



WFSE members spoke up for their jobs, families, and communities during the 2023 Legislative Session. We lobbied elected officials in their offices, testified in front of committees, and sent over 1000 postcards to elected leaders urging them to pass our contracts and take action on vital legislation.

New members got involved; 71% of our member lobbyists this year were taking part in our lobby program for the first time.

Our members proved, yet again, that no workforce has more at stake in the decisions made by elected officials than state employees.

For an updated version of this document and more information, visit wfse.org or scan below:



2023 LEGISLATIVE SESSION REPORT

Updated 5/3/23

Note: *Our lobbyists are still looking through the final budget for items that will impact our members. This document will be updated as more information becomes available.*

2023 LEGISLATIVE SESSION REPORT

KEY BILLS ADOPTED

- [HB 1122 \(Doglio\)](#): Allows WMS employees in salary band 1 and 2 the ability to collectively bargain and join a union. [WFSE priority]
- [HB 1187 \(Hackney\)](#): Ensures communication between an employee and the union who represents them is not subject to subpoena. [WFSE priority]
- [HB 1533 \(Mena\)](#): Makes it easier for public employee victims of domestic violence and stalking to have their personal information redacted from public records requests. [WFSE priority]
- [SB 5015 \(Fortunato\)](#): Reestablishes the state Productivity Board and rewards the ingenuity of state employees. [WFSE priority]
- [SB 5217 \(Dhingra\)](#): Allows workers to file workers compensation claims for certain ergonomic-related injuries and musculoskeletal disorders. [WFSE supported]
- [SB 5304 \(Saldana\)](#): Protects the testing and certification standards of DSHS spoken language interpreters. [WFSE priority]
- [SB 5350 \(Conway\)](#): Provides a benefit increase to PERS/TERS plan 1 retirees. [WFSE supported]
- [SB 5385 \(Lias\)](#): Increases higher education bid limits, protecting public employee work from outsourcing. [WFSE priority]
- [SB 5440 \(Dhingra\)](#): Provides urgent reforms to our state's competency restoration system by creating alternative programs to help ease current capacity and timeliness issues. [WFSE supported]
- [SB 5454 \(Cleveland\)](#): Allows direct care nurses with work-related PTSD to qualify for workers' compensation. [WFSE supported]
- [HB 1580 \(Callan\)](#): Creates support systems between all potentially involved agencies for children in crisis and extended hospital visits instead of mandating DCYF initiate foster care. [WFSE supported]
- [HB 1200 \(Alvarado\)](#): Requires local, school district, and higher ed employers to provide bargaining representatives certain information of employees and new hires in the bargaining unit in a time period or face legal repercussions. This opens the door to future state employee protections. [WFSE supported]

KEY BILLS NOT ADOPTED

- [HB 1151 \(Stonier\)](#): Would have mandated insurance coverage for fertility services. [WFSE priority]
- [HB 1566 \(Bateman\)](#): Would have allowed state employees to retain up to 280 hours of vacation leave. [WFSE priority]
- [SB 5273 \(Valdez\)](#): Would have required all public employers to provide bargaining representatives certain information of employees in the bargaining unit in a timely manner or face court action. The companion bill, HB 1200, was passed by the legislature but excludes state agency employees. [WFSE priority]
- [SB 5694 \(Hunt\)](#): Would have allowed OFM the ability to use the state salary survey as tool for recognizing inequities during bargaining. See "Compensation" section for salary survey budget proviso victory. [WFSE priority]

- [HB 1397](#) (Walsh): Would have mandated 5 years of random UAs, resulting in skyrocketing caseloads for child welfare workers. [WFSE opposed]
- Operating budget proviso that would have allowed for OFM to return to the bargaining table with DCYF social workers to negotiate up to 10% more assignment pay in addition to what currently exists in the CBAs [WFSE supported]

MAJOR AMENDMENT VICTORIES

- A WFSE-supported amendment to [HB 1777, Sec. 4\(2\)](#), providing job protection and training to WFSE members who perform the maintenance and repair of state energy equipment.
- WFSE defeated a budget draft proviso that would have begun the closure of our state's Residential Habilitation Centers (RHCs) [[SB 5187, Sec. 203 \(1\)](#)]

