

Hon. Speaker Laurie Jinkins  
339C Legislative Building  
PO Box 40600  
Olympia, WA 98504

Hon. Majority Leader Pat Sullivan  
339A Legislative Building  
PO Box 40600  
Olympia, WA 98504

Hon. Minority Leader J.T. Wilcox  
335C Legislative Building  
PO Box 40600  
Olympia, WA 98504

Dear Lawmakers,

We, the undersigned organizations and individuals, are reaching out in strong opposition to SB 5561, which perpetuates the racial inequities in our criminal legal system and is attempting to solve a problem that simply doesn't exist. There is absolutely no data to justify hastily passing this bill with zero research or stakeholder engagement. This bill furthers the stigma attached to those with a criminal conviction and is an attack on our civil rights. This bill does nothing to protect survivors of domestic violence or other violent crimes and is just harmful and racist rhetoric.

We believe this bill should not be passed for the following reasons:

- There is absolutely no data that indicates there has been a problem identified of people who have gotten their gun rights legally restored and gone out and committed acts of violence using firearms.
- Anybody who waits the current specified amount of time, takes the proactive step to get their gun rights legally restored, legally purchases and registers their gun, is not likely to go out and commit acts of violence jeopardizing those rights.
- If there is violence happening, it's not by the people who are going through the current legal process of firearm rights restoration.
- People of color are disproportionately targeted by police and are disproportionately affected and harmed by this bill.
- This is an issue for indigenous communities who are also disproportionately affected by the criminal legal system and affects their ability to participate in hunting activities, which is an integral part of many Native American cultures.
- There is a large spectrum of offenses that can be labeled as "domestic violence", many of which are not violent offenses, and can often affect victim defendants.
- This bill affects families and where they can live by not allowing them to live in households where other members own guns.

Last year this legislature passed HB 1078, an important civil rights bill that restored the voting rights to people immediately upon release from incarceration. This bill is a return to the Jim Crow era of dismantling the civil rights of marginalized and over policed communities.

We urge you to not bring this bill to the floor for a vote and to create a workgroup with all stakeholders impacted by this bill to determine if there is actually any problem this bill would address.

Respectfully,

A Philip Randolph Institute - Seattle Chapter  
All of Us or None  
Around the Table Farm  
Breean Beggs, Spokane City Council President  
Civil Survival Project  
Community Passageways  
Faith Action Network  
Freedom Project  
God's Broken Home University  
Hope for Homies  
Husky Post-Prison Pathways  
I Did the Time  
No New Washington Prisons  
North Kitsap Indivisible  
Northwest Community Bail Fund  
Northwest Credible Messengers  
Participatory Justice  
Peer Reentry Navigation Community Bail Fund  
Public Defender Association  
Resisterhood Indivisible (Kitsap)  
Tacoma Recovery Center  
The Revive Center for Returning Citizens  
The Way to Justice  
VOCAL-WA  
Washington Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers  
Washington Coalition Against Domestic Violence  
Washington Defender Association  
WA Partners for Social Change  
WA Drivers Relicensing Taskforce  
What's Next Washington  
Brittany Lovely  
Cynthia Brady  
Karen Osborne  
Katherine Frasier  
Laurie Dawson

Leslie Cushman  
Lydia Schoen  
Michael Shoemaker  
Tonia McClanahan