



2021 SESSION REVIEW

Equity

Background

After the death of George Floyd sparked riots and demonstrations across the country, many Democrats focused on social equity as a single issue. To address perceived systemic racism, many bills, provisions within bills, and provisions within budgets were passed.

Bills

Higher Education

[E2SSB 5227](#) (Randall) – **DEIA Training & Assessments**. Requires Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Anti-Racism (DEIA) training and assessments at higher education institutions. Funded in Operating Budget – \$4,675, 000. *Passed House 67-31. Signed by Governor. Effective July 25, 2021.*

[SSB 5228](#) (Randall) – **Equity in Medical Training**. Requires public medical schools to develop a health equity curriculum that students must take in order to graduate. Also requires each public medical school to create a goal regarding student representation and report progress on that goal annually. "Sufficient funding" is provided in the Operating Budget. *Passed House 56-42. Signed by Governor. Effective July 25, 2021.*

[E2SSB 5194](#) (Lias) – **Equity and Access in Community & Technical College Programs**. Requires Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) strategic plans at Community and Technical Colleges (CTCs). Requires CTCs to develop a diversity program for faculty recruitment and retention. Funded in Operating Budget – \$16,123,000. *Passed House 60-38. Signed by Governor. Effective July 25, 2021.*

Housing

[HB 1220](#) (Peterson) – **Comprehensive Plans**. Includes a provision making it mandatory as part of the Growth Management Act (GMA) that each jurisdiction's comprehensive plan housing element identifies local policies and regulations that result in racially disparate impacts, displacement, and exclusions in housing, including zoning that may have discriminatory effects. It must identify policies and regulations to begin to undo racially disparate impacts, displacement, and exclusion in housing caused by local policies. The local authorities must identify areas of higher risk for displacement and then establish anti-displacement policies. Funded in Operating Budget – \$702,000. *Passed House 57-40. Signed by Governor. Effective July 25, 2021.*

Health and Long-Term Care

[E2SSB 5052](#) (Keiser) – **Health Equity Zones**. Requires Department of Health (DOH) to designate health equity zones statewide and develop projects that meet the needs of each zone. Communities may self-identify as a health equity zone and develop projects. Funded in Operating Budget – \$1,406,000. *Passed House 57-40-1. Signed by Governor. Effective July 25, 2021.*

[ESSB 5229](#) (Randall) – **Health Equity Continuing Education for Health Care Professionals**. Requires health equity courses for health professionals to teach how to care for patients from diverse cultures, groups, and communities. Funded in Operating Budget – \$335,000. *Passed House 57-41. Signed by Governor. Effective July 25, 2021.*

[2SSB 5313](#) (Lias) – **Health Insurance Discrimination.** Health carriers and the Health Care Authority (HCA) may not deny coverage for medically necessary gender affirming treatment. Funded in Operating Budget – \$64,000. *Passed House 57-41. Signed by Governor. Effective July 25, 2021.*

State Government

[ESSB 5405](#) (Hasegawa) – **JLARC Racial Equity Analyses.** Requires the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Committee (JLARC) to incorporate racial equity analysis in performance audits, sunset reviews, and other audits and reports. ~~Requires JLARC to complete a racial equity analysis on the impact of COVID-19 related restrictions on K-12 education.~~ (Vetoed). Funded in Operating Budget – \$517,000. *Passed House 56-41-1. Signed by Governor. **Partial Veto.** Effective July 25, 2021.*

Business, Financial Service, and Trade

[SSB 5378](#) (Das) – **Real Estate Broker Renewal.** Requires the education for obtaining or renewing a Real Estate Broker license or a managing broker's license to include instructional hours in fair housing. Funded in Operating Budget – \$267,000 (Real Estate Commission Account). *Passed House 85-12-1. Signed by Governor. Effective June 1, 2022.*

[ESHB 1443](#) (Morgan) – **Social Equity in Cannabis.** Expands the purpose of the Task Force on Social Equity in Cannabis and adds recommendation topics to the Task Force's duties. Expands eligibility for awards under the Cannabis Social Equity Technical Assistance Grant Program. Funded in the Operating Budget – \$1,096,000. *Passed House 60-36-2. Signed by Governor. Effective July 25, 2021.*

[HB 1335](#) (Valdez) – **Illegal Racial Restrictions on Deeds.** Requires notification to property owners of illegal racial restrictions on property deeds so that the property owners can take steps to remove the covenants from the property. The seller's disclosure statement is updated to include a provision notifying that such covenants are illegal and the method by which the covenant can be removed. The University of Washington and Eastern Washington University are tasked with reviewing existing covenants and deeds to identify those that include illegal racial restrictions. The universities are directed to notify property owners and the county auditor. Funded in Operating Budget – \$500,000. *Passed House 95-1. Signed by Governor. Effective July 25, 2021.*

Early Learning & K12

[ESSB 5044](#) (Das) – **Training on Cultural Competence, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (CCDEI).** Directs the school directors' association (WSSDA) and the educator standards board (PESB) to separately develop standards on CCDEI, to collaborate to align the standards, and to separately review the standards every 10 years. Requires each member of a board of directors to complete a governance training program aligned with the CCDEI standards, provided by WSSDA, at least once every four years beginning with the 2022 calendar year. In the 2021-22 school year, districts must use one of the state-funded professional learning days to train all school staff on CCDEI. Beginning in the 2023-24 school year, school districts are required to use one of the state-funded professional learning days every other year to provide a variety of opportunities for training, professional development, and professional learning aligned with the CCDEI standards of practice developed by the PESB, which must include training on multicultural education and principals of language acquisition. Requires alignment of paraeducator and educator preparation and development programs to the CCDEI standards. Funded in Operating Budget – \$245,000. *Passed House 57-40-1. Signed by Governor. Effective July 25, 2021.*

