

## Weekly Legislative Update: **Health Care**

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Thank you for the many actions you have taken thus far! Bills were in fiscal committees and if they survived will now progress through Rules and into the other side of the house. This is the time to [email your representatives to request bills move onto the floor for a vote](#). When you see **TAKE ACTION** click the link!

As always, the most effective influence we can have really is to have many voices speaking for themselves rather than many voices speaking for the League. Remember to speak for yourself and the Issue Chairs will speak for the League. [Learn how to participate HERE](#)

### **Support Bills Addressing Health Care Staffing**

Email your representative where indicated:

**[SB 5236](#) Concerning hospital staffing standards.** Sponsored by Sen. Robinson and fourteen others. Relating to improving nurse and health care worker safety and patient care by establishing minimum staffing standards in hospitals, requiring hospital staffing committees to develop staffing plans, addressing mandatory overtime and meal and rest breaks, and providing for enforcement. **Executive session 2/24/23, passed to RULES.**

**TAKE ACTION [HERE](#)**

**[SB 5278](#) Implementing audit recommendations to reduce barriers to home care aide certification.** Sponsored by Sen. L. Wilson and eight others. Requires the departments of Health and Social and Health Services to address delays between training and testing, the lack of test sites, and performance and contract management processes, and submitting a report to the Governor and Legislature no later than June 30, 2024. **Executive session 2/24/23 2nd substitute Do Pass, passed to Rules.**

**TAKE ACTION [HERE](#)**

**[SB 5373](#) Requiring equal reimbursement for advanced registered nurse practitioners, physician assistants, and physicians.** Sponsored by Sen. Randall and eighteen others. Requires health carriers to reimburse advanced registered nurse practitioners and physician

assistants at the same rate as physicians for providing the same service in the same service area. **No action was taken in Executive session 2/24/23. This bill may be dead.**

**HB 1495 Requiring equal reimbursement for advanced registered nurse practitioners, physician assistants, and physicians.** Sponsored by Rep. Simmons and twelve others. This is a companion bill for SB 5373 described above. **It was read on 1/23 and referred to Health Care & Wellness.**

**SB 5454 Concerning industrial insurance coverage for posttraumatic stress disorders affecting registered nurses.** Sponsored by Sen. Cleveland and eleven others. Provides industrial insurance coverage for posttraumatic stress disorders affecting registered nurses. **Executive session 2/24/23, 2<sup>nd</sup> sub passed to Rules.**

**TAKE ACTION [HERE](#)**

**HB 1593 Concerning industrial insurance coverage for posttraumatic stress disorders affecting registered nurses.** Sponsored by Rep. Macri and eleven others. This is a companion bill to SB 5454, see description above. **Executive Action taken 2/24/23 passed to Rules.**

**TAKE ACTION [HERE](#)**

**SB 5498 Creating the hospital-based nurse student loan repayment assistance program under the Washington health corps.** Sponsored by Sen. Mullet and nine others. Creates a nursing student loan repayment assistance program under the Washington health corps. **Executive session but no action 2/23/23.**

**HB 1643 Creating the hospital-based nurse student loan repayment assistance program under the Washington health corps.** Sponsored by Rep. Riccelli and 10 others. This is a companion bill to SB 5498 – see description above. **It was heard in the House Committee on Postsecondary Education & Workforce on 2/7/23.**

**SB 5582 Reducing barriers and expanding educational opportunities to increase the supply of nurses in Washington.** Sponsored by Sen. Holy and twenty others. Requires the state board for community and technical colleges to develop a plan to increase credential opportunities in nursing. Creates nursing education opportunities at community and technical colleges and within the Department of Veterans Affairs. Modifies program approval and training requirements under the Nursing Care Quality Assurance Commission. Will create the High School Student Certified Nursing Assistant Pilot Program. **Second Substitute passed in Ways & Means 2/23/23, passed to Rules.**

**TAKE ACTION [HERE](#)**

## **Continue to Act on Reproductive Freedom and Care:**

Contact your Senator or Representatives and ask them to move the bill to the floor for a vote by sending an email when you see **TAKE ACTION**

### **SB 5241 Concerning material changes to the materials and operation structure of participants in the healthcare marketplace (previously Keep Our Care Act (KOCA)).**

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. **Passed out of Ways & Means 2/23/23 without recommendation to rules.**

**TAKE ACTION [HERE](#)**

### **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 SB 5241 (Described above). This bill is sponsored by Representatives Simmons, Stonier, Macri and Pollet in the house. This bill has been referred to the Civil Rights and Judiciary Committee.

