

Our Progress

The 2024 Washington State Legislative Session was a 60-day sprint, and my oh my, are we tired!

For the fourth consecutive session, advocates pushed legislators to act on the Keep Our Care Act (KOCA), but unfortunately, KOCA was unable to make it to Governor Inslee's desk.

Every session is a learning opportunity to figure out how to come back even stronger next year.

Here are some takeaways:

Disinformation is alive and well. The Washington State Hospital Association (WSHA) and other opponents succeeded in spreading fear and myths about KOCA and its impact. Myth busting and increasing confidence in the facts are strategies we need to focus on in the interim, especially with House members.

A diverse, robust coalition makes for a strong, unified voice. Pro-Choice Washington co-chaired the KOCA coalition alongside the ACLU-WA and facilitated a space that brought together folks from queer and trans advocacy, labor rights, abortion care providers, and others to show how important the issue of consolidations is on communities across Washington.

The vital need for accountability. Electing officials is just one part of the work. Once officials are in office, it's up to us to hold them accountable for the promises and commitments they make on the campaign trail.

2024 Post-Session Update

Priority Legislation

Keep Our Care Act (SB 5241)

Large corporate health systems are absorbing smaller community-based health care entities. Unchecked consolidations drive up prices and restrict access to critical health care services, including abortion, gender-affirming care, and end-of-life care.

The Keep Our Care Act (KOCA) would ensure that consolidations of health care systems improve rather than harm access to affordable, quality care. It would also give the Attorney General oversight and enforcement power to ensure that communities in Washington are not negatively impacted by consolidations.

Current Status: **DEAD**

KOCA did not pass the House by the opposite chamber cut-off.

In its fourth year as a bill, KOCA made it farther than it ever has! Thanks to your tireless advocacy efforts, here are some of the legislative milestones it achieved:

- Pulled from Senate Rules by Senator Pedersen (thank you!)
- Voted out of the Senate (roll call of votes can be found [here](#))
- Heard and voted out of the House Civil Rights and Judiciary Committee (thank you to Rep. Simmons for her work on the companion bill!)
- Heard and voted out of House Appropriations
- Pulled for a vote on Friday, March 1, which was the deadline for opposite chamber passage, but unfortunately never made it to a full, public vote.
 - a. Died during private conversations amongst representatives in their caucuses.

The bill also received broad media coverage, including a robust story in RANGE Media, with a cross-post in Crosscut! Other notable stories: [Seattle Times report about KOCA](#), [Health Care Costs are Surging](#), [KOCA passes the Senate](#).

Through digital action, Pro-Choice Washington sent over 600 emails to legislators, urging their support for KOCA. Finally, this year Pro-Choice Washington convened a more robust coalition of organizations, and made this movement more intersectional.



Secondary Priority

The Strippers Bill of Rights (SB 6105)

What is the issue? From our partners at Working Washington, “Adult dancing can be a path to economic mobility for many workers in Washington. But right now, WA dancers are facing a predatory business model that strips workers of rights and fair pay.”

What does the bill do? The Strippers Bill of Rights seeks to create safer working conditions for dancers by allowing clubs to apply for liquor permits to increase flows of income, prohibiting back rent practices, capping dancer stage fees, and more.

More info on the bill and its impact can be found [here](#).

Current Status: **PASSED**

Support Legislation

Regulating Ultrasounds to Protect Patients and Crisis Pregnancy Centers (SB 6151)

What is the issue? In an attempt to bring some accountability to crisis pregnancy centers, Pro-Choice Washington supports legislation that clarifies that ultrasounds must be offered in licensed facilities or by licensed providers.

What does the bill do? This bill ensures that ultrasounds or other similar medical imaging devices can only be provided by a licensed health care provider or a person acting under the supervision of a licensed health care provider.

Current Status: **PASSED**

Expanding Access to PEP (SB 6127)

What is the issue? There are unnecessary barriers to folks accessing post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP), which leads to higher risk of contracting HIV and limited access for folks living in rural communities.

What does the bill do? This bill eliminates cost-sharing for PEP, requires hospitals to maintain a policy for prescribing PEP in emergency departments, and requires hospitals to dispense PEP on-site.

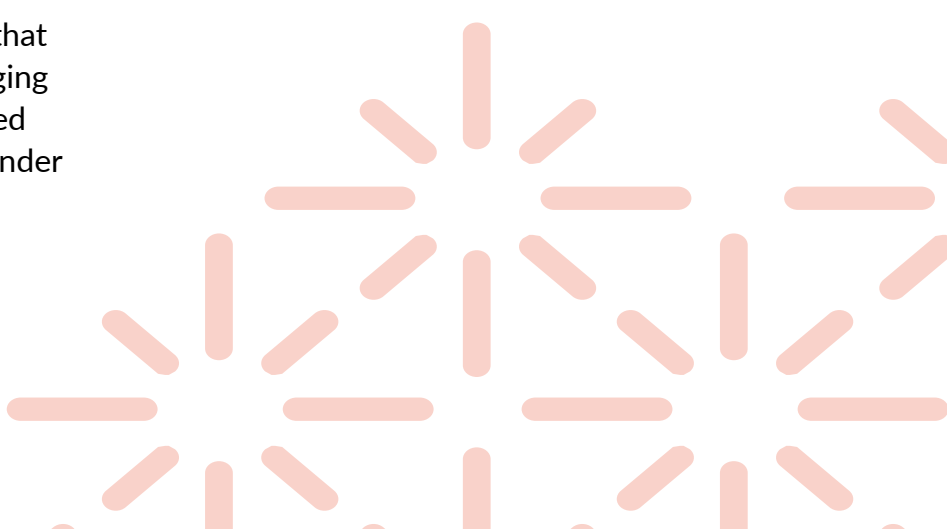
Current Status: **PASSED**

Mandating Coverage for Fertility Services (HB 1151 / SB 5204)

What is the issue? Many insurance plans in Washington do not cover fertility services and the cost of paying out of pocket can be prohibitive.

What does the bill do? This bill will require insurance plans to cover the diagnosis and treatment of infertility, ensuring more access to fertility services.

Current Status: **DEAD**



Nonconsensual Condom Removal/Tampering (HB 1958)

What is the issue? Currently, there are no legal protections if a partner tampers with or removes a condom without a person's consent (also known as "stealthing").

What does the bill do? This bill, which is supported by domestic violence and sexual assault coalition partners, allows for a survivor to bring civil charges against a person for nonconsensual tampering of a sexually protective device (i.e. internal or external condom, spermicide, diaphragm, cervical cap, contraceptive sponge, dental dam, or any other physical barrier device intended to prevent pregnancy or STIs).

Current Status: **PASSED**

Police Accountability

The Washington Coalition for Police Accountability came to the legislature with a similar agenda as last session to reduce police violence and increase accountability. Yet again, the legislature did not pass these commonsense policies, which is extremely disappointing.

- **Traffic Safety for All (HB 1513/SB 5572):** This bill would focus law enforcement officers on traffic stops related to road safety, instead of nonmoving violations.

Current Status: **Died in House Rules**

- **Attorney General's Investigations and Reform Bill (HB 1445):** This bill would strengthen and clarify the WA Attorney General's authority to investigate and bring suits where there are failures at an agency or department.

Current Status: **Died in House Rules**

- **Independent Prosecutor (3SHB 1579):** This bill would establish a statewide independent prosecutor within the AGO to address the conflict of interest that exists within the working relationships between prosecutors and police.

Current Status: **Died in House Rules**

