

Quaker Voice Annual Legislative Report for 2025

Quaker Voice launched its efforts into a turbulent environment this year.

In Olympia, fiscal issues dominated this year's legislative session, from start to finish. From the opening gavel, our representatives and senators knew that they faced a projected \$16 billion shortfall over the next four years, the period of time over which the budget must be balanced according to state law. Any bill that asked for significant new spending was facing a huge climb uphill. Most did not make it through their first fiscal committees.

Leadership started working early in the session on ideas for new, progressive sources of revenue – those that draw more from rich people and large corporations and do not fall heavily on small businesses and Washingtonians with low or moderate incomes. Everyone knew that even with new revenue, there would be budget cuts. The coalitions we work with made their best cases for maintaining spending in the areas we care deeply about – environment, health care, and housing, to name just a few.

Adding to the dark clouds was the federal context. The budgets proposed in the other Washington slashed enormous amounts from human services, food, and investments to counter climate change. It also became clear that many protections that make Washington an inclusive place to live would come under attack.

The Quaker Voice working groups, as always, selected priority bills based on long-term considerations. Later sections of this report will describe how these bills fared.

In addition, two remarkable developments sprung up within Quaker Voice itself. First, we had the largest participation ever in Quaker Lobby Day. More than seventy people met with their legislators early in February to make the case for our priority bills, either in person in Olympia or online. In over 40 meetings in 19 legislative districts, we spoke up for the humane, environmentally responsible Washington we want to live in.

Second, in late February, we formed a Task Force on Human Rights to support the work our legislators undertake to protect and extend those rights. Nine people, mostly not active in other working groups, joined the task force, to track bills on LGBTQ+ and immigrant rights, especially legal protections; respecting differences in abilities; protecting democracy, free speech, and privacy; supporting indigenous communities and dismantling structural racism. They identified dozens of bills that deserved our active support, and we asked our base of Quaker Voice activists to speak up on many of them. The results from this Task Force also appear later in this report.

In the last few weeks of the session, the budget drama played out. Senate and House leadership introduced a package of creative, progressive revenue bills, and the governor promptly threatened several with vetoes. Other, less progressive new taxes were introduced. The legislature in the end balanced the budget with a combination

of cuts and new revenue. Then powerful actors in the state put pressure on the Governor to veto it. Until the last moment, with our coalition partners, we were still making calls to urge the Governor to sign it. He did.

On this page and the next, two tables summarize action on this year's priority bills and the task force bills that were passed. Working group and task force reports then go into detail. Reports from our two Legislative Fellows appear at the end of the document.

Final Status of Working Group Priority Bills

(All bills that passed both chambers were signed into law by the Governor.)

Bill Number	Working Group	Sponsor	Bill Descriptor	House Action	Senate Action
HB 1131	Criminal Justice	Goodman (45)	Concerning clemency and pardons	Passed	Passed
SB 5219	Criminal Justice	C. Wilson (30)	Easing re-entry	Passed	Passed
SB 5098	Criminal Justice	Valdez (46)	Restricting guns in public places with children	Stopped at House Rules	Passed
HB 1217	Economic Justice	Alvarado (34)	Rent stabilization	Passed	Passed
SJM 8004	Economic Justice	Hasegawa (11th)	Universal healthcare waiver	Passed	Passed
HB 1483	Environmental Stewardship	Gregerson (33)	Right to Repair	Passed	Passed
SB 5284	Environmental Stewardship	Lovelett (40)	Solid Waste Management	Passed	Passed
HB 1607	Environmental Stewardship	Stonier (49)	Recycling and waste reduction	Stopped at House Rules	

Task Force on Human Rights Successes, Bills that have Become Law
 (All bills that passed both chambers were signed into law by the Governor.)

