

AAUW WA State Legislative Update 1/21/22

**From: Nancy Sapiro – AAUW WA Lobbyist
Week 2**

In this short, 60-day session, things are moving quickly! With limited time in the 2022 session, legislators are making key decisions on which bills to prioritize. Public hearings on policy issues will continue for another week and at the same time decisions are being made on which bills will move on in the process That is where you come in! **Join AAUW members on Monday, January 24 for our annual Lobby Day, as we meet with legislators on our priority bills and urge their support.** This is a great opportunity to engage directly with state lawmakers, meet other AAUW members, and learn more about our state's legislative system.

AAUW-WA 2022 LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

Creating programs to encourage sexual assault nurse examiner training – [HB 1621](#), sponsored by Rep. Mosbrucker, would require the Department of Health to establish a stipend program for licensed nurses training to become certified sexual assault nurse examiners (SANEs). The bill also requires DOH to establish a hospital grant program to increase access to certified SANEs for hospitals without sufficient access. [A sexual assault nurse examiner is a registered nurse specifically trained to provide evidentiary examinations of sexual assault victims. In addition to other services, SANEs provide medical assistance while also assessing, documenting, and preserving evidence for potential prosecutions.] HB 1621 is an attempt to address the acute problem of many counties not having SANE nurses available to offer services to sexual assault survivors. **UPDATE:** HB 1621 passed out of Committee unanimously and has been referred to House Appropriations. [Want to know who sits on the Appropriations Committee? Click here...](#)

Increasing the Availability of sexual assault nurse examiners education in rural and underserved communities – [HB 1622](#), also sponsored by Rep Mosbrucker, would require the WA State University College of Nursing to establish a sexual assault nurse examiner (SANE) online and clinical training program, and a regional SANE leader pilot program. Of note, currently the only entity that offers SANE training in the state is Harborview Medical Center in Seattle. **UPDATE:** The bill also passed out of the Health Care Committee unanimously and has been referred to Appropriations.

Keep Our Care Act – [SB 5688](#)/HB 1809, sponsored by Senator Randall and Rep Simmons respectively, would ensure that health entity mergers and acquisitions improve, rather than harm, access to affordable quality care. Our state has seen a proliferation of hospital mergers over the past 10 years, and they often have negatively impacted cost, quality and access to necessary health care, particularly access to reproductive and end of life e. SB 5688 would give the AG's office the tools it needs to ensure that future health system mergers and other transactions improve access to care. Specifically, the bill would prohibit a health entity consolidation that diminishes access to affordable quality care and would ensure AG oversight of all mergers. It also would allow for community input through public notification of proposed

consolidations and the opportunity for public input and comment. **UPDATE:** There was a robust public hearing on SB 5688 in Senate Law and Justice on January 18. Thank you to all the AAUW members who signed in as supportive. The bill is now scheduled for executive action on Senate Law and Justice on January 27. [Click here...if you want to know who sits on the Senate Law and Justice Committee](#). You can write them and ask them to move the bill out of Committee. The email convention for all legislators is `firstname.lastname@leg.wa.gov`

Creating Teaching Endorsements in Computer Science – [SB 5389](#), sponsored by Senator Wellman, was introduced in the 2021 legislative session. In 2021, the bill passed out of its policy committee but didn't move out of Senate Ways and Means. If the bill is to progress this session, there will need to be a public hearing in Ways and Means. The endorsement created by SB 5389 would allow current teachers to be qualified to teach computer science. These specialty endorsements will allow greater accessibility to computer science courses and skills to underserved communities. **UPDATE:** The bill is in Ways and Means. A hearing date has not yet been set.

Concerning Protections and Services for Indigenous Persons who are Missing Murdered or Survivors of Human Trafficking – [HB 1571](#), sponsored by Rep Mosbrucker, builds off legislation passed both in 2017 and 2018, addressing the ongoing tragedy of missing and indigenous persons. Information provided during the public hearing indicates that the indigenous population of WA makes up less than 2% of the population while at same time accounting for almost 80% of the MIP in this state. HB 1517 would create new protections and services for missing and indigenous persons including changes to the duties and responsibilities of coroners and medical examiners; creation of grant programs, and changes to the duties of law enforcement. **UPDATE:** HB 1571 moved out of House Public Safety on January 20. It is anticipated the bill will now move to the Appropriations Committee, but no hearing date has been set.

Affirm WA Access to Abortion Act – [HB 1851](#) sponsored by Rep Thai, will ensure that qualified licensed health care providers can include abortion services in their practice. This legislation comes at a critical juncture when threats to abortion are intensifying across the country. Thirteen other states already recognize that certain advanced practice clinicians can safely and effectively provide abortion, and providers have already been doing so in Washington under the guidance of two Attorney General Opinions. Passing this legislation would remove legal ambiguity and ensure that providers are not unnecessarily prohibited from offering abortion care when it is within their existing scope of practice. The bill will also modernize the statute's language to be gender neutral and inclusive. **UPDATE:** HB 1851 was heard in committee on January 20. The bill is scheduled for executive action on January 26.

Changes to the Paid Family Leave – [SB 5649](#), sponsored by Senator Robinson, will make improvements to our Paid Family and Medical Leave law by making it more compassionate and easier for workers, health care providers, and employers to utilize. The bill will: allow people to apply up to 45 days in advance of an expected leave; extend family caregiving leaves up to 14

days after the death of the family member for whom the worker was providing care, or after the death of a newborn or stillborn child; allow people to take medical leave during the first 6 weeks after giving birth without requiring additional medical certification. A public hearing was held on January 13 and advocates provided compelling testimony on the need for these changes. **UPDATE:** The bill is currently scheduled for executive action on January 24.

Providing Wage and Salary Information – [SB 5761](#), sponsored by Senator Randall, will expand upon current law, by requiring employers to disclose additional information in job postings. Specifically, when posting job openings, an employer would have to disclose the hourly or salary compensation, or a range of the compensation, and a general description of the benefits offered. The bill was heard in Senate Labor on January 17. As of this writing, no executive action has been scheduled.