

Weekly Legislative Update: Health Care

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The 50th anniversary of Roe v. Wade is January 22nd. The focus of sign-in PRO request this week reflects our present political reality and how fortunate we are to live in Washington State. Let us further protect Democracy and our rights.

Bills Needing Action This Week, Please Sign in Pro for the following Bills:

You may express support for bills in hearings with the online process as citizens. Remember, only authorized members can speak for the League; the Issue Chairs will do that, so please leave the "Organization" box blank. A more powerful influence is really to have many voices speaking for themselves rather than many voices speaking for the League.

HB 1115 Cost Sharing for Abortions. Sponsored by Representative Bateman and seventeen others. This bill seeks to end the practice of copays and coinsurance preventing women from obtaining abortion care.

Sign in **Pro** here: [Washington State Legislature - Public Bill Comments](#)

HB 1263 Concerning material changes to the materials and operation structure of participants in the healthcare marketplace (previously Keep Our Care Act (KOCA)). Companion Bill to the Senate Bill 5241 (Described below). This bill is sponsored by Representatives Simmons, Stonier, Macri and Pollet in the house. This bill has been referred to the Civil Rights and Justice Committee.

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HJR 4201 House Joint Resolution. This is a companion bill to SJR 8202. Sponsored by Representative Gregerson and thirty-two others.

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HB 1469 Concerning access to reproductive services and gender affirming treatment in Washington state. Sponsored by Representatives Hansen and Thai.

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SB 5241 Concerning material changes to the materials and operation structure of participants in the healthcare marketplace (previously Keep Our Care Act (KOCA)). ([Washington State Legislature](#)). Sponsored by Senator Randall and sixteen others, this bill seeks to limit mergers and acquisitions of hospitals and healthcare facilities. Passage gives the Attorney General further legal grounds to investigate and intervene in cases where takeover of a secular healthcare facility limits choice in personal healthcare decision making. This is particularly of concern in end of life, gender affirming care and the whole of reproductive healthcare. This bill was referred to the Senate Law & Justice committee on 1/24/23.

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SB 5242 Prohibits cost sharing for abortion. Sponsored by Senator Cleveland and sixteen others. Companion bill to HB 1115. It will be heard in Senate Law & Justice 1/24/23.

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SB 5260 Protecting and assisting Washington employers and that provides access to or benefits for reproductive healthcare services. Sponsored by Senator Keiser and sixteen others.

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SB 5489 Concerning access to reproductive health care services and gender affirming treatment in Washington state. Sponsored by Senator Trudeau and Wellman. This is a companion bill to HB 1469.

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SJR 8202 Senate Joint Resolution. Amending the State Constitution to address reproductive freedom. This resolution will require passage by two-thirds of the membership in both the House and Senate and if passed will be voted on by the voters in the next general election. Sponsored by Senators Keiser and Kuderer and fourteen others. This bill will be heard in Senate Law & Justice on 1/24/23,

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Other Bills We Support

These bills also require your attention and action now by emailing your legislators and letting them know they are important to you as their constituent. [Get their emails here: Washington State Legislature.](#)

HB 1027 Concerning telemedicine. Extending the Telemedicine time frame option (until 01/2017) in which real-time telemedicine using both audio and video technology may be used and has important consequences for the underserved, frail, and elderly especially in rural communities. This bill was moved to the committee on health and healthcare. Sponsored by Representative Riccelli and eighteen others. It was heard in executive session.

HB 1035 Prohibiting healthcare entities from restricting certain healthcare services by health care providers. This bill clarifies that health care providers have agency in what services can be provided if they are within scope of practice and approved by Department of health (DOH). We will be following this bill as we look for amendments. Sponsored by Representative Walen.

HB 1222 Requiring coverage for hearing Instruments. Sponsored by Representative Orwall and 16 others. This bill has expanded to include everyone who requires hearing instruments. It is an access to care issue the League has consistently supported.

HB 1281 Increasing access to the provisions of the Washington death with dignity act. (Previously Concerning Death with Dignity.) Sponsored by the Representative Rude and twenty-one others. (The companion bill is **SB 5179.**) This bill is scheduled to be heard on January 25th at 1:30pm in Health Care & Wellness.

HB 1340 Concerning actions by health professions' disciplining authorities against license holders and applicants. This is a companion bill to SB 5400 described below. Sponsored by Riccelli and twenty-four others.

SB 5036 Concerning telemedicine. This is a companion bill to HB 1027. Sponsored by Senator Muzzall.

SB 5103 Concerning payment to acute care hospitals for difficult to discharge Medicaid patients. Patients in hospitals in small communities are waiting to be discharged to other placement such as a nursing home bed. This bill will protect these hospitals which smaller and rural communities cannot afford to lose. Sponsored by Senator Muzzall. There was a comprehensive work session, and the bill had a public hearing in the Health and Long-Term Care Committee on 1/17/23.

SB 5400 Concerning actions by health professions' disciplining authorities against license holders and applicants. This bill seeks to protect healthcare license holders or applicants from having action taken against them for providing gender affirming or reproductive healthcare. Sponsored by Senator Salomon and sixteen others.

Bills We Oppose

Please take action on these items:

SB 5098 Prohibiting abortion based on Down syndrome. This bill was sponsored by Senator Padden and three others. (The companion bill is **HB 1379**.) The bill seeks to control a person's freedom to make medical choices and interferes with an individual's bodily autonomy.

Please Sign in **Oppose** here: [Washington State Legislature - Public Bill Comments](#)

SB 5184 Considering Anesthesia Assistants. This bill is sponsored by Senator Rivers and six others. (The companion bill is **HB 1038**.) This bill seeks a new classification of assistants to anesthesiologists. This bill instead of lifting and supporting Certified Nurse Anesthetists (CRNAs) who are critical to the existing healthcare workforce especially in rural communities, has the potential to undermine them. CRNAs are an independent and well-established profession with an exemplary educational program at Gonzaga.

Please Sign in **Oppose** here: [Washington State Legislature - Public Bill Comments](#)

How You Can Be Involved

- Local Leagues in Washington have action chairs who coordinate action teams. Some local Leagues have health care teams to take action locally. Contact your local League action chair to find out and join.
- Please work with LWVWA issue chairs and become involved with our Healthcare Affinity group. We welcome your perspectives as we determine our support for legislation and prepare testimony for the session. Contact Kim Abbey to be added to our Healthcare Affinity Group: kabbey48@gmail.com.