Bill Number	Issue Area	Topic	Sponsor
HB 1052	LGBTQ+ Rights	Clarifying a hate crime offense	Ryu (32)
HB 1296	LGBTQ+ Rights	Promoting student privacy	Stonier (49)
SB 5577	LGBTQ+ Rights	Medicaid coverage for antiviral drugs	Liias (21)
HB 1232	Immigrant Rights	Private detention facilities	Ortiz-Self (21)
HB 1875	Immigrant Rights	Allowing paid leave for immigration proceedings	Salahuddin (48)
SB 5104	Immigrant Rights	Protecting employees from coercion based on immigration status	Hasegawa (11)
HB 1432	Respecting differences in abilities	Improving access to services	Simmons (23)
SB 5263	Respecting differences in abilities	Special education funding	Pedersen (43)
SB 5632	Privacy	Confidentiality of records	Hansen (23)
HB 1540	Indigenous Community Priority	Expanding youth eligibility to tribal colleges	Timmons (42)
HB 1837	Indigenous Community Priority	Intercity passenger rail	Reed (36)
HB 1696	Dismantling Structural Racism	Modifying the Covenant Home Ownership Program	Taylor (30)

Criminal Justice Working Group

It was another difficult year for criminal justice reform legislation. The major surprises came from the new Governor. As Attorney General, he supported police accountability, but he did not continue that priority as Governor. He made a campaign promise to add more officers to the state's law enforcement ranks and pushed for a \$100 million grant program to help local governments hire more (passed as [HB 2015](#), which also facilitates spending on other public safety items such as non-police emergency response). In addition, none of the sentencing reform bills moved forward.

As a result, none of the three initial Criminal Justice priority bills moved out of their houses of origin. The working group then adopted three new priority bills, and two of these passed. In addition, some provisions affecting immigrants in the criminal justice system, recommended for support by the Quaker Voice Human Rights Task Force, were incorporated into one of the new priority bills that passed and thus became law. Successful and unsuccessful bills the Working Group supported this year are both described below.

Bills the Working Group supported that passed the legislature and were signed by the Governor this year:

[HB 1131](#). **Concerning clemency and pardons.** This bill changes the composition of the Clemency and Pardon Board from five to ten members. It must now include a person with lived experience as an incarcerated individual or who has worked with the formerly incarcerated or successful community reentry. Also incorporated into this law are expediting review of sentences for persons pending deportation and eligibility for pardons or clemency without regard to immigration status.

[SB 5219](#). **Concerning partial confinement eligibility and alignment.** SB 5219 provides for "graduated re-entry," the possibility of up to 18 months of partial confinement at the end of a sentence. This period could help with adjustment to life outside and thus improve re-entry and reduction in recidivism.

Bills the Working Group supported that did not move forward this year include:

[HB 1125](#): **Judicial Discretion Act.** This bill would allow incarcerated persons who have already served a long time to petition for a second look, with a re-sentence at the discretion of the original sentencing court.

[HB 1178](#): **Unstacking Sentencing Enhancements.** Mandatory enhancements to base sentences can add many years in prison and are typically stacked on top of each other. HB 1178 would provide judicial discretion to serve enhancements concurrently. It would eliminate the sentencing enhancement for drug violations committed in protected zones. These provisions would greatly reduce racial inequity.

[HB 1274](#): **Resentencing without Juvenile Offenses.** For a person being sentenced today, certain specified previous convictions as a juvenile are not counted (scored) in determining the length of sentence. HB 1274 would make this procedure retroactive, by reducing sentences for persons already incarcerated, by not counting offenses as a juvenile that are no longer being scored for new convictions.

[SB 5066](#) / [HB 1056](#): **AG Investigations of Law Enforcement Agencies.** SB 5066 would grant authority to the WA State Attorney General (AG) to investigate systemic violations of the state constitution and laws by local law enforcement agencies and sue them. Currently, this investigative authority is limited to the federal Dept. of Justice, which lacks the time and resources to do this on the local level. Many other states have provided their attorneys general with this authority.

[SB 5098](#). **Restricting the possession of weapons in public places where children are likely to be present.** Would restrict the possession of weapons on the premises of state or local public buildings, parks or playground

facilities where children are likely to be present, and county fair facilities. Gun bills are always very difficult to get through.

