**2025 7 – 23 AAUW Branch Public Policy Report**

[*Three years after Dobbs, the state of women's health is dire*](https://contrarian.substack.com/p/three-years-after-dobbs-the-state?utm_source=substack&utm_medium=email)

From The Contrarian June 25; the case of Adriana Smith in Georgia, kept alive for months after being declared brain dead, until cesarian section removed the viable fetus.

Article in The Atlantic July 2025 discusses ethical implications.

*Washington State Standard: June 30, 2025* [*https://washingtonstatestandard.com/tag/prayer/*](https://washingtonstatestandard.com/tag/prayer/)

Prayer in Public School

A new analysis published last week by the [Pew Research Center](https://www.pewresearch.org/short-reads/2025/06/23/support-for-christian-prayer-in-us-public-schools-varies-widely-by-state/) shows differences between adults in Washington and Idaho and their views on prayer in public school.

Washington remains one of the 12 states and the District of Columbia who are home to more adults who oppose rather than favor Christian [prayer in schools](https://favs.news/prayer-in-school-texas-law-takes-effect/). More specifically, 61% of adults oppose allowing teachers to lead their classes in prayer that refer to Jesus with 37% in favor. Included in this list are California, Oregon, District of Columbia and much of New England.

*Crimes on tribal lands*

A new state law aims to stop criminal suspects from fleeing Washington’s tribal lands to evade law enforcement.

[Senate Bill 6146](https://app.leg.wa.gov/billsummary/?BillNumber=6146&Year=2023&Initiative=false) authorizes police to enforce warrants that the state’s federally recognized tribes issue, and bring fugitives back to reservations to face prosecution.

Tribes have recognized state warrants since 1854, but that practice hasn’t been reciprocated.

“The safety of all Washingtonians is a responsibility across governmental families, and SB 6146 responds to those victims of crimes, from drug dealers to domestic violence,” state Rep. Debra Lekanoff, D-Anacortes, said in a statement last year. Lekanoff is the only Native American woman serving in the state House.

Since passing with unanimous support in the Legislature last year, a task force has worked on how to implement the new law. Out of that work came [legislation that lawmakers approved this year to make some changes](https://app.leg.wa.gov/billsummary/?BillNumber=1829&Year=2025&Initiative=false) to last year’s law.

*Trafficking*

Hundreds of children in Washington are victims of [sex trafficking](https://washingtonstatestandard.com/2024/03/05/child-sex-trafficking-survivor-says-update-of-wa-laws-will-help-prevent-stories-like-hers/) every year.

Lawmakers unanimously passed [Senate Bill 6006](https://app.leg.wa.gov/billsummary/?BillNumber=6006&Year=2023&Initiative=false) (Sen. Manka Dhingra, D-Redmond),last year to better identify these minors.

* new law adds trafficking to the definition of [abuse or neglect](https://dcyf.wa.gov/safety/mandated-reporter) that mandatory reporters would have to report.
* state agencies must use a validated assessment tool to screen children for commercial sexual abuse.
* Victims can also now ask for a sexual assault protection order based on commercial sexual exploitation.
* Police can also file petitions on their behalf. Denials of these civil orders can’t be based on the person consenting to sex.
* Under the law, the state Department of Children, Youth and Families must offer services to children identified as survivors of sex trafficking.
* The measure also removes the statute of limitations for some statutes used to prosecute traffickers.

“Currently, survivors of sex trafficking do not have the same rights and access to the services and support that survivors of childhood sexual assault do,” said the bill’s sponsor Sen. Manka Dhingra, D-Redmond. “These sexually exploited children are not criminals; they are victims. This bill continues to ensure we recognize that even though their abuse is paid for, they deserve the same access to services and support. That is justice.”

*Washington State Standard July 10, 2025*

The Republican budget bill cuts Medicaid funding for Planned Parenthood for one year. That provision is tied up in the courts. If the organization's legal fight is unsuccessful, Governor Ferguson committed Wednesday to backfilling that lost federal funding with $11 million in state dollars.

*State communications July 11*

AAUW has toolkits for planning events, talking points for Good Trouble Day July 17 and beyond. July 17th is the anniversary of Rep. Lewis’ death. Good Trouble Lives On National Day of Action.

[*The Abortion Prosecution No One Is Talking About*](https://contrarian.substack.com/p/the-abortion-prosecution-no-one-is?utm_source=substack&utm_medium=email)

From ‘The Contrarian’, July 15, 2025. Texas case charging man who slipped his girlfriend abortion pills without her knowledge as capital murder.

“If this man’s actions warrant a capital murder charge, it lays a very dangerous foundation. So-called “abortion abolitionists”—the people behind these dangerous bills—believe deeply that abortion is murder, and the women who get them are murderers. We cannot let the horrific facts of this case be manipulated to further their dangerous agenda.”

This case could advance the national agenda to create and enforce fetal personhood from conception. This is an ethically complex case.

[*https://www.thenewstribune.com/opinion/article311085660.html#campaignName=tacoma\_morning\_newsletter*](https://www.thenewstribune.com/opinion/article311085660.html#campaignName=tacoma_morning_newsletter)

Opinion piece by Nick Watkins, science teacher Franklin Pierce High School

Mr. Watkins analyzes the lack of funding for lab experiments in high school science classrooms, and how it impacts students’ ability to learn about the sciences, and their interest in pursuing science classes post high school.