

YWCA IS ON A MISSION

*2016 Washington State Legislative Session Summary-YWCA Olympia
Jan 1, 2016 – March 10, 2016*

WA SB 5630 & WA HB 1646 (Equal Pay Opportunity Act)

Prime sponsor: Tana Senn, D- 41st LD.

The bill modifies the Equal Pay Act to protect workers from being fired or retaliated against for inquiring about or discussing compensation; and require employers to justify differences in job opportunities and pay based on bona fide factors like education - not gender.

Status: Dead for the year. On Friday, 2/26, the striker bill was heard in Senate Committee. Some excellent testimony from sponsor Rep. Senn and her 10 year old daughter, Marilyn Watkins from the Work and Family Coalition as well as others. Rep. Senn will bring the bill back for next session. She is undeterred.

BH 2907 & SB 2908 (Addressing Use of Deadly Force by Public or Peace Officer)

Headed by Black Alliance of Thurston County and sponsored by 10+ legislators

Creates a task force to examine the deadly force statute. **In Washington, police officers can't be convicted of using unnecessary force unless a prosecutor can prove they acted with malice.** If signed by the governor, the bill would create a task force made up of representatives from the Legislature, law enforcement groups and diversity groups. Members of the task force would recommend best practices to reduce the number of violent interactions between law enforcement officers and the public. They would also examine training for police officers, and explore tools officers can use instead of deadly force.

Re: HB 2907: By resolution, bill reintroduced and retained in present status.

Re: SB 2908: On Mar 9, Senate receded from amendments, rules suspended and returned to second reading for amendment, which were adopted by the Floor. Third reading passed 46 yeas, 3 nays. In the House on Mar 10, the House concurred with the Senate amendments and passed final passage 97 yeas, 0 nays, Speaker signed. In the Senate, the President signed and was delivered to Governor Inslee who had 20 days to sign. On April 1, was delivered to Governor and signed, effective 06/09/16. As of 3/10 evening, it had not been signed.

HB 2307 & SB 6149 (Pregnant Workers Fairness Act)

This first-time legislation would require employers to provide reasonable work accommodations during pregnancy. It provides reasonable accommodations in the workplace for women. YWCA Olympia endorsed this bill with MomsRising, Legal Voice, and more.

A strong version of the bill passed the House. A different version received unanimous support in the Senate; the House then strengthened the Senate bill to protect more women and increase flexibility for workers and employers to determine together which accommodations will work in each situation. Unfortunately, the Senate did not concur with the House on the stronger language before the session ended on Thursday, March 10. The Washington Legislature is now in its first special session, so there is a chance—albeit a very small one—that the PWFA could be pulled for a Senate vote. But more than likely, the bill will not progress further this session.

WA SB 5459 & WA HB 1273 (Family & Medical Leave Insurance)

Prime sponsor HB 1273: June Robinson, D-38th LD

Prime sponsor SB 5459: Karen Keiser, D-33rd LD

Washington's FAML I Act would provide income when workers must take extended leaves of up to 12 weeks for the birth or adoption of a child, or the serious health condition of the worker or a close family member, financed through low-cost payroll premiums.

It is extremely disappointing that the bill was scheduled for a hearing in Appropriations and then pulled from the list. Dead for the year

WA HB 1356 & WA SB 5306 (Minimum Standards for Sick and Safe leave)

Neither bill moved and both are dead for the session. We are hearing from our colleagues at YWCA King-Sno that it is likely that a ballot measure combining minimum wage and paid sick leave will be on the November ballot.

Thank you to Liz Mills, Advocacy & Policy Director at YWCA Seattle | King | Sno, The Black Alliance of Thurston County, Legal Voice & MomsRising