Economic Justice Working Group

The weight of the budget deficit fell hard on the human services, where benefits in many programs have still not caught up from huge cuts taken in the 2009 recession. One Quaker Voice priority, universal healthcare, was put on the “hold” stack with hundreds of other bills because of its large price tag, but this year had dozens of co-sponsors in both House and Senate, a good sign for the future. The Working Group ended up focusing on the Senate Joint Memorial which requests permission from the federal government to put a universal plan in place, if a future budget allows that to happen.

Rent stabilization generated a dramatic story last year and again lived up to this reputation, with House and Senate passing quite different versions. In the end, the two were reconciled and the Governor signed a bill, that was nonetheless a disappointment to its advocates because of the high level of rent increases it allows (7% plus the increase in the Consumer Price Index, or 10%, whichever is lower).

The Working Group reserved its third priority for progressive revenue bills, those in which the rich pay their share. As described briefly in the introduction to the report, a suite of such bills was introduced and some of them were passed, providing new revenue sources to meet the projected budget shortfall.

Bills the Working Group supported that passed and were signed into law:

[HB 1217](#). Improving Housing Stability. Nearly 50 percent of households in Washington now spend more than 30% of household income on rent, constricting household funds available for food, education, healthcare and transportation. As passed, this bill allows rent increases for a continuing tenant of 7% plus the increase in the Consumer Price Index, or 10%, whichever is lower.

[SJM 8004](#) Concerning Universal Healthcare

This is a letter from Washington to the U.S. Congress asking for a waiver to pursue our own universal healthcare plan. The previous priority bills, [HB 1445](#)/ [SB 5233](#) Developing Washington State Health Trust, did not move forward this year.

Progressive revenue bills. Several of the bills that House and Senate leadership introduced did not make it into the final budget package, but the following three steps forward were taken:

- [SB 5794](#) Eliminating obsolete tax preferences, clarifying legislative intent, and addressing changes in constitutional law.
- [HB 2049](#) Increasing State and Local Flexibility to Fund Schools and Public Safety.
- [SB 5813](#), expanding the capital gains tax.

Bills the Working Group supported that did not pass this year:

[HB 1380](#) Objectively Reasonable Regulation of Use of Public Property.

This bill acknowledges that a growing number of Washington state residents face displacement due to lack of affordable housing. Currently there is a “patchwork of legislation” regulating the use of public land. Bill 1380 would require that regulation of the acts of sitting, sleeping, or keeping warm, though not with the use of fire, on public land open to the public be objectively reasonable as to time, place and manner and consider health and safety of all citizens. This legislation would allow individuals to sue municipalities over restricting tent encampments.

HB 1445/ SB 5233 Developing the Washington State Health Trust

The Health Trust would ensure that all Washington residents could enroll in nonprofit health insurance providing an essential set of health benefits including dental, vision, mental health and pharmacy. Currently many Washington residents are either uninsured or have high co-payments and deductibles leading to increased debt due to medical expenses. The health plan administered by the Washington Health Trust would correct some of the inequities of the most vulnerable, including the unhoused, the uninsured and the unemployed.

Environmental Stewardship Working Group

Regulatory actions require very little budget allocation, so environmental bills had an easier time this year than those from the other two Working Groups. Environmental issues sometimes receive bipartisan support in the state of Washington, as shown in the near-unanimous support this year for the Right to Repair bill. But the recycling bill Quaker Voice supported made it through on more party-line votes. Both these bills have become law.

The Working Group acted on our solidarity with the tribes by pausing support for a salmon recovery bill SB 5155 because of opposition from one of the tribes. This Working Group also led the way for Quaker Voice staunchly to defend the funds generated by the Climate Commitment Act, which some advocates eyed jealously when other parts of the budget did not get the funding that they wanted.

HB 1483: Right to Repair. The Right to Repair bill requires manufacturers of digital electronics to make repair information, parts, and tools available to independent repair businesses and makes it possible to salvage working parts from nonfunctional -electronics. It would reduce e-waste by allowing users to repair and extend the lives of their computers, tablets, cellphones, and appliances. Consumer costs would go down; used electronics would go to people who need them. Manufacturing of new products, with associated greenhouse gas emissions and resource extraction, would be reduced.

