

**Building the movement
to ensure that everyone
in Washington has the
opportunity to live in a
safe, healthy, affordable home.**



Support Issues

In addition to our lead priorities, every year we identify other issues that we take positions on. Some are issues that our members or allies lead that directly impact affordable housing and related services. Others are not as directly related to affordable homes, but impact the lives of people who live in affordable homes, struggle to keep a roof over their heads, or are experiencing homelessness. People don't live their lives in silos and while we believe that a home is the basic foundation that everyone needs, it is not all that anyone needs.

We prioritize issue areas so we can respond to the increased attention to affordable housing and homelessness issues. We expect to see more proposals than ever aimed at solving the housing crisis that exists across Washington. We also expect to see proposals based in stereotypes and prejudice that will harm our community and that we will oppose forcefully.

Every issue below impacts our ability to create safe and inclusive communities, which allow all families and individuals to thrive in safe, healthy, affordable homes.

To track our position on key bills visit wliha.org/bill-and-budget-tracker

*The following issue areas are in no particular order.

Clean up the tax code

Creating affordable homes and inclusive communities requires investment. We strongly support cleaning up our tax code and eliminating tax breaks to free up resources for investments that benefit all of us.

Advance Social Justice

Immigrant Rights:

The Legislature should protect the rights of immigrants and refugees because attacks make these communities more vulnerable to homelessness and to substandard housing conditions. We oppose any attempt to weaken protections or to prevent immigrants and refugees from qualifying for state services.

Fair Housing:

The Legislature should protect and expand fair housing protections, including by investing more deeply in fair housing enforcement. We oppose any attempt to weaken fair housing protections, including for transgender people as seen in recent legislative sessions.

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Support Issues Continued

Criminalization of Homelessness:

The Legislature should do more to protect people experiencing homelessness. We oppose any attempt to criminalize homelessness such as arresting people for sleeping outdoors or for otherwise trying to survive without housing.

Democracy and Voting Rights:

The Legislature should protect and expand the rights of Washington's voters and do more to encourage voter engagement. When low-income people and other marginalized communities engage in the democratic process, lawmakers gain a better understanding of the needs of all their constituents and enact better policy.

Criminal Records:

The Legislature should eliminate barriers to housing, employment, and services for people with criminal records. Criminal records disproportionately impact communities of color and low-income people due to sentencing and policing biases, while also foreclosing opportunities long after formal sentences have been served.

Racial Justice:

The Legislature should enact policies that increase racial and social equity and ensure that policies under consideration do not have negative impacts on marginalized groups, including communities of color, immigrants and refugees, and Muslims.

Build and Preserve Affordable Homes

Local Options:

The Legislature should expand and protect local government options to fund affordable homes, homelessness and safety-net services, and to protect the rights of tenants and homeowners.

Incentivize Affordable Homes:

The Legislature should expand incentives for nonprofits, local governments, and for-profit housing developers to create affordable homes. We support incentives that do not outweigh public gain and that do not compromise tenant protections.

Preserve Affordable Homes:

The Legislature should help preserve affordable homes owned by nonprofit or public entities, by investing in the aging Housing Trust Fund portfolio, ensuring sufficient operations and maintenance funds for affordable housing, and preventing unexpected new costs for affordable housing developers.

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Support Issues Continued

Homeownership:

The Legislature should support programs that assist low-income first-time homebuyers, such as the Housing Trust Fund or other programs. We oppose attempts to weaken homeowner protections, especially against foreclosure.

Manufactured Housing Communities:

The Legislature should preserve manufactured housing communities and protect the rights of homeowners and renters in these communities. We oppose attempts to weaken standing protections.

Rural Washington:

The Legislature should act on the unique housing needs of rural Washington, including the need for preservation of existing affordable homes and deeper investments in a wide variety of affordable housing, including homes for farmworkers. We also urge the legislature to help address the repair and weatherization needs of low-income rural homeowners.

Prevent Homelessness and Meet the Needs of Vulnerable Populations

Homeless Youth and Young Adults:

The Legislature should invest in the needs of homeless youth and young adults by ensuring that no youth exits a state system of care into homelessness, expand services to meet housing and other needs for youth and their families, and strengthen the role that public schools play in identifying and meeting the unique educational needs of students impacted by homelessness and housing insecurity.

Domestic Violence:

The Legislature should do more to protect children and adults from domestic violence and to connect survivors to housing and other opportunities.

Support People with Developmental Disabilities:

The Legislature should protect and invest in the needs of people with developmental disabilities and their families.

Caring for Washington's Seniors:

The Legislature should protect Washington's seniors, including by investing in accessible affordable senior housing.

Appropriate Care for People Living with Mental Illness:

The Legislature should protect people living with mental illness and create community-based solutions, including Permanent Supportive Housing, to avoid unnecessary time in institutions.

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Support Issues Continued

Tenants' Rights:

The Legislature should protect and expand the rights of Washington's tenants to reduce barriers to housing for renters. We oppose efforts to weaken standing protections or to preempt local governments from enacting protections.

Mental Health and Chemical Dependency Services:

The Legislature should recognize the impact of mental illness and chemical dependency on homelessness and invest more deeply in mental health and chemical dependency services.

TANF, WorkFirst, Food Assistance and Safety-Net Services:

The Legislature should protect the TANF program and restore the cash grant to pre-recession levels. We urge the legislature to protect and invest in other safety-net services and anti-poverty programs including food assistance, WorkFirst, and other strategies to address intergenerational poverty.

Child Welfare:

The Legislature should do more to support families experiencing challenges that could lead, or have led them, into the child welfare system, including consolidating services into a single state agency dedicated to children, youth, and families.