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**SENATE BILL 5826**

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**State of Washington**

**69th Legislature**

**2026 Regular Session**

**By** Senators Nobles, Alvarado, Chapman, Conway, Dhingra, Hasegawa, Liiias, Pedersen, Riccelli, Saldaña, Shewmake, Slatter, Stanford, Trudeau, Valdez, and C. Wilson

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1 AN ACT Relating to access at public postsecondary educational  
2 institutions to medication abortion; and adding a new chapter to  
3 Title 28B RCW.

4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature finds and declares the  
6 following:

7 (1) Access to abortion is a human right, an integral part of  
8 essential health care, and vital for promoting public health.

9 (2) There are approximately 196,000 pregnancy capable students  
10 attending Washington's public institutions of higher education and  
11 many of these students need access to abortion services each year. A  
12 central mission of Washington's student health centers serving these  
13 institutions is to minimize the negative impact of health concerns on  
14 students' studies and to facilitate retention and graduation.

15 (3) Students seeking pregnancy termination face substantial  
16 travel, financial, and logistical barriers. Students must travel as  
17 far as 78 miles, or over four hours on public transit, round trip to  
18 the nearest abortion-providing facility, and the average wait time  
19 for an appointment is 10 days. The supreme court *Dobbs v. Jackson*  
20 *women's health organization* decision has increased the burden on  
21 abortion-providing facilities in the state, meaning longer wait times

1 for students needing to access care. A 2024 report from senator Maria  
2 Cantwell's office states that clinics in Oregon have already seen a  
3 50 percent increase in patients from Washington state traveling for  
4 abortion care, and the average wait times in Washington for abortion  
5 appointments in a Seattle area clinic have already increased by one  
6 week due to the influx of patients traveling from out of state. These  
7 financial and time burdens negatively impact academic performance,  
8 mental health, and physical health.

9 (4) Though many of Washington's public institutions of higher  
10 education have student health centers, only one campus student health  
11 center currently offers medical abortion services and only one other  
12 is known to be in the process of implementing abortion services.  
13 Medication abortion is extremely safe, efficacious, and cost-  
14 effective. Research shows that the provision of medication abortion  
15 in student health centers is safe, effective, and feasible.

16 (5) Because medication abortion is recognized as a safe and  
17 effective treatment for pregnancy termination and a health service  
18 every pregnant person in the state has the legal right to choose, it  
19 is the intent of the legislature that public institutions of higher  
20 education make medication abortion as accessible and cost-effective  
21 for students as possible.

22 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** The definitions in this section apply  
23 throughout this chapter unless the context clearly requires  
24 otherwise.

25 (1) "Council" means the Washington student achievement council as  
26 defined in RCW 28B.77.010.

27 (2) "Medication abortion" has the same meaning as  
28 "abortion medications" in RCW 69.41.050.

29 (3) "Public institution of higher education" or "public  
30 institutions of higher education" means institutions of higher  
31 education as defined in RCW 28B.10.016.

32 (4) "Safety net abortion provider" means an abortion provider  
33 contracted with the department of health's sexual and reproductive  
34 health program.

35 (5) "Student health center" means a clinic or health center  
36 providing physical health care services to students operated by  
37 public institutions of higher education.

1        NEW SECTION.        **Sec. 3.**        (1)(a) By the start of the 2027-28  
2 academic year, each student health center must offer access to  
3 medication abortion through:

4        (i) A public program that connects patients in Washington to  
5 reproductive health services;

6        (ii) A formal agreement with a safety net abortion provider with  
7 telehealth capabilities; or

8        (iii) Other available methods.

9        (b) Student health centers that do not offer medication abortion  
10 services prior to the effective date of this section must utilize the  
11 most cost-effective option to offer medication abortion services.

12        (2) By the start of the 2027-28 academic year, each public  
13 institution of higher education that does not operate a student  
14 health center must provide information and referral services for  
15 medication abortion to students seeking such services. The  
16 institution must train current student support staff on the  
17 availability of public resources to refer students to, including  
18 existing:

19        (a) Directories of qualified health care providers who can  
20 lawfully administer medication abortion;

21        (b) Private and accessible space on campus for the student to  
22 participate in telehealth appointments;

23        (c) Student technical support to participate in telehealth  
24 appointments; and

25        (d) Student access to electronic devices to participate in  
26 telehealth appointments.

27        (3)(a) All public institutions of higher education must maintain  
28 a comprehensive health services webpage on an existing website that  
29 provides clear, accessible information and resources regarding  
30 reproductive health services including, but not limited to, prenatal  
31 care and options for pregnancy termination.

32        (b) The webpage must include:

33        (i) Detailed instructions for scheduling appointments, with  
34 contact information for both pregnancy-related services and  
35 behavioral health services;

36        (ii) Links and contact information for existing campus resources  
37 that assist students in requesting academic accommodations, including  
38 absences, rescheduling exams, or adjusting other academic  
39 requirements due to pregnancy, recovery from medical treatment, or  
40 related conditions; and

1 (iii) An unbroken link and accurate description that directs  
2 students to the abortion page of the sexual and reproductive health  
3 section of the department of health's website.

4 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 4.** Sections 1 through 3 of this act  
5 constitute a new chapter in Title 28B RCW.

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