



APIC WA 2023

LEGISLATIVE OUTCOMES

2023 Legislative Session Debrief

Dear APIC WA Members,

In April, we saw the close of the 2023 legislative session in Washington. Despite numerous challenges, we passed numerous bills, operating budget requests and capital budget requests, making 2023 an impactful year for A&NH/PI communities and other immigrant communities across the state.

Our coalition's tireless fight for equitable resources and laws stands as a testament to the commitment shared across all of our diverse communities.

Thank you all for your advocacy and endless commitment toward seeking out more opportunities for this community.

Here's to 2023 and the beginning of a new chapter.



Legislative Days 2019 (Photo by Dean Wong)



Legislative Days 1997 - First Meeting in Olympia, WA (Photo by Dean Wong)

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TEAM ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Through the strength of our coalition's network, APIC members less familiar with the legislative process could rely on more experienced members for mentorship and guidance. This included assistance in navigating confusing parts of the legislative process, such as understanding the state budgets and connecting with key legislators.

Our members showed incredible leadership during APIC events, including preparation meetings, Legislative Days, and beyond. Members took the initiative in community outreach and education, helping build grassroots momentum for issues our communities have highlighted as top-tier priorities for our state government.



Legislative Days 2019 (Photo by Dean Wong)

Outcomes of 2023 Legislative Priorities

Part 1

BILLS



Eliminating Advisory Votes (HB 1158/SB 5082)

Remove advisory votes to make ballot language more accessible and invite more voters from Limited English Proficiency, naturalized, and younger age groups.

Outcome: Passed legislation, to become effective July 2023



Secure Automatic Voting Registration (HB 1229/SB 5112)

Improvements to WA state's AVR system that will eliminate human error, including automatically registering or updating voter's information.

Outcome: Passed legislation, to become effective July 2023



Voting Rights Act Improvements (HB 1048/SB 5047)

Expands right to challenge inequitable voting laws and election systems to previously excluded community members, such as tribes located in a political subdivision.

Outcome: Passed legislation, to become effective January 2024



Working Families Tax Credit (HB 1477)

Implement technical and administrative fixes to the WFTC program. This includes extending WFTC application filing period—currently one year—to three years and allowing married couples to file separately.

Outcome: Passed legislation, to become effective January 2024



Assault Weapon Ban (HB 1240/SB 5265)

Increase public safety and lower rates of mass killings in the state by banning the production, importation, distribution, and selling of assault weapons.

Outcome: Passed legislation, became effective April 2023



Legislative Days 2019 (Photo by Dean Wong)

Outcomes of 2023 Legislative Priorities

Part 1

OPERATING BUDGET



Health Equity for Immigrants (Budget request: sufficient funding) Provide a fully funded Medicaid-equivalent program, available to all WA state residents 138% FPL, regardless of immigration status.
Outcome: Partial funding received (\$45.7m). The program start-up date is delayed by six months, to launch July 2024. Program will be available to all undocumented immigrants and low-income groups.



Immigrant Services Funding (Budget request: varies)

<p>Naturalization services: Lower naturalization application costs. <i>Outcome:</i> \$3.5m/year</p>	<p>WA New Americans Program: Connect recently arrived immigrants to legal and naturalization services. <i>Outcome:</i> \$2m/year</p>	<p>Legal Defense Fund: Increased legal defense services available to immigrants. <i>Outcome:</i> \$8m/year</p>	<p>LEP Pathways: Promote economic self-sufficiency for refugees and immigrants. <i>Outcome:</i> \$2.366m/year</p>
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International Families Justice Coalition (Budget request: \$150k/year) Receive sufficient funds from the Office of Civil and Legal Aid to provide low to no-cost legal services for vulnerable immigrants and survivors of domestic violence.
Outcome: Received \$150,000 per year

CAPITAL BUDGET



Asia Pacific Cultural Center (Budget request: \$2 million) Based in Tacoma, the APCC aimed to receive sufficient funds for expansion construction, allowing additional space for recreational activities, offices, community classes, and more.
Outcome: \$2m provided to build the new center and \$1.08m provided for existing center's renovations



Indian American Community Services (Budget request: \$2 million) Receive the funds necessary to purchase and implement structural changes in the Center to provide various support services, resources, and activities to the Indian American community, including vocational training, early learning, business support, behavioral health assistance, and more.
Outcome: Received \$794,000



Communities of Concern Commission (Budget request: \$1 million) Receive sufficient funds to support 42 capital projects and initiatives that would build community wealth in communities of color and low-income rural areas, such as organizational capacity building, technical assistance, and project predevelopment.
Outcome: Received \$1 million

TAKEAWAYS

Recognizing our valuable resources

Several resources are valuable in the coalition's advocacy. While we hope to engage all legislators in the rising issues of the A&NH/PI community, time often acts as a constraint that prevents lobbyists from doing so.

As a result, it's important to recognize the sources where we can relay specific legislative asks. Here's what we can do:

Utilizing legislator's staff, such as legislative aides

Recognizing legislators who've historically offered mentorship

Do power mapping to determine most urgent sources of contact

Recentering around equity

While we reflect on the accomplishments and challenges of last session, it's important to remind ourselves that equity, diversity, and inclusion remain at the forefront of our work. What groups can begin to be included as we move forward? Here are a set of specific asks from a few coalition members:

- Requesting project funding for smaller but important communities, such as cultural centers for less recognized A or NHPI communities
- Including more diverse stakeholder representation through the entirety of the legislative session (geographic, ethnic, linguistic, etc.)
- Connecting with legislators to recenter them and ensure APIC WA's end goals are in mind
- More consistent communication throughout the year after session