CORE ISSUES

COMPENSATION

- All WFSE-negotiated collective bargaining agreements for 2023-25 were ratified.
- Budget proviso language creating a salary survey workgroup with OFM and affected unions with the goal of improving the state salary survey and benchmark job descriptions. [[SB 5187, Sec. 135 \(9\)](#)]

PENSIONS

- All state employee pension plans were fully funded in the operating budget.
- [SB 5350](#): Provides a 3 percent benefit increase to PERS/TERS plan 1 retirees. [WFSE supported]

HEALTH CARE

- The collective bargaining agreement related to state employee health care costs was ratified, which maintains the provisions of the prior agreement and extended to non-represented employees. [[SB 5187, Sec. 908](#)]
- [HB 1222](#): Requires insurance coverage for hearing instruments. [WFSE support]

COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

- [HB 1122](#): Allows WMS employees in salary band 1 and 2 the ability to collectively bargain and join a union. [WFSE priority]

OUTSOURCING

- [SB 5385](#): Provides a modest increase to higher education bid limits, protecting public employee work from outsourcing. [WFSE priority]
- A WFSE-supported amendment to [HB 1777](#) provided job protection and training to WFSE members who perform the maintenance and repair of state energy equipment. [WFSE concerns]

STATE REVENUE

- Although there were several bills introduced, the legislature failed to adopt any new revenue proposals aimed at making Washington's tax system more fair and equitable.
- [HB 1628](#): Would have created progressive modifications to the state real estate excise (REET) tax, to increase the supply of affordable housing. The legislation failed to generate enough support and died in the House Rules Committee. [WFSE support]
- [HB 1670](#): Would have removed Eyman-orchestrated 1 percent property tax restriction on local government, allowing them to better fund public services. [WFSE support]
- [HB 1795](#): Would have made the state's estate tax more progressive. [WFSE support]
- [SB 5486](#): If passed, the bill would have established a 1% wealth tax on financial intangible assets. It failed to pass key deadlines this session and was not brought forward for a vote. [WFSE supported]

RACIAL JUSTICE

- [HB 1474](#): Creates the covenant homeownership account, which addresses the racist history of property ownership due to racially restrictive real estate covenants in Washington State. This bill sets up a fund via County Assessments that will via small grants assist BIPOC Washington residents with costs associated with home purchases, such as closing costs and down payments.
- \$11,700,000 for the Tubman Center for Health and Freedom provided in the Capital Budget, a community health center focused on meeting the needs of marginalized and BIPOC communities
- [HB 1048](#): Enhances the Washington Voting Rights Act, strengthening protections for Washington's tribes and allowing for any costs to be reimbursed if someone who challenges an election under the Voting Rights Act is found to be correct and there is a remedy as a result of that challenge.

CLIMATE CHANGE

- [HB 1181](#): Updates the goals of Washington's Growth Management Act (GMA), adding climate change and resiliency as a goal, updating the mandatory elements to include climate, and adds climate change to the list of elements that counties must consider
- [HB 1170](#): Requires the Department of Ecology to update the Integrated Climate Change Response Strategy every 4 years, and to add climate resiliency funding opportunities
- [HB 1216](#): Establishes an Interagency Clean Energy Siting Council, increasing clean energy siting coordination across agencies, especially for rural and underserved communities
- [HB 1176](#): Establishes the Washington Climate Corps, creating state service jobs that focus on addressing and educating on climate change

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

- [HB 1110](#): Will increase the middle housing supply by allowing more diverse housing options in communities that have enacted housing restrictions only allowing single family housing. [WFSE support]
- [HB 1625](#): If passed, the bill would have allowed local governments to plan and adopt programs to stabilize and control rent increases. HB 1625 died in the House Housing Committee. [WFSE support]
- [HB 1337](#): Requires cities to allow for the building of ADUs in Urban Growth Areas, and allows cities and counties to offer incentives to developers to build ADUS in Urban Growth Areas

LABOR

- [HB 1055](#): Allows public safety telecommunicators join the Public Safety Employees Retirement (PSERs) plan. [WFSE support]
- [HB 1068](#): Allows an injured worker to make an audio and video recording of an independent medical examination, and to have one person of the worker's choosing present during the examination. [WFSE support]
- [HB 1200](#): Requires local government, higher education and school district employers to provide bargaining representatives certain information of employees in the bargaining unit in a timely manner or face court action. [WFSE support]
- [SB 1491](#): Prohibits employers from searching an employee's vehicle in employer's parking areas. [WFSE support]
- [SB 5238](#): Allows academic student employees the ability to collective bargain. [WFSE support]
- [HB 1762](#): Protects warehouse employees by clarifying quota systems and codifying that meal breaks and rest breaks are required at risk of a violation to the company. Additionally allows L&I to investigate company violations of this law.

