week's Updates" to read the issue chair's report on this past week. When a "⚠️" appears at the end of an issue, it indicates there are actions to take for this week. Click on the "⚠️" to be taken to our Action Alert page.

#### Democracy

Elections ⚠️ | [Issue overview](#) | [Weekly update](#)

Money in Politics | [Issue overview](#) | [Weekly update](#)

Education | [Issue overview](#) | [Weekly update](#)

Local News and Democracy | [Issue overview](#) | [Weekly update](#)

Redistricting | [Issue overview](#)

## Environment

Climate Crisis and Energy  | [Issue overview](#)

Forests  | [Issue overview](#) | [Weekly update](#)

Growth Management | [Issue overview](#) | [Weekly update](#)

Waste Diversion  | [Issue overview](#) | [Weekly update](#)

Transportation  | [Issue overview](#) | [Weekly update](#)

## Social and Economic Policy

Housing and Homelessness  | [Issue overview](#) | [Weekly update](#)

Health Care  | [Issue overview](#) | [Weekly update](#)

Behavioral Health  | [Issue overview](#) | [Weekly update](#)

Children's Issues  | [Issue overview](#) | [Weekly update](#)

Early Care and Education of Young Children  | [Issue overview](#) | [Weekly update](#)

Criminal Justice  | [Issue overview](#)

Revenue  | [Issue overview](#) | [Weekly Update](#)

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## Support Our Advocacy Work

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The League of Women Voters is a nonpartisan political organization that encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.

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