[E2SSB 5237](#) (Wilson, C.) – **Fair Start Act.** Creates the Fair Start for Kids account with specific spending goals and strategies including Department of Children, Youth & Families (DCYF) staff receiving anti-bias and anti-racist training. The Early Learning Advisory Council is expanded to include representatives appointed by the minority commissions. The council must work with DCYF to, “maintain a focus on racial equity and inclusion in order to dismantle systemic racism at its core and contribute to statewide efforts to break the cycle of intergenerational poverty.” The council must also monitor if DCYF is advancing racial equity by recognizing and responding to the growing diversity of the state's

population. The bill also creates equity grants for early-learning and child-care providers. DCYF must solicit applications from a racially and geographically diverse pool of applicants. Applicants must demonstrate their proposed uses of the funds to, “incorporate either inclusive practices or culturally and linguistically supportive and relevant practices, or both, into early learning program design, delivery, education, training, and evaluation.” Funded in Operating Budget – \$300,000,000 for all Fair State Act investments, which includes \$5,300,000 in childhood equity grants. *Passed House 65-32-1. Signed by Governor. Varying effective dates. See final bill report for effective dates.*

Environment

[ESSB 5141](#) (Saldaña) – **Environmental Justice**. Covered agencies are required, and other agencies encouraged, to apply and comply with specified environmental justice (EJ) requirements with respect to agency activities. Covered agencies must include EJ implementation plans with their agency's strategic plans. They must create and adopt a community engagement plan, describing planned engagement with overburdened communities. They must also incorporate EJ principles into agency budget decision packages. Funded in Operating Budget – \$10,541,000. *Passed House 56-41-1. Signed by Governor. Effective July 25, 2021.*

Budget information

Transportation Budget

- Continuation of the Transportation Commission’s study and pilot program on the road usage charge that includes an equity analysis to identify and measure potential disparate impacts on communities of color, low-income households, vulnerable populations, and displaced communities. This is paid for by a federal grant.
- \$2,400,000 is provided for a pilot program to provide clean alternative fuel vehicle use opportunities to underserved communities and low to moderate income members of the workforce not readily served by transit located in areas that exceed federal and state emissions standards.
- \$215,000 for a legislative Joint Transportation Committee study on the impacts of current and historical city transportation investments communities of color, low-income households, vulnerable populations and displaced communities. The study should provide specific approaches to address existing inequities within cities and recommendations of best practices to improve, diversify, and expand city transportation investments.
- \$4,000,000 is provided for Pre-apprenticeship Support Services (PASS) which aims to increase diversity in the highway construction workforce. It may provide housing assistance for youth aging out of the foster care and juvenile rehabilitation systems. Grants can also assist minority and women-owned businesses to be more involved in the transportation construction industry, including business training and mentorship programs.

Capital Budget

- **Clean Energy V** – The Department of Commerce (Commerce) must use an equity and environmental justice lens when designing programs within the Clean Energy V program.
- **State Broadband Office** – \$5,000,000 is provided to the State Broadband Office (SBO) for broadband equity and affordability grants (CSFRA–Federal or CCRA–Federal).
- **Capital Grant Program Equity** – \$5,000,000 is provided to Commerce to provide planning, technical assistance, and pre-design grants to projects that would directly benefit communities historically underserved by capital grant programs. This funding is intended to reduce barriers to participation due to race, ethnicity, religion, income, geography, disability, or educational attainment. (State Building Construction Account.)
- **Outdoor Recreation Equity** – \$2,325,000 for the Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO) to conduct a similar grant program to the Capital Grant Program Equity offered by Commerce. (State Building Construction Account.) An additional \$375,000 is provided in the Operating Budget to review state grant programs administered by RCO and to develop targeted equity strategies informed by a public stakeholder process. (General Fund-State).

Operating Budget (In addition to funding listed with Bills above)

- **Office of Equity** – \$2,600,000 to staff the State Office of Equity created in 2020. (General Fund-State.)
- **Court Equity and Access Team** – \$1,500,000 for the development of a statewide Court Equity and Access Team which will help those from historically marginalized backgrounds resolve their civil legal problems. (General Fund-State.)
- **Addressing Economic Inequality** – \$674,000 for the Department of Financial Institutions to support a targeted diversity, equity, and inclusion financial literacy plan, including the creation of a position dedicated to work with regulated financial institutions and financial education partners to address racial wealth inequality. (Financial Services Regulation Account-Non-Appr.)
- **Digital Equity** – \$350,000 for the State Broadband office to conduct digital equity and inclusion efforts, including planning and technical assistance grants for community organizations, translation of outreach materials, and technical assistance. Additional funding is provided to co-facilitate a Digital Equity Forum with the Office of Equity. (General Fund-State.)
- **Equity Coordinator, State Parks** – \$260,000 for State Parks to hire a diversity, equity, and inclusion coordinator with the goal of expanding the diversity of the agency’s workforce. (General Fund-State.)
- **Equity Study, State Parks** – \$85,000 for Parks to conduct a study to identify modes of systemic racism for Black Washingtonians in accessing public outdoor recreation. (General Fund-State.)
- **Equity in Farming** – \$180,000 of one-time funding is provided for coordination and a report on efforts to ensure inclusion of historically underrepresented farmers and ranchers in the agricultural industry. (General Fund-State.)