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