

FAN 2023 Legislative Agenda (annotated)

approved by FAN Board 12-20-2022

In each category of our legislative agenda, we seek to advocate for and implement systems and policies that advance racial equity.

PROMOTE ECONOMIC JUSTICE: *We value economic justice and security, enabling all people and communities to flourish. We collaborate with the Working Families Tax Credit and Balance Our Tax Code coalitions.*

- **Working Families Tax Credit fixes and expansion to ensure that those eligible receive benefits in a timely manner and that program works as intended.**
 - Establishing a 3-year lookback window of time for applicants to claim the WFTC
 - Including the Married Filing Separately filing status fully in eligibility
 - Ensuring ITIN filers don't face delays due to federal processing issues
 - Potentially adding a biannual reporting requirement for DOR to the legislature on the progress of the program
 - Expansion of age eligibility to 18 and over. Currently, age eligibility is at least 25 and under 65 years of age OR have a qualifying child in 2022.
- **Statewide Guaranteed Basic Income (GBI) pilot program.** The Guaranteed Basic Income (GBI) bill is a pilot program that would put cash into the pockets of communities experiencing economic instability.
- **Washington Future Fund "Baby Bonds"** would create a pool of money that every child born under the state's Medicaid program, Apple Health, could access a portion of upon adulthood to use toward homeownership, education or pursuing a small business. The trusts are intended to even the financial playing field for lower-income residents.
- **Wealth Tax on Billionaires:** A state wealth tax will close a major loophole in our tax code and will ensure that the very wealthiest, such as our state's 100 or so billionaires, pay more of their fair share so everyone in Washington can thrive. This tax is structured as a property tax on financial property, such as corporate stocks and bonds. This policy will bring in billions in progressive revenue per year by assessing a one percent tax on financial intangible assets, with the first \$1 billion exempt.
- **Repeal Statewide Advisory Votes (Sen. Kuderer, Rep. Walen):** Remove non-binding advisory votes from the ballot and add more information about the Legislature's budgeting and fiscal decisions to the statewide voter's pamphlet.

PROTECT AND EXPAND THE SOCIAL SAFETY NET: *We value sufficient healthy food for all, and a stronger safety net for people living in poverty. We collaborate with the Anti-Hunger and Nutrition Coalition and WA Anti-Poverty Advocates Group.*

- **Free School Meals for All Students (OSPI, Rep. Ricelli, Sen. Nobles):** Providing meals would be part of the right to education. This is a pathway to end child hunger and relieve financial burden on Washington families.
- **Hunger Free College Campus:** Ensures that all students have a BFET navigator. The Basic Food, Employment and Training program (BFET) provides access and services to food stamp recipients in Washington state. Services include job search and job search training, education and skills training, and support services.

REFORM THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM: *We value fairness and respect for human dignity within the criminal justice system and opportunities for restoring futures during and after serving time. We collaborate with the Multifaith Coalition for Restorative Justice, ACLU and others.*

- **Solitary Confinement Reform (Rep. Peterson).** Reform solitary confinement practices in Washington prisons to make more humane.
- **Real Labor, Real Wages Act (Rep. Simmons)** to require that incarcerated workers in Washington prisons be paid minimum wage. Additionally, the bill directs DOC to submit a report to the Legislature examining the services incarcerated persons are charged for, the average debts owed by an incarcerated person to DOC, the average percentage of costs paid for by an incarcerated person prior to release, and the average debts owed by an incarcerated person upon release.
- **Repealing Unconstitutional Statutes in State Law including the Death Penalty (Sen. Pedersen)** Removes language from the Revised Code of Washington that has been identified by the justices of the state Supreme Court or judges of the superior courts as defects and omissions in the laws pursuant to Article IV section 25 of the Washington state Constitution, including repealing Washington's death penalty

INCREASE GUN RESPONSIBILITY and PUBLIC SAFETY: *We value safe communities free of violence. We collaborate with the Alliance for Gun Responsibility.*

