



### **Entering Week 7**

**Thank You For Your Continued Advocacy**  
Bills that are still in play have now moved on to the opposite house and are being scheduled for committee hearings. Below are a number of bills that you can sign in “pro/con” for. Additionally, now is the time to urge your representatives to pass or oppose bills that have already had hearings. Thank you for your advocacy!



### **Action Alert: Sign In “Pro/Con” For These Bills**

#### **Action Alert: Sign In “Con” To Oppose the Expansion Of Abortion**

[Sign in](#) “con” to oppose the expansion of abortion, [House Bill 1851](#) (HB 1851). This link will be available until Monday, February 21 at noon. HB 1851 is scheduled for a hearing in the Senate Committee on Health and Long Term Care on February 21 at 1 PM. When signing in you may leave the “organization” box blank or write in “parishioner of --- Church.” HB 1851 expands who may perform abortions. A physician would no longer be required to perform the procedure, and physician assistants, nurse practitioners, and other health care providers would be authorized to perform abortions. Additionally, under HB 1851 the state is prohibited from taking action against an individual for having an abortion. The state is also prohibited from taking action against someone who aids or assists a pregnant woman with getting an abortion. Language in the bill is changed from “woman” to “pregnant individual.” WSCC executive director Mario Villanueva testified against HB 1851 before the House Committee on Health Care and Wellness last week. Video may be viewed [here](#). In line with the bishops’ legislative priority to respect the dignity of every human being from conception to natural death, the WSCC opposes HB 1851.

#### **Action Alert: Sign In “Pro” To Help Medicaid Recipients Receive Housing and Community Supports**

[Sign in](#) “pro” to help Medicaid recipients receive housing and community supports, [House Bill 1866](#) (HB 1866). This link will be available until noon on Monday, February 21. HB 1866 is scheduled for a hearing in the Senate Committee on Health and Long Term Care on February 21 at 1 pm. HB 1866 establishes the Apple Health and Homes Program, which will provide a

supportive housing benefit and community support services to low-income individuals who have medical risk factors and encounter barriers to finding stable housing. In line with the bishops' health care and affordable housing legislative priorities, the WSCC supports HB 1866.

**Action Alert: Sign In “Pro” To Address Human Trafficking By Commercial Drivers**

[Sign in](#) “pro” for [Senate Bill 5631](#) (SB 5631), which addresses human trafficking by commercial drivers. This link will be available until Thursday, February 24 at 12:30 PM. SB 5631 is scheduled for a hearing in the House Committee on Transportation on February 24 at 1:30 PM. When signing in you may leave the “organization” box blank or write in “parishioner of --- Church.” SB 5631 disqualifies a person convicted of human trafficking offenses from holding a commercial driver license for life. Human trafficking often involves the use of commercial vehicles. In accordance with the bishops' legislative priority to respect the life and dignity of all, the WSCC supports SB 5631.

**Action Alert: Sign In “Pro” To Improve the Working Families Tax Credit**

[Sign in](#) “pro” to improve the Working Families Tax Credit, [House Bill 1888](#) (HB 1888). This link will be available until 3:00 pm on Tuesday, February 22. HB 1888 is scheduled for a hearing in the Senate Committee on Ways and Means on February 21 at 4:00 pm. In 2021 the legislature voted to fund the Working Families Tax Credit, a tax credit that assists low-income, working individuals and families. The Working Families Tax Credit addresses Washington's regressive tax system, which causes low-income Washingtonians to pay a higher percentage of their household income in comparison to wealthier residents. HB 1888 improves the Working Families Tax Credit by aligning rates with federal maximum qualifying income levels. In accordance with the bishops' legislative priority of economic justice, the WSCC supports HB 1888.

**Targeted Action Alerts**

For the following bills, please send a message to your legislators if your legislators are members of the committees indicated below. Identify your district, state legislators, and your legislators' contact information [here](#).

**Oppose the Expansion Of Assisted Suicide**

**Targeted Action Alert:** If your senator is a member of the [Senate Committee on Health and Long Term Care](#), click on our [action alert](#) to urge your senator to oppose the expansion of assisted suicide, [House Bill 1141](#) (HB 1141). Identify your district, state senator, and their contact information [here](#). Thank you to the many advocates who acted quickly and signed in “con” for this bill's hearing on February 18! Initially, those supporting the bill outnumbered us,

but in the end, approximately 100 more people signed in to oppose rather than support assisted suicide!