**SB 5242 Prohibits cost sharing for abortion.** Sponsored by Senator Cleveland and sixteen others. Companion bill to HB 1115 (description for this bill is provided below). **It is waiting in Rules for a 2<sup>nd</sup> reading.**

**TAKE ACTION [HERE](#)**

**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 some women from obtaining abortion care. **It was heard and referred to the Healthcare & Wellness Committee on 1/9/23.**

**SB 5351 Addressing the collection, sharing, and selling of consumer health data.** Companion bill to HB 1155 described below. **Referred to Law & Justice on 1/12/23.**

**HB 1155 Addressing the collection, sharing, and selling of consumer health data.** Establishes consumer rights regarding health data; defines obligations of regulated entities that collect, process, share, and sell consumer health data. Prohibits selling consumer health data without a valid authorization. Prohibits implementing a geofence to track or collect data from

consumers who enter certain health care entities.

**SB 5260 Protecting and assisting Washington employers providing access to or benefits for reproductive healthcare services.** Sponsored by Senator Keiser and sixteen others. A companion bill to HB 1286. Bill description is provided with the house bill. **It was heard in Senate Labor & Commerce 1/24/23. This bill may be dead.**

**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. Companion bill to HB 1340 described below. Sponsored by Senator Salomon and sixteen others. **First reading was 1/16/23 in Health & Long-Term Care.**

**HB 1340 Concerning actions by health professionals disciplining authorities against applicants and license holders.** Sponsored by Rep. Riccelli and twenty-four others. **On the floor calendar!**

**SB 5489 Concerning access to reproductive health care services and gender affirming treatment in Washington state.** Sponsored by Senator Trudeau and Wellman and thirteen others. This bill provides legal protection for individuals who provide or receive protected health care services from lawsuits or criminal cases commenced in other states. This is a companion bill to HB 1469 described below. This bill has been referred to the Health & Long-term Care Committee. It was heard in committee in Senate Law & Justice 1/24/23; **It was then passed on 1/27/23 to Rules for a second reading. This bill may be dead.**

**HB 1469 Concerning access to reproductive services and gender affirming treatment in Washington state.** Sponsored by Representatives Hansen and Thai and twenty-five others. This is a companion bill to SB 5489 described above. **The bill is on the floor calendar!**

**SB 5501 Establishing a public education program to reduce the incidence of stillbirth using a platform for recording and tracking fetal movements.** This bill is sponsored by Senator Keiser and three others. Fetal death and stillbirths are a significant issue across the country. In Washington both Indigenous and APIA mothers suffer significantly elevated rates of fetal death. **There was a public hearing on 2/7/23 and an Executive session on 2/10/23 followed by another on 2/16/23 where action was taken. Referred to Ways & Means. This bill may be dead.**

**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 had a public hearing

in Senate Health & Long-term Care Committee on 1/24/23 at 8am and was heard in Executive Session on 1/31/23 and received a Do Pass recommendation. **It has been passed to Rules as of 2/1/23.**

**This may be our last chance to get a floor vote. Please, TAKE ACTION [HERE](#)**

**[HJR 4201](#) House Joint Resolution.** This is a companion bill to SJR 8202 which was heard in the Senate Health and Long-Term care committee on 1/24/23. Sponsored by Representative Gregerson and thirty-four others and it is currently **waiting for a hearing in the House Healthcare and Wellness committee.**

## **Other Bills We Support**

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

## **Senate Bills**

**[SB 5036](#) Concerning telemedicine.** This is a companion bill to HB 1027 (described below). Sponsored by Senator Muzzall. **This bill has passed through the Senate and has moved on to the house for a floor hearing!**