- **Banning the Sale of Assault Weapons (Sen. Kuderer, Rep. Peterson)** Prohibits the sale, manufacture, transport, and import of assault weapons in Washington state while allowing reasonable exemptions for law enforcement and the military. The legislation does not prohibit the possession of assault weapons.
- **Firearm Industry Responsibility & Gun Violence Victims' Access to Justice Act (Sen. Pedersen, Rep. Hackney)** Requires firearm industry members to establish, implement, and enforce reasonable controls regarding the manufacture, sale, distribution, importing, use, and marketing of firearm-related products. A violation of this bill is a violation of the Consumer Protection Act.
- **Require a Permit to Purchase Firearms (Sen. Liias, Rep. Berry):** Permit to purchase systems require a comprehensive background check, safety training, and waiting period to purchase a firearm. States with permit to purchase laws have lower rates of firearm-related death, lower rates of guns diverted to criminals shortly after retail sale, and lower rates of guns exported to criminals in other states.

We strongly support safety and justice for Indigenous Communities.

- **Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women & People (MMIWP) Cold Case Unit (Sen. Dhingra, Rep. Lekanoff)** Creates a cold case investigations unit within the Office of the Attorney General for the primary purpose of assisting local and tribal law enforcement agencies to solve cold cases involving missing and murdered indigenous women and people. Unanimously recommended by the Washington State Missing & Murdered Indigenous Women & People Task Force.

We are part of the WA Coalition for Police Accountability to increase public safety, reduce police violence and increase police accountability.

- **Accountability for Systemic Issues in Police Misconduct Rooting out systemic civil rights violations (Rep. Drew Hansen)** This bill empowers the Attorney General's Office to investigate and take action on patterns and practices of misconduct at law enforcement agencies. The investigations can address systemic misconduct in policies, practices, departmental accountability systems, and training. This will allow for increased oversight of local law enforcement and help ensure a baseline of quality policing consistent with our constitution and state laws across Washington.
- **Civil Remedy for Victims and Families of Police Misconduct (Rep. My-Linh Thai)** Today, if a person's constitutional rights are violated by police, the victim or family has no right under state law to

address the harm and injuries. This bill authorizes victims and their families to sue for violations of the state constitution or state laws, without the federal shield of qualified immunity. This will encourage accountability, training, and better supervision and recognizes that police are not above the law

- **Independent Prosecutor for Deadly Force Creating an Office of Independent Prosecutor (Rep. Monica Stonier)** In November 2020 the Governor's Task Force on Police Use of Deadly Force identified real or perceived conflicts of interest by the local prosecutor as an obstacle in the prosecution of alleged police criminal conduct. This bill would create a state office, working with the new Office of Independent Investigations, to handle these charging decisions and any prosecution to ensure fair, credible, and transparent prosecutions.
- **Traffic Safety Stops It's Time to Prioritize Traffic Safety for All.** Low-level traffic stops like expired tabs and broken taillights can lead to criminal system entanglement, debt, and bankruptcy. Ending stops for non-moving violations will allow law enforcement to focus on high risk stops such as impaired, distracted, and reckless driving. This will reduce disproportionate impacts on communities of color and end interactions that too often escalate to violence. The bill includes grants for innovative solutions that help people comply with the law and fix their vehicles to avoid low-level violations.

PROVIDE AFFORDABLE HOUSING: *We work toward stable, affordable, and safe housing for every person. In 2023, we support the Governor's budget and the WA Low Income Housing Alliance priorities addressing housing and homelessness.*

- **Governor \$4 Billion referendum to capital budget increasing new housing units** to 7,500 in the next two years and 19,000 in the following two years.
- **Address Equity in Housing.** \$8 million for Black, Indigenous, and other people of color-led organizations for organizational support and capacity building to address inequitable access to the Housing Trust fund.
- **Increase proposed funding for the Tenancy Preservation Program and the Landlord Mitigation Fund.** The Department of Commerce anticipates that an appropriation of approximately \$10 million would address the backlog and prevent many tenants from experiencing eviction and homelessness.
- **Increase funding for organizations with human services contracts providing affordable housing and homelessness services** to address frontline workforce crisis.
- **\$400 million for Housing Trust Fund** to build and preserve permanently and deeply affordable homes.
- **Address Rent Increases.** Prevent abusive and extreme rent increases that are used to deny tenants of their rights, including to protections against no-cause evictions. Cap yearly rent increases that a landlord can charge a tenant to a fair amount to account for costs and improvements.
- **Create an enforcement mechanism for landlord obligations under the Residential Landlord Tenant Act.** Create an accessible and expedited enforcement process for tenants to use when their landlord does not abide by their basic obligations under the residential landlord tenant act (HB 2023 in 2022).

