



# Legislative **ACTION** Newsletter

A Publication of the League of Women Voters of Washington



## Action Alerts

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

#### Expand Community Solar Projects

Community solar projects are medium-sized solar arrays sited on landfills, former industrial sites, private lands, and other preferred areas near utility customers they will serve, including households, small businesses, and public service organizations. [HB 2253](#), Community Solar Projects, would enable low-income residents to benefit from solar energy with system installation funding from already established sources such as the Federal Inflation Reduction Act.

⚠️ **Sign in PRO** on HB 2253 [here](#) by 3:00 PM on Tuesday, January 16.

#### Give People Incarcerated as Young Adults an Opportunity for a Second Chance

Under current law, people serving long sentences for crimes committed before age 18 can seek review of their sentences. [HB 1325](#), Second Chances for People Incarcerated as Young Adults, raises the age for sentence review to 25. This change recognizes developments in brain science establishing that our brains are not fully developed until age 25. It also responds to extreme racial disparities in sentencing for young adults. For example, while Black people make up less than 5% of the state’s population, they account for nearly one-third of people serving long sentences for crimes they were convicted of as young adults.

⚠️ **Sign in PRO** on HB 1325 [here](#).

#### Restoring Voting Rights for People in Prison, Except Those in Lifetime Confinement for Crime Punishable by Death

[HB 2030](#) recognizes the unjust silencing of Black, Indigenous, and lower-income voters through practices like prison disenfranchisement, which mirrors past racist tactics such as poll taxes, literacy tests, and grandfather clauses. The bill is not about granting a new right but rectifying a historical wrong. By reinstating the voting rights that were taken away for racist purposes, this legislation takes a significant step toward rectifying systemic inequalities.

⚠️ **Sign in PRO** on HB 2030 [here](#) by 12:30 PM on Tuesday, January 16.

[See All Action Alerts](#)



## This Week in the Legislature

Welcome to the 2024 League of Women Voters of WA Legislative Action Newsletter! We look forward to updating you each week about the legislative session. We urge you to use the Action Alerts throughout this and every edition.

This session began with a bang on Monday, January 8. Already each committee has held public hearings and executive sessions to make decisions about pending bills, whether to amend or move out of committee with a Do Pass recommendation or to hold the bill in committee.

This session is the second of the biennium and typically addresses budget adjustments and catch-up from the prior year. Each biennium has a long session in odd years, 105 days, and a short session in even numbered years, of only 60 days. But this year a remarkable number of prefiled bills are on the table in addition to bills from last year that haven't been passed. Further, the recently filed initiatives are on the agenda, which is not typical. So the legislators are acting under tremendous pressure to address budget and policy needs.

Please see the League's legislative priorities here and use the weekly updates linked below in addition to the prominent Action Alerts that follow. The weekly updates provide more details on pending legislation and contact information for our Issue Chairs, in case you would like to contact them for more information.

For additional information and to participate in meetings with local legislators, plan to attend the Democracy Lobby Week, January 22 through 26. There are brief meetings to address talking points on key issues and meetings with legislators virtually during the day. [Sign up here.](#)

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!



## Breaking Down the Legislature

### The Legislative Biennium

The second year of the biennium is generally considered a "catch-up" time. Bills pending from the first year of the biennium are still on the table for consideration, and importantly, a supplemental budget is passed to address changes in revenue forecasts or policy needs. The Governor submitted a supplemental budget proposal to the Legislature in December 2023 that assumes there is somewhat greater revenue than forecast in 2023. House and Senate fiscal committees have held public hearings on it already this week. The next step will be for the legislative fiscal committees to each develop their own proposals, which will be given public hearings as well. When each chamber passes its budget, the two versions will be negotiated to form one that both chambers pass and the Governor will sign.



## 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 next to an overview, it indicates there are actions to take for this week. Click on the "⚠️" to be taken to our Action Alerts page.

### [Democracy](#)

Elections | [Issue overview](#).

Money in Politics | [Issue overview](#)  
Education | [Issue overview](#)  
Local News and Democracy | [Issue overview](#)  
Redistricting | [Issue overview](#)

### [Environment](#)

Climate Crisis and Energy | [Issue overview](#) ⚠️  
Forests | [Issue overview](#) | [Weekly update](#)  
Growth Management | [Issue overview](#)  
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](#)

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## Calendar and Events

- JAN 22–26 | Democracy Lobby Week

## Support Our Advocacy Work

League of Women Voters of Washington  
1511 3rd Avenue, Suite 900, Seattle, WA 98101  
206-622-8961 | 1-800-419-2596 | [www.lwwwa.org](http://www.lwwwa.org)

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.

The League of Women Voters of Washington  
1511 Third Ave, Suite 900  
Seattle, WA 98101  
United States

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