In 2008 Washington voters approved Initiative 1000, the Physician-Assisted Death Initiative, but only after being assured that certain "safeguards" would be in place. HB 1141 loosens safeguards, increasing access to physician-assisted suicide and accelerating

the process. The bill broadens the definition of a "qualified medical provider" who can make a diagnosis and prescribe lethal medication. Two physicians are no longer required to diagnose a patient. HB 1141 also loosens the definition of those who can provide counseling; in lieu of a psychiatrist or psychologist, a social worker, mental health counselor, or psychiatric advanced nurse practitioner may determine if a patient is suffering from a psychiatric or psychological disorder or depression causing impaired judgement. Additionally, this bill shortens the minimum amount of time from 15 days to just 72 hours that a patient is required to wait between making a request and receiving a prescription to terminate his or her life. The 72 hour wait time may even be waived if the "qualified medical provider" deems that a patient has less than 72 hours to live. HB 1141 also permits assisted suicide prescriptions to be delivered via the mail. In accordance with the bishops' legislative priority to respect life, the WSCC opposes HB 1141.

### **Support the Charity Care Act**

**Targeted Action Alert:** If your senator is a member of the [Senate Committee on Health and Long Term Care](#), please urge your senator to pass the Charity Care Act, [House Bill 1616](#) (HB 1616). Identify your district, your senator, and your senator's contact information [here](#). HB 1616 increases the number of individuals eligible for charity care at hospitals. In accordance with the bishops' hospitals and health care and economic justice legislative priorities, the WSCC supports the Charity Care Act.

### **Affordable Housing from the Real Estate Excise Tax**

**Targeted Action Alert:** If your senator is a member of the [Senate Committee on Housing and Local Government](#), please urge your senator to pass [House Bill 1643](#) (HB 1643), which will exempt the sale or transfer of property to a nonprofit, housing authority, public corporation, county, or municipal corporation from the real estate excise tax if the grantee intends to use the property for rental housing for low-income persons. Identify your district, House representatives, and their contact information [here](#). In line with the bishops' affordable housing legislative priority, the WSCC supports HB 1643.

### **Tribal Consultation and the Climate Commitment Act**

**Targeted Action Alert:** If your state senator is a member of the [Senate Committee on Environment, Energy, and Technology](#), please urge your senator to support tribal consultation with the Climate Commitment Act, [House Bill 1753](#) (HB 1753). Identify your district, your representatives, and your representatives' contact information [here](#). Under HB 1753, state agencies must offer early, meaningful, and individual consultation with any federally recognized tribes affected by Climate Commitment Act programs that may impact tribal resources such as tribal cultural resources, fisheries, and archaeological sites. In accordance with the bishops' legislative priorities to respect the life and dignity of all and to care for God's creation, the WSCC supports HB 1753.

### **Increase Enrollment In the National School Lunch Program and the School Breakfast Program**

**Targeted Action Alert:** If your senator is a member of the [Senate Committee on Early Learning and K-12 Education](#), please urge your senator to pass [House Bill 1833](#) (HB 1833), which creates a statewide electronic system for enrollment in the National School Lunch Program and the School Breakfast Program. Identify your district, senator, and your senator's contact information [here](#). The electronic system created by HB 1833 will determine students' eligibility for free and reduced-price meals in lunch and school breakfast programs. This will increase program participation by families in need. It will also ease schools' applications for schoolwide free meals; entire schools are eligible for free meals when at least 40% of its students are eligible for free lunch and breakfast programs. In accordance with the bishops' legislative

priorities of economic justice and supporting children and families, the WSCC supports HB 1833.

### **Reduce Youth and Young Adult Homelessness**

**Targeted Action Alert:** If your senator is a member of the [Senate Committee on Human Services, Reentry, and Rehabilitation](#), please urge your senator to pass [House Bill 1905](#) (HB 1905). Identify your district, your senator, and your senator's contact info [here](#). HB 1905 establishes a rapid response team to support youth and young adults exiting publicly funded care, including the child welfare system, behavioral health system, juvenile justice system, and programs administered by the Office of Homeless Youth Prevention and Protection Program. Young individuals exiting these programs are at a high risk for experiencing homelessness. In line with the bishops' children and families and affordable housing legislative priorities, the WSCC supports HB 1905.

### **Improve Services For Individuals With Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities**

**Targeted Action Alert:** If your senator is a member of the [House Committee on Housing, Human Services, and Veterans](#), please urge your senator to improve services for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities and support, [Senate Bill 5268](#) (SB 5268). Identify your district, your senator, and your senator's contact information [here](#). SB 5268 is scheduled for a vote on Tuesday, February 22 at 8 AM. SB 5268 increases the capabilities of community residential settings and redesigns intermediate care facilities. This is a landmark bill to improve services for individuals with disabilities. In line with the bishops' legislative priority to care for the aging and those disabilities, the WSCC supports SB 5268.