**[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. **Executive action in Ways & Means 2/23/23, passed to Rules 1/24/23.**

**TAKE ACTION [HERE](#)**

**[SB 5179](#) Increasing access to the provisions of the Death with Dignity Act.** This is a companion bill to HB 1281 described below (which was introduced in the house this past week and has been championed by Rep. Skylar Rude for many years.) This senate bill is sponsored by Senator Pederson and nineteen others. This bill has faced opposition principally due to religious beliefs. The League has supported this bill over many years. The bill had a public hearing on February 2, 2023, **on the floor calendar!**

**[SB 5373](#) Requiring equal reimbursement for advanced registered nurse practitioners, physician assistants, and physicians.** This bill would require health plans (other than health

maintenance organizations) to reimburse Advanced Nurse Practitioners and Physician Assistants at the same rate as physicians when they perform the same service. The bill defines the positions and includes behavioral health. The bill becomes effective for health plans after 1/1/2024. The bill requires the Dept. of Insurance to study the impact of the bill and produce a report in 2025. **No action was taken in Executive Session 2/24/23.**

**SB 5499 Concerning the multistate nursing licensure compact.** A bill sponsored by Senator Mullet and six others would seek changes in existing law to allow Washington state to cooperate with other states so that Registered Nurses with a Washington license or a nurse from another state with a compact agreement could practice in Washington. **Passed to Rules 2/17/23.**

**TAKE ACTION [HERE](#)**

**SB 5519 Improving Health Care Consumer Affordability through the Health Care Cost Transparency board.** Sponsored by Sen. Robinson and eleven others. This is a companion bill to HB 1508. **It was heard and referred to Health & Long-Term Care 1/23/23.**

## **House Bills**

**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. Sponsored by Rep. Riccelli and eighteen others and has bipartisan support. This bill was moved to the committee on health and healthcare and heard, in Executive Session on 1/13/23 and received a Do Pass recommendation and referred to Rules where it was relieved of further consideration. **It is on the floor calendar!**

**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. Sponsored by Representative Walen. The bill was heard in committee on 1/17/23. **This bill may be dead.**

**HB 1222 Requiring coverage for hearing Instruments.** This bill passed out of the house and is scheduled for executive session this week. Sponsored by Representative Orwall and sixteen others. **It is on the floor calendar.**

**HB 1281 Increasing access to the provisions of the Death with Dignity Act.** Sponsored by Representative Rude and twenty-one others. **It is now on the floor calendar!**

**HB 1495 Requiring equal reimbursement for ARNPs PAs, and physicians.** Sponsored by Rep.

Simmons and twelve others, this is a companion bill to SB 5373. Read on 1/23/23 and referred to Health Care & Wellness.

**[HB 1508](#) Improving Health Care Consumer Affordability through the Health Care Cost Transparency Board.** Sponsored by Representative Macri and thirteen others. This bill directs the Board to study consumer underinsurance, consider the role of profit as a driver of spending and directs the Board to study the role of non-profit tax breaks on spending as well as other important considerations. This bill was scheduled for an Executive session on 2/8/23 at 1:30pm.

**The 2<sup>nd</sup> substitute passed to Rules 2/24/23.**

**TAKE ACTION [HERE](#)**

**[HB 1678](#) Establishing and authorizing the profession of dental therapy.** This bill will define the profession of dental therapy and how it will fit within the dental team but allows it only to exist within federally qualified health centers only. This is a bill long supported by the League as it promises to improve access to dental care for underserved pockets of the broader community.

**Referred to Rules on 2/25/23.**

**TAKE ACTION [HERE](#)**

## **How You Can Be Involved**

- Local Leagues in Washington have action chairs who coordinate action teams. Some local Leagues have health care teams or individuals with a healthcare interest to work with so you can take action locally. Contact your local League action chair to find out and join.
- Please work with LWVWA Healthcare 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](mailto:kabbey48@gmail.com).