AGENCY HIGHLIGHTS

ADMINISTRATIVE HEARINGS

- The operating budget funds \$34,000 to implement SB 5236, hospital staffing standards for nurses [WFSE Support]

ATTORNEY GENERAL

- The operating budget funds \$2,916,000 for a Youth Risk hotline for the public to report threats of abuse, rape, cyberbullying, etc... (Sec. 126 #6)
- The operating budget funds \$204,000 to implement SB 5236, hospital staffing standards for nurses [WFSE Support]
- The operating budget funds \$100,000 for the Attorney General and Insurance Commissioner to jointly study avenues for health insurance affordability (Sec. 126 #33)

DCYF CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES

- The operating budget mandates a tracking report for the legislature and DCYF Oversight Committee on caseloads and turnover, with attention to regional details (Sec. 227, #5)
- The operating budget provides \$862,000 for DCYF to develop and manage strategies for making visits for parents/guardians and children in temporary out of home care more efficient and reliable. This could include mileage reimbursements for providers, transportation contracts, or reducing supervision needs when possible. (Sec. 227 #8)
- The operating budget provides \$4,616,000 to increase travel reimbursements for in-home service providers (Sec. 227 #10)

DCYF JUVENILE REHABILITATION

- The operating budget added \$21 million and 98 FTEs to address policy changes and staffing shortages throughout the agency including juvenile behavioral health, community reentry, juvenile rehabilitation services up to age 25, and community transition services.
- \$1.5 million is provided for additional solitary confinement, Prison Rape Elimination Act, and security staffing at Echo Glen.
- \$900K is provided for additional Prison Rape Elimination Act staffing at Green Hill School.
- \$16.7 million is removed given the closure of Naselle Youth Camp in FY 2023.

CONSOLIDATED TECHNOLOGY (WATECH)

- \$8,666,000 provided to implement the enterprise cloud computing system, per the 2020 Washington State Cloud Readiness Report (Sec. 155 #13)
- \$3,498,000 to implement the recommendations of the Cloud Transition Task Force to help agencies prepare to use the cloud and train state staff (Sec. 155 #14)
- \$3,000,000 to implement legacy system modernization and innovative technology solutions to improve the state's technology health portfolio (Sec. 155 #18)

CORRECTIONS

- The operating budget provides an additional \$10.2 million in new programs/support and 59.7 FTEs for DOC community corrections.

- [SB Bill 5134](#): provides new funding for reentry services & supports, including dedicated reentry corrections specialist staff for discharge plans, and includes gate money at \$300 per releasing individual. [WFSE support]
- WFSE secured \$2.9 million for supervision staffing to convert the Bellingham Reentry Center from a contractor-run facility to a state-run facility.
- \$2.7 million was also dedicated for supervision staffing to convert the Helen B. Ratcliff Reentry Center from a contractor-run facility to a state-run facility. The previous contract was terminated in the fall of 2021 and DOC took on operations and began accepting incarcerated individuals again in November 2022.
- WFSE's advocacy resulted in \$1.3 million and 10.5 FTEs to expand training resources for the agency's community corrections program.
- WFSE successfully secured a budget proviso creating a workgroup to address WFSE's challenges related to the state's salary survey and benchmark job descriptions. The state's use of the salary survey and benchmark descriptions has been a major point of contention for our Community Correction members during bargaining. The workgroup will be the first step in addressing the concerns.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE TRAINING

- [HB 1132](#): Adds limited authority peace officers to the law enforcement personnel subject to Criminal Justice Training Commission requirements. WFSE DOC members are exempted from this requirement.
- \$150K is provided for the CJTC to develop a plan and recommendations to further increase CJTC training capacity to include meeting the needs of limited law enforcement personnel. A preliminary report is due November 15, 2023 and a final report is due September 30, 2024.
- \$9.5 million is provided for an additional four basic law enforcement academy classes per year at two new proposed regional training academy (RTAs) locations. This includes one RTA in Pasco and one new RTA in Skagit County, and the four additional classes per year will be split between the two new RTA locations. This will expand the CJTC staffing by 8 FTEs.
- An additional \$4.7 million and 4 FTEs is provided for another two basic law enforcement academy classes per year at one new proposed regional training academy in Clark County.
- 960K is provided for additional administrative staffing to support operational needs at the CJTC.