### **Expanding Eligibility For the Independent Youth Housing Program**

**Targeted Action Alert:** If one of your representatives is a member of the [House Committee on Housing, Human Services, and Veterans](#), please urge your representative to support expanding eligibility for the Independent Youth Housing Program, [Senate Bill 5566](#) (SB 5566). Identify your district, your representatives, and your representatives' contact information [here](#). The Independent Youth Housing Program provides rental assistance and case management services to youth who have aged out of foster care programs. One of the goals of the program is to prevent youth from experiencing homelessness, as this population is at increased risk for homelessness. HB 5566 increases eligibility of the Independent Youth Housing Program by including youth who were in foster care at any time, extending the age limit from 23 to 25, and including youth receiving voluntary extended foster care services. In line with the bishops' children and families and affordable housing legislative priorities, the WSCC supports SB 5566.

### **Cost Sharing for Prescription Drugs**

**Targeted Action Alert:** If one of your representatives is a member of the [House Committee on Health Care and Wellness](#), please urge your representative to support [Senate Bill 5610](#) (SB 5610). Identify your district, your representatives, and your representatives' contact information [here](#). SB 5610 requires that all cost-sharing amounts paid by health insurance enrollees for prescriptions drugs be counted against enrollees' cost sharing requirements, such as deductibles, copayments, coinsurance, or similar obligations. One of the bishops' health care priorities is to address the cost of prescription drugs, and the WSCC supports SB 5610.

## Useful Links For the Legislative Session

[Legislative Priorities of the Washington State Catholic Conference](#)

[Identify your district and legislators](#)

[Washington State Legislature](#) – Information on bills, hearings, legislators, and more

[Find bill information](#)

[WSCC website](#)

## Upcoming Events

**Planting Seeds Of Hope: Taking Action For Our Common Home**

Register for this event [here](#).

The poster features the title "planting seeds of HOPE" where the 'O' is a globe, followed by "TAKING ACTION FOR OUR COMMON HOME". The event details are: "Saturday, March 19<sup>th</sup> from 9am–3pm, Seattle University, Campion Hall, 914 E Jefferson St, Seattle, WA 98122". It notes that the event is free and includes a vegetarian boxed lunch and parking. A red banner at the bottom says "FREE - Earth Justice Summit for all!". Logos for organizers and sponsors are listed at the bottom.

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This free in-person event is open to all and will include a vegetarian boxed lunch & parking.

**FREE - Earth Justice Summit for all!**

ORGANIZED BY

SPONSORED BY

Creation Care Network, St. James Cathedral, SEATTLEU INSTITUTE FOR CATHOLIC THOUGHT AND ACTION, Racine Dominicans, ARCHDIOCESE OF SEATTLE, St. Mary's Queen of Peace, Washington State Catholic Conference

## Important Dates

February 24	Last day to pass bills out of the opposite house with the exception of House fiscal committees and Senate Ways and Means and Transportation Committees
February 28	Last day to pass bills out of House fiscal committees and Senate Ways and Means and Transportation Committees
March 2	Ash Wednesday
March 4	Last day to pass opposite house bills
March 10	Final day of the state legislative session
April 17	Easter

## PREPARES Annual Appeal

The WSCC bishops invite you to learn about and support [PREPARES](#).



*"Your every act  
should be done with love."  
Corinthians 16:14*



Dear Friends,

This simple, yet profound message we find in Corinthians is most fitting as we invite you to join us in opening your hearts with love, care and concern for infants, children, mothers and dads in desperate need.

The PREPARES program is our combined initiative as Catholic bishops to provide a nurturing response to mothers and fathers who have chosen the precious gift of life. A promise of direct support and assistance from pregnancy to their child's fifth birthday. Regardless of religious beliefs, this parish-based program, administered by our Catholic Charities agencies statewide, offers low-income families vital, life-affirming services.

Your gift to PREPARES, no matter the amount, will have real impact in helping to ensure that the critical services for this pro-life, pro-family program continue to thrive and expand in parishes in your region and all across the state of Washington.

From our own hearts, we extend the gift of prayer that you and your family are abundantly blessed and that all those in the sacred care of PREPARES will be renewed by our "every act... done with love."

With gratitude and blessings, we remain in the heart of Christ.

**Archbishop Paul D. Etienne**  
Archbishop of Seattle

**Bishop Joseph J. Tyson**  
Bishop of Yakima

**Bishop Thomas A. Daly**  
Bishop of Spokane

## WSCC Staff



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