

## **2021 Criminal Justice Legislative Priorities**

All of these bills address issues for which low-income persons and people of color suffer disproportionately.

### **1. Police Reform and Racial Equity:**

(a) **[SHB 1054](#)**: Prohibition of tear gas and certain **military equipment** for police use, and certain forms of **use of force**, such as prohibition of use of neck constraints and choke holds, prohibition of use of unleashed dogs for arrest, as well as other items. Vote expected in the House, after which it should go to the Senate.

(b) **[SSB 5051](#)** (and companion bill HB 1082): Provisions for police training and procedures for **decertification of officers convicted of wrong-doing**. Urge support for a vote in the Senate, then House.

In the long term, reforms should also include funding alternatives to incarceration such as diversion and use of professionals in the areas of substance abuse and mental health.

**2. [HB 1078](#): Voting Rights under Community Supervision:** Restoration of voting rights for persons released from prison but still under the authority of the Dept. of Corrections for community supervision. Persons leaving prison need encouragement and acceptance as participants in society. The right to vote is central to and symbolic of status as a citizen.

**3. [HB 1282](#): Earned Release Time:** Would enlarge the opportunities for persons in prison to earn release time (up to 33% accrual in most cases) if they have a positive participation in educational programming. At present, much of accrual is 10% to 15%, does not apply to mandatory minimums and enhancements, and affects people of color disproportionately. Uniform accrual at 33% would simplify implementation; incentivize participation in work, education and rehabilitative programming; and offer those in prison hope and an opportunity to affect their future. Would be retroactive as well as proactive.

**4. [SB 5226](#): Debt-based Drivers' License Suspension.** For a traffic infraction for a moving violation, driver's licenses would not be suspended for failure to pay fines (or to appear in court), i.e., not punish people for "driving while poor." The suspension of drivers' licenses is a serious measure that should be based on public safety, not failure to pay fines. For those unable to pay, courts would be allowed to waive fees or offer a payment plan. Provisions would be retroactive as well as proactive.

## **2021 Economic Justice Legislative Priorities**

The economy of Washington is in recession due to the pandemic. Millions of residents are out of work, hundreds of thousands are hungry or behind on rent or mortgage payments. Black, Indigenous, and Hispanic households are carrying more than their share of the load.

### **SAFETY NET PROGRAMS**

The experience of the last recession shows that states that continue providing direct cash assistance to households recover better economically, as compared with those that cut human services. The reason is easy to see – low-income households spend the cash they receive right away on their basic needs and through that spending they help the rest of the economy to recover. We are therefore working actively on ...

- Protecting Human Services in the [budget](#) (TANF, SNAP, HENS, ABD, DCAP)
- Working towards more realistic standards of need over the long term ([HB 1151](#))

## HOUSING

The eviction moratorium was necessary but has put both tenants and landlords in precarious positions. To prevent a spike in homelessness, we support legislation that provides an off-ramp from the moratorium with help for both tenants and small landlords.

We are therefore working actively to support...

- [SB 5160](#) and [SB 5139](#) –mediation on evictions, legal assistance for tenants, and help for landlords; after the end of the moratorium, temporary limits on rent increases.
- [HB 1277](#) – a permanent state-funded rental assistance and housing stability program with revenue from an increased document recording fee on real estate transactions.

## NEW EQUITABLE REVENUE

Cutting the state budget is not the most effective pathway to recovering from the current recession. We are therefore actively supporting most of the revenue proposals in the Governor’s budget, including the capital gains excise tax ([SB 5096](#)). We remain open to other proposals that may emerge during the session.

## 2021 Environmental Stewardship Legislative Priorities

In this long session we are prioritizing the following four bills:

- **Clean fuel standards** [HB 1091](#): to spur innovation and adoption of clean technologies in the oil and gas industry and the development and use of low-carbon fuels to reduce greenhouse gas. California, Oregon and Canada all have clean fuel standards in place.
- **Climate Justice** [HEAL ACT SB 5141](#), to reduce environmental health impacts on Washington communities and improve access to clean air, clean water and a healthy environment throughout the state
- **Phase out Hydro fluorocarbons** [HB 1050](#) from air conditioners and other appliances, a major source of greenhouse gas
- **Right to repair bill** [HB 1212](#) increase access to repair proprietary digital equipment, support small business and decrease waste