SB 5284: Improving Washington's Solid Waste Management Outcomes -

This bill would reduce plastic waste by requiring producers of packaging to create a Producer Responsibility Organization (PRO) under supervision of the Department of Ecology. PROs are effective because they make producers of packaging responsible for reducing the amount of packaging produced and increasing the amount being reused, composted, or recycled. Residential recycling collection would be provided wherever residential garbage is collected.

Other bills the Working Group supported that became session law this year.

HB 1409. Updating Clean Fuel Standards - Requires the Department of Transportation to adopt rules that reduce the overall, aggregate carbon intensity of transportation fuels used in Washington

HB 1497. Improving Composting of Organics - Takes another step toward more environmentally and economically sustainable food and organic materials management systems (for example, adding food waste collection at more sites, including businesses, schools, and multi-unit dwellings)

HB 1462. Reducing Damage from Refrigerants - Reduces greenhouse gas emissions associated with hydrofluorocarbons by transitioning to environmentally and economically sustainable alternatives and promoting use of reclaimed hydrofluorocarbons

HB 1837. Improving Passenger Rail - Establishes policies to support intercity passenger rail to increase on-time performance, increase service frequencies, improve first and last mile connections, improve multimodal connectivity to other transportation options at stations, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions

Human Rights Task Force

The Task Force formed in late February, following Quaker Lobby Day. By that time, it was clear that threats to our community were rising, and we wanted to respond. The Board recognized that the role that Quaker Voice can play is with our state-level decisionmakers. Our legislators have an outstanding record of defending everyone who lives here. We wanted to support them in those efforts.

The Board therefore opened the opportunity for our members to participate in a temporary Task Force on Human Rights. The charge to this group was to scan for state-level proposed bills or executive actions that either threaten or protect people in the state. Based on the voices of the nine people who formed the group, it tracked 19 bills that affected LGBTQ+ rights; immigrant rights; academic, educational, or religious freedom; or were priorities for Washington racial or indigenous groups. For example, one of those bills required that Medicaid (Apple Health) now cover HIV antiviral drugs with no prior authorization. Another requires employers to allow the use of paid sick leave to prepare for or participate in immigration proceedings for either the employee or a family member.

The Board sent action alerts that called attention to these bills several times during the remainder of the session. Many moved forward successfully and have become session law.

LGBTQ+ Rights

HB 1052. Clarifying a hate crime offense. This bill expands what can be prosecuted as a hate crime to those acts motivated “in whole or substantial part” by prejudice, as opposed to existing law in which a hate crime is defined as exclusively motivated by prejudice.

HB 1296. Promoting a safe and supportive public education system. Requires schools to prioritize student safety and privacy. Establishes a statement of student rights. Establishes anti-retaliation protections for public school employees supporting students in the exercise of their legal rights.

SB 5577. Concerning Medicaid coverage for HIV antiviral drugs. This bill requires that Medicaid (“Apple Health”) plans cover all FDA-approved HIV antiviral drugs with no prior authorization or step therapy.

Immigrant Rights

SB 5104. Protecting employees from coercion in the workplace based on immigration status. An employee may file a complaint if that person's employer threatens the employee or induces the person to engage in conduct that the person has a legal right to abstain from; employers who are found to have threatened an employee based on immigration status will be fined.

HB 1232. Concerning private detention facilities. Lays out requirements for private detention facilities regarding provision of clothing, food, supervision, privacy, communication devices, access to a law library, provision of medical care, natural lighting and windows in sleeping rooms, and the like.

HB 1875. Allowing the use of paid sick leave to prepare for or participate in certain immigration proceedings. Additionally, the bill outlines the verification process for such leave, allowing employees to use documentation from a variety of sources, without disclosing information about their immigration status.