ECOLOGY

- \$640,000 for the Department of Ecology jointly with OFM and the Environmental Justice Council to develop a process to track and report on state expenditures from Climate Commitment Act accounts that provide direct benefits to vulnerable communities (Sec. 302 #13)
- \$500,000 for the department to conduct an analysis of water use for irrigation in case of the removal of the Lower Snake River Dams (Sec. 302 #21)

EMPLOYMENT SECURITY

- WFSE advocated for and the legislature provided \$12 million and 59 FTEs to create a dedicated team to process and resolve the UI overpayment caseload backlog and provide workload relief.
- WFSE helped secure an additional \$21.2 million in funding is provided to bridge the Employment Security Department's (ESD) gap in federal funding revenue to the state's Unemployment Insurance (UI) program for the 2023-25 biennium.
- One-time funding of \$15.4 million and 13.5 FTEs are provided to complete the second phase of the Long-term Services and Supports Trust (LTSS) information technology system.
- \$3.1 million in new funding and 11.3 new FTEs are provided for the PFML and LTSS programs to increase outreach to underserved communities; perform program evaluation and data management; perform necessary fiscal functions; and make customer experience enhancements.

HIGHER EDUCATION

- [SB 5385](#): Increases higher education bid limits, protecting public employee work from outsourcing. [WFSE priority]
- \$85.7 million is provided to institutions of higher education (excluding TESC) for employee compensation costs in recognition that the costs exceed estimated increases in undergraduate operating fee revenue.
- \$2.3 million is provided to establish a bachelor's and master's degrees in social work at the WSU Tri-Cities campus to address mental and behavioral health workforce shortage needs across the state.
- The legislature provided \$300K support the Harry Bridges Center for Labor Studies and \$100K to support the Labor Archives at the University of Washington.
- \$4.6 million is provided to fully launch the Bachelor of Science in Nursing program at Eastern Washington University.
- \$694K is provided to establish a Master of Social Work program at Western on the Peninsulas.
- \$988K and 4.5 FTEs is provided to the Evergreen State College to support student enrollment and retention, including new student advising, underserved student support, and Native Pathways Program support.
- \$24K is provided for the costs of the Criminal Justice Training Center to use classroom and office space at Central Washington University's Lynnwood campus.
- \$5.2 million is provided to implement Second Substitute House Bill 1559 (Postsecondary student needs), hire 0.75 FTE benefits navigator per CTC campus, and for a food pilot at 4 college districts.
- \$3.6 is provided to increase the number of slots in nursing programs at community and technical colleges by 200 in the 2023-25 biennium. A coordinated progress report with the Student Achievement Council is due to the Legislature by June 1, 2023, and a final report is due by December 1, 2024.

HORSE RACING COMMISSION

- WFSE worked tirelessly to secure \$1,150,000 in funding from the Coronavirus State Fiscal Recovery Fund to secure jobs at the Horse Racing Commission

INTERPRETERS

- WFSE worked to ensure passage of SB 5304, preventing the outsourcing of DSHS medical interpreter certification to private companies and keeping it in-agency

LABOR AND INDUSTRIES

- \$500,000 to research the high injury rates of the janitorial workforce, including identifying potential risk factors that increase injury based on job-related strain (Sec. 220 #2)
- \$5,200,000 to continue the growth of behavioral health apprenticeship programs via grants (Sec. 220 # 12)

PARKS AND RECREATION

- \$2,395,000 for additional staff and technical support for tribal and community concerns while capital projects are completed
- WFSE fought for the significantly greater number of \$7,500,000 for parks maintenance, which ended up in the final budget, a massive victory for our Parks and Recreation Department

