MUNICIPAL ELECTION | NOVEMBER 2021
POST-ELECTION REVIEW

Pro-Choice Washington 2021 Update

WHY THIS MATTERS

Despite incredible efforts by Pro-Choice Washington activists who knocked on 585 doors, called 2,676 voters, and contributed $2,500 to five key races, these elections were shaped by a small percentage of voters. Turnout was notably low, especially among young voters. Many of our endorsed-candidates' races were decided by just a few hundred ballots, and one by less than 50.

This is another reminder that every vote counts! Local elected officials have the power to protect and promote abortion access. For example, in 2017, the King County Board of Health passed an ordinance requiring Crisis Pregnancy Centers (CPCs) – fake clinics opposing abortion and contraceptives – to post clear signage in multiple languages stating they are not health facilities. On the other hand, local officials opposed to reproductive freedom will do everything they can to create barriers to abortion.

In 2022, 87 percent of the Washington state legislature is up for election! We cannot afford another year with low voter turnout. We must motivate progressive voters to get to the polls and make voting more accessible for all communities.

KEY RESULTS

This year, we prioritized candidate endorsements in counties experiencing the greatest threats to reproductive freedom: Spokane, Whatcom, Kitsap, Chelan, and Snohomish.

We are pleased that 68 percent of endorsed candidates won their elections, including Zack Zappone for Spokane City Council, Riley Smith for Spokane School Board, Jennifer Chamberlin for Bremerton City Council, and Kristina Michele Martens for Bellingham City Council.

Unfortunately, despite significant activism and strong candidates, endorsed candidates Naghmana Sherazi for Spokane City Council and Rebecca Lewis for Whatcom County Council did not win their races.

WHAT COMES NEXT

In 2022 and beyond, we are committed to electing leaders who are outspoken on abortion access, to holding local government accountable to investing in the reproductive healthcare needs of their residents, and to ensuring voters have the information they need to engage these community leaders. Together with our members, we will continue to foster the political power of voters, candidates, and communities who take bold action on reproductive freedom.

HOW YOU CAN HELP

We need many more people to join the movement to protect and promote reproductive freedom in Washington state. If you, or others you know, are not involved yet, please consider joining our efforts in these priority ways:

- **Join our 2022 Electoral Action Team** and help elect leaders who will advance reproductive freedom in key cities and counties across Washington
- **Join our movement** to stop discriminatory restrictions to care in Washington State
- **Donate** to support our continued work in communities across Washington
- Follow us on social media to stay on top of news and action opportunities
  - Twitter: **@ProChoiceWA**
  - Instagram: **@prochoicewashington**
  - Facebook: **@ProChoiceWA**

INSPIRING MUNICIPAL ACTION IN SPOKANE AND PORTLAND

In 2020, Spokane City Council, buoyed by its progressive majority, passed an ordinance to limit noise disturbances at health care facilities. This was in response to disruptive protests by anti-abortion group The Church at Planned Parenthood (TCAPP), which prevented patients from receiving critical reproductive health care.

In 2021, in response to the Texas abortion ban (S.B. 8), Portland City Council voted to allocate $200,000 to the Northwest Abortion Access Fund to provide support and resources for people trying to access abortion care. This bold move by municipal leadership centered the people who experience the biggest barriers to abortion access.

In 2022, inspired by these local wins, we in Washington will sustain pressure on our city and county governments to protect abortion access, fund reproductive health care, and pass policies that expand democracy. To learn more, see the **NIRH Local Reproductive Freedom Index.**