Respecting differences in abilities

HB 1432. Improving access to appropriate mental health and substance use disorder services. Requires, in part, that the copayment or coinsurance for mental health services and prescription drugs to treat mental health condition may be no more than the copayment or coinsurance for medical and surgical services and prescription drugs.

SB 5263. Concerning special education funding. Makes rules for special education to ensure that adequate records are kept, that policies are equitable across the state, and that funding is adequate.

Protecting Democracy, Free Speech, and Privacy

SB 5632. Protecting the confidentiality of records and information that may be relevant to another state's enforcement of its laws. Washington businesses that provide electronic communications services are prohibited from knowingly providing records that relate to the enforcement of, another state's laws for the provision of protected health care services.

Supporting indigenous communities/ dismantling structural racism

HB 1837. Establishing intercity passenger rail improvement priorities. This bill establishes ambitious goals for Amtrak Cascades intercity passenger rail, which has 12 stations in Washington State. Washington state will be receiving new train sets for Amtrak Cascades next year, but we won't be able to take full advantage of these train cars if the infrastructure is not improved. Frequent and reliable intercity regional rail is a transportation solution for our growing population and housing crisis and will result in greater economic vitality in town centers.

HB 1540. Expanding eligibility for the students experiencing homelessness and foster youth program to an accredited tribal college. Adds public tribal colleges to the list of higher education institutions that have the right to provide services to students experiencing homelessness and to students who were in the foster care system when they graduated high school.

HB 1696. Modifying the covenant homeownership program. Raises program eligibility to 120 percent of Area Median Income where the home is located, instead of 100 percent; allows the program to fully forgive the loan once it has been outstanding for at least five years; and expands the Program Oversight Committee with one representative of a nonprofit organization that provides housing counseling to the groups eligible for the program. This bill was a priority of the Legislative Black Caucus.

Quaker Voice Legislative Fellows

Quaker Voice benefitted from the work of two Legislative Fellows this year.

Andy Hardy is from Bellingham Friends Meeting. He is the newsletter editor there and a member of the Social and Environmental Action Committee. Andy joined the Economic Justice Working Group, followed the progressive tax bills, and explored opportunities for state-level decisionmakers to encourage defense conversion. He was active in visits on Quaker Lobby Day and particularly liked the approachability of state legislators. He was impressed with how quickly legislation moves at state level.

“You have to be really proactive,” he noted. “You can't wait for the news cycle to figure out what's going on, because by the time they're report on it, it may have already happened.”

He was also impressed that the simple act of signing in pro or con when bills are being heard really influences how the committees see them.

“Even if you can't make it all the way to Olympia,” Andy notes, “you can still support important causes.”

Meg Cody is from Multnomah Friends Meeting, where she is co-clerk of the Peace and Justice Committee. She is also active with FWCC, including organizing Young Adult Friends. Although she lives in Oregon, she was drawn to the fellowship to move into action after the election and to learn more about the state legislative process. After she started her fellowship, she also took up an internship with the Majority Leader of the Oregon State Senate.

Meg joined the Environmental Stewardship Working Group to work on reducing plastics in packaging.

“When I go to the grocery store and I see the aisles upon aisles, upon aisles of single use plastic, I'm literally just screaming in my head. I'm so upset. I just think of all of the grocery stores across the

country, across the continent around the world that this scene is present in, and it makes me very, very sad and mad.”

Meg joined us for Quaker Lobby Day and in her final report shared some tips for effective practices in meeting with state legislators.

“In-person visits are where the legislators hear from the constituents what's important to them. That's where we make our voice and our priorities known. That's how we hold legislators accountable as well”.

She recommends having a clear idea of your goal for your 15-minute meeting: education, persuasion, asking the legislator to take a specific action? Giving them a one-pager with information on the bill you are supporting is important (note that we do this electronically in Washington, where legislative offices are required to be paper-free), and perhaps also something memorable, a little gift. (Buttons with the FCNL slogan “Love Your Neighbors, No Exceptions” were available this year at Quaker Lobby Day. Next year we will make sure there are enough to give these as gifts to legislators and their staff.)