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

- \$1,200,000 for workforce housing on state trust lands, increasing state employee affordable housing capacity
- \$2,365,000 to bolster a statewide natural resources workforce to support the health and resiliency of Washington's forests
- \$10,000,000 to address the backlog in maintenance and repair of recreation lands

SECRETARY OF STATE

- \$616,000 for SB 5015, on Reestablishing the Productivity Board [WFSE Priority], allowing for state employees to present their ideas on streamlining government in return for a monetary prize
- \$16,000,000 for cyber security efforts, including the hiring of additional staff and conducting security and threat assessments
- \$1,766,000 for staff dedicated to maintenance and operations of the voter registration and election management system

- \$150,000 for grants to businesses and nonprofits that provide outreach and education to Washington’s juvenile rehabilitation facilities
- \$352,000 to establish a Washington State Library Branch at the Green Hill School
- \$8,000,000 in the capital budget for the library archives planning and construction

DSHS DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

- The capital budget provides \$175.9 million in funding for the construction of a 120-bed skilled nursing facility on the grounds of the Fircrest RHC campus
- The Capital Budget also included maintenance project funding for state RHCs including \$5.3 million for Yakima Valley School window replacement, \$5.8 for Lakeland Village infrastructure upgrades, and \$3.8 million for Rainier School roof repairs.
- \$7.8 million and 22 new FTEs for the implementation of [SB 5440](#) (competency restoration), which requires DSHS to create a program for individuals found incompetent to stand trial due to an intellectual or developmental disability, traumatic brain injury, or dementia to receive services and supports in community-based settings. This was a WFSE supported bill.
- \$4.5 million funding is provided to operate Klamath Cottage at Rainier School as a short-term transition option for individuals with developmental disabilities who are ready to discharge from an acute care hospital or state hospital and do not have an immediate community placement alternative available. This includes 24.5 FTE, mostly in WFSE’s bargaining unit.
- \$104k for WFSE/Action DD-led budget proviso to year 2024 is contract with the Ruckleshaus center for a progress report on the recommendations in the [December 2019 report](#), "Rethinking Intellectual and Developmental Disability Policy to Empower Clients, Develop Providers and Improve Services."
- The budget also includes the anticipated \$67.3 million budget reduction as a result of the decertification of the Program Area Team (PAT) C and the transition of approximately 60 individuals from Rainier school to other settings.

DSHS LONG TERM CARE

- \$6.7 million and 7 FTE’s is provided to implement [SB 5440](#) (Competency evaluations), which requires DSHS to create a program for individuals found incompetent to stand trial due to an intellectual or developmental disability, traumatic brain injury, or dementia to receive services and supports in community-based settings.

DSHS MENTAL HEALTH

- Both the state Operating (\$42 million) and Capital/Construction (\$630 million) budgets provide historic new investments in our state hospitals.
- \$58 million for behavioral health operations and bed capacity expansion at Maple Lane (additions include Chelan and Baker cottages), including 206 new FTEs.
- The operating budget provides \$15.7 million to restore the civil ward at WSH previously used for the Specialized Treatment Assessment and Recovery (STAR) ward. This funding includes 62 FTE – many of which will be WFSE bargaining unit members.

- The capital budget provides \$613 million for the construction of a new forensic ward at Western State Hospital. Additional funding is provided for infrastructure improvements at ESH, and new funds for mental health facilities improvements at Maple Lane to increase bed capacity. WFSE has been working closely with the Governor’s office for several years to site, design, and fund new state-operating mental health facilities.
- \$13.2 million is provided for provided to implement a violence reduction and prevention strategy at the state hospitals.
- [SB 5440](#) provides new reforms to the state competency evaluation and restoration system. The budget includes \$9.3 million for the agency to implement SB 5440 for additional forensic navigators, clinical intervention specialists, siting work, and medication reimbursement (30 new FTEs).

TRANSPORTATION

- WFSE fought to get the entire Move Ahead WA state appropriation account dedicated to obsolete and in-need-of-repair equipment replacement, for a total of \$20,000,000

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Operating Budget: SB 5187 [overview](#), [agency details](#), and [bill text](#): UPDATED 5/1/2023

Transportation Budget: HB 1125 [agency and program summaries](#), and [bill text](#): UPDATED 5/1/2023

Capital Budget: SB 5200 [summary](#) and [bill text](#): UPDATED 5/1/2023

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