S-3669.1

SENATE BILL 5950

State of Washington 69th Legislature 2026 Regular Session

By Senators Cortes, Alvarado, Braun, Dhingra, Hasegawa, Liias, Nobles, Riccelli, Salomon, Stanford, and Valdez

Prefiled 12/29/25. Read first time 01/12/26. Referred to Committee on State Government, Tribal Affairs & Elections.

AN ACT Relating to celebrating Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, Guru Nanak, Guru Gobind Singh, and Vaisakhi; reenacting and amending RCW 1.16.050; and creating a new section.

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

NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature finds that many religious minorities are living in increased fear and isolation and are victims of increased incidents of bias and hate. Recognizing important holidays is one way to help communities feel seen, valued, and respected. At a time in which there is increased hate speech and more attacks on religious groups, saying that Washington is a home for all, and that we value and respect you and your community's contributions, is more important than ever. By expanding the list of nonlegal state holidays, the state helps recognize and celebrate the many faiths, heritages, and cultures of Washingtonians.

Sec. 2. RCW 1.16.050 and 2025 c 58 s 1001 and 2025 c 30 s 1 are each reenacted and amended to read as follows:

(1) The following are state legal holidays:

(a) Sunday;

(b) The first day of January, commonly called New Year's Day;

(c) The third Monday of January, celebrated as the anniversary of the birth of Martin Luther King, Jr.;

(d) The third Monday of February, to be known as Presidents' Day and celebrated as the anniversary of the births of Abraham Lincoln and George Washington;

(e) The last Monday of May, commonly known as Memorial Day;

(f) The nineteenth day of June, recognized as Juneteenth, a day of remembrance for the day the African slaves learned of their freedom;

(g) The fourth day of July, the anniversary of the Declaration of Independence;

(h) The first Monday in September, to be known as Labor Day;

(i) The eleventh day of November, to be known as Veterans Day;

(j) The fourth Thursday in November, to be known as Thanksgiving Day;

(k) The Friday immediately following the fourth Thursday in November, to be known as Native American Heritage Day; and

(l) The twenty-fifth day of December, commonly called Christmas Day.

(2) Employees of the state and its political subdivisions, except employees of school districts and except those nonclassified employees of institutions of higher education who hold appointments or are employed under contracts to perform services for periods of less than twelve consecutive months, are entitled to one paid holiday per calendar year in addition to those specified in this section. Each employee of the state or its political subdivisions may select the day on which the employee desires to take the additional holiday provided for in this section after consultation with the employer pursuant to guidelines to be promulgated by rule of the appropriate personnel authority, or in the case of local government by ordinance or resolution of the legislative authority.

(3) Employees of the state and its political subdivisions, including employees of school districts and those nonclassified employees of institutions of higher education who hold appointments or are employed under contracts to perform services for periods of less than twelve consecutive months, are entitled to two unpaid holidays per calendar year for a reason of faith or conscience or an organized activity conducted under the auspices of a religious denomination, church, or religious organization. This includes employees of public institutions of higher education, including

community colleges, technical colleges, and workforce training programs. The employee may select the days on which the employee desires to take the two unpaid holidays after consultation with the employer pursuant to guidelines to be promulgated by rule of the appropriate personnel authority, or in the case of local government by ordinance or resolution of the legislative authority. If an employee prefers to take the two unpaid holidays on specific days for a reason of faith or conscience, or an organized activity conducted under the auspices of a religious denomination, church, or religious organization, the employer must allow the employee to do so unless the employee's absence would impose an undue hardship on the employer or the employee is necessary to maintain public safety. Undue hardship shall have the meaning established in rule by the office of financial management under RCW 43.41.109.

(4) If any of the state legal holidays specified in this section are also federal legal holidays but observed on different dates, only the state legal holidays are recognized as a paid legal holiday for employees of the state and its political subdivisions. However, for port districts and the law enforcement and public transit employees of municipal corporations, either the federal or the state legal holiday is recognized as a paid legal holiday, but in no case may both holidays be recognized as a paid legal holiday for employees.

(5) Whenever any state legal holiday:

(a) Other than Sunday, falls upon a Sunday, the following Monday is the legal holiday; or

(b) Falls upon a Saturday, the preceding Friday is the legal holiday.

(6) Nothing in this section may be construed to have the effect of adding or deleting the number of paid holidays provided for in an agreement between employees and employers of political subdivisions of the state or as established by ordinance or resolution of the local government legislative authority.

(7) The legislature declares that the following days are recognized as provided in this subsection, but may not be considered legal holidays for any purpose:

(a) The fifth day of January, commonly known as the birth of the tenth guru, Guru Gobind Singh;

(b) The eleventh day of January, recognized as human trafficking awareness day;

((~~(b)~~)) (c) The thirteenth day of January, recognized as Korean American day;

((~~(c)~~)) (d) The date corresponding with the second new moon following the winter solstice, or the third new moon following the winter solstice should an intercalary month intervene, recognized as the lunar new year;

((~~(d)~~)) (e) The twenty-sixth day of January, recognized as Washington army and air national guard day;

((~~(e)~~)) (f) The nineteenth day of February, recognized as civil liberties day of remembrance;

((~~(f)~~)) (g) The ninth day of March, recognized as Billy Frank Jr. day;

((~~(g)~~)) (h) The thirtieth day of March, recognized as welcome home Vietnam veterans day;

((~~(h)~~)) (i) The thirty-first day of March, recognized as Cesar Chavez day;

((~~(i)~~)) (j) The ninth day of April, recognized as former prisoner of war recognition day;

((~~(j)~~)) (k) The tenth day of April, recognized as Dolores Huerta day;

((~~(k)~~)) (l) The fourteenth day of April, commonly known as the birth of Guru Nanak;

(m) The fourteenth day of April, commonly known as the birth of Khalsa, commonly known as Vaisakhi;

(n) The sixteenth day of April, recognized as Mother Joseph day;

((~~(l)~~)) (o) The fifteenth day of May, recognized as water safety day;

((~~(m)~~)) (p) The twenty-seventh day of July, recognized as national Korean war veterans armistice day;

((~~(n)~~)) (q) The seventh day of August, recognized as purple heart recipient recognition day;

((~~(o)~~)) (r) The fourth day of September, recognized as Marcus Whitman day;

((~~(p)~~)) (s) The fourth Saturday of September, recognized as public lands day;

((~~(q)~~)) (t) The second Sunday in October, recognized as Washington state children's day;

((~~(r)~~)) (u) The twelfth day of October, recognized as Columbus day;

((~~(s)~~)) (v) The seventh day of December, recognized as Pearl Harbor remembrance day;

((~~(t)~~)) (w) The eighteenth day of December, recognized as blood donor day;

((~~(u)~~)) (x) The first day of the tenth month of the Islamic calendar, which is lunar-cycle based and shifts by approximately 10 to 11 days each year, commonly called Eid al-Fitr; ((~~and~~

~~(v)~~)) (y) The tenth day of the twelfth month of the Islamic calendar, which is lunar-cycle based and shifts by approximately 10 to 11 days each year, commonly called Eid al-Adha;

(z) The first and second days of the seventh month of the Jewish calendar, which is lunar-cycle based and shifts by approximately 10 to 11 days each year, commonly called Rosh Hashanah; and

(aa) The tenth day of the seventh month of the Jewish calendar, which is lunar-cycle based and shifts by approximately 10 to 11 days each year, commonly called Yom Kippur.

--- END ---