

Weekly Legislative Update: **Children's Issues**

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Bills Needing Action This Week

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 many voices speaking for themselves rather than many voices speaking for the League.

HB 2146/SB 5850 Supporting students who are chronically absent and at risk for not graduating high school. Directs the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) to establish a grant program for community-based organizations, tribes, and community and technical colleges to support students who are chronically absent, subject to appropriations. **SB 5850 passed the Senate with a vote of 49 to 0. Scheduled for public hearing in the House Committee on Education.**

 **Sign in PRO on SB 5850 [here](#) by 1:30 PM on February 19.**

Bills We Support

HB1455/SB 5695 Eliminating Child Marriage. This bill provides that a marriage entered into in which either person has not attained the age of 18 years is void. It further eliminates provisions authorizing a court to waive the age requirement on a showing of necessity. **HB 1455 passed the House with a vote of 98-0 and is in the Senate Rules Committee.**

HB 1479/SB 5559 Concerning Restraint or Isolation in Public Schools and Educational Programs. This bill phases out the use of restraint or isolation by school staff and provides training of de-escalation practices. **HB 1479 passed the House with a vote of 79 to 18. It has been referred to the Senate Early Learning and K-12 Education Committee.**

HB 2146/SB 5850 Supporting students who are chronically absent and at risk for not graduating high school. Directs the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) to establish a grant program for community-based organizations, tribes, and community and technical colleges to support students who are chronically absent, subject to appropriations. **SB 5850 passed the Senate with a vote of 49 to 0. Scheduled for public hearing in the House Committee on Education at 1:30 PM on February 19.**

HB 2218/SB 5908 Extended foster care for youth 18-21. Directs the Department of Children, Youth and Families to make a number of changes to the Extended Foster Care Program to reduce barriers to participation. **SB 5908 passed the Senate with a vote of 37 to 12 and has been**

scheduled for executive session in the House Human Services, Youth & Early Learning Committee at 1:30 pm on February 20.

SB 5591 Providing Dependent Youth with Financial Education and Support. Directs the Department of Children, Youth, and Families to develop a program to provide dependent youth, ages 14 and up, with the ability to establish a private, self-controlled account. **Scheduled for executive session in the House Committee on Human Services, Youth, & Early Learning at 1:30 PM on February 20**

Bills We Are Watching

SB 6298 Concerning the Duty of Clergy to Report Child Abuse and Neglect. This bill adds clergy to the list of mandated reporters when there is reasonable cause to believe that a child has suffered abuse or neglect. Provides an exception to the mandated reporter requirement for child abuse or neglect for members of the clergy when the information is obtained solely in the context of penitential communication. **Scheduled for executive session in the House Committee on Human Services, Youth, & Early Learning at 1:30 PM February 20**

Bills That Have Died

HB 2016 Allowing Certain Minors to Contract for Housing and Utilities. This bill has died because it was not passed out of committee by the cut-off.

HB 2076/SB 6057 Addressing crimes involving human trafficking and sexual exploitation statewide. A coordinating committee is established to address the issue of children who are commercially sexually exploited, to examine the practices of local and regional entities involved in addressing sexually exploited children, and to make recommendations on statewide laws and practices. **SB 2076 didn't make it out of Rules.**

How You Can Be Involved

- If you are interested in a particular bill, use the links above to go to the webpage for that bill. These pages include staff summaries and reports including those who testified PRO versus CON on the bill. There is also information about how to access videos of hearings that have been held.
- Read and take action through the [LWVWA Legislative Action Newsletter](#), distributed each Sunday during the legislative session.
- You may also express your opinion on legislation with the LWVWA issue chairs. We will take your perspectives under consideration as we determine our support for legislation and prepare testimony. Please direct questions or comments to [Janet Hedgepath](#), Children's Issues Issue Chair.