ADDRESS CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE *We value human interactions with the earth that promote resilience, sustainability, equity and care. We support a just transition and securing energy access for all Washington residents. We collaborate with Earth Ministry/Interfaith Power & Light.*

- **Address Climate Change** by improving the state's climate response through updates to the state's comprehensive planning framework. Ensure Washington cities and counties are planning for climate-resilient communities while reducing our contributions to the climate crisis.

- **Washington Recycling and Packaging Act (The WRAP Act)** Our recycling system needs to be modernized so packaging can actually be recycled, composted, or reused. The WRAP Act addresses this waste by creating a set of graduated fees on packaging manufacturers based on how readily reusable, compostable, or recyclable their products are. These fees will be used to fund improvements in infrastructure, uniform access for residents across the state, and a clear list of what people can recycle. This bill will have the added benefit of shifting recycling costs away from ratepayers and onto the manufacturers.
- **Extreme Heat Utility Shutoff Moratorium (Sen. Nguyen, Rep. Mena)** Prohibits utility providers from discontinuing electric service and drinking water to residential customers during days of extreme heat.
- **Ensure frontline communities are prioritized and decarbonization goals are met** when building upon the work of the Clean Energy Transformation Act, Climate Commitment Act, Healthy Environmental for All (HEAL) Act, and Move Ahead Washington.
- **Ensure the protection of Orcas and the restoration of Salmon for future generations.**

PROTECT HEALTHCARE ACCESS: *We affirm the right to access equitable, appropriate and affordable health care, responsive to individual identities. We collaborate with Health Care is a Human Right coalition, unions and other organizations.*

- **Healthcare Equity for Immigrants Campaign (HEIC):** Every Washingtonian should have access to health care, but federal restrictions and state austerity cuts have left many immigrants in our state without critical health services. The 2021 operating budget directed the Health Benefit Exchange to pursue the creation of a health coverage program by 2024 for people who are ineligible for federal assistance. The Health Equity for Immigrants Campaign is calling on the Legislature to fulfill this promise and fund the next steps in this effort to ensure the program is successfully launched in 2024. Meeting the basic health care needs for all Washingtonians will make every community healthier and our economy stronger.
- **Keep Our Care Act:** In Washington state, mergers and acquisitions between health care entities like hospitals and provider organizations are prolific and can negatively impact cost, quality, and access to necessary health care services, including reproductive, end-of-life and gender-affirming care. The Keep Our Care Act would hold health entities accountable by requiring Attorney General oversight of health entity consolidations and by requiring that consolidations improve rather than harm communities' access to affordable quality care.
- **Safe Health Care Staffing:** Health care workers struggle to meet patient needs due to unsafe working conditions and dangerous patient loads, leading to burnout and high turnover. Establishing minimum staffing standards, improving rest and meal breaks, and creating overtime provisions are critical to improving worker safety and patient care.
- **Shield Law** to protect reproductive care patients and providers from out-of-state legal action

SUPPORT IMMIGRANT and REFUGEE RIGHTS: *We value hospitality and opportunity for immigrants and refugees living and working in our state. We collaborate with WA Immigrant Solidarity Network, Jewish Coalition for Immigrant Justice, and others.*

- **Support additional state funding for refugees and refugee-serving organizations**, including providing legal services to those in need.
- **Unemployment benefits for undocumented workers (Sen. Saldana).** This bill will create a permanent, separate unemployment system that provides benefits to undocumented workers.
- **Healthcare Equity for Immigrants Campaign (HEIC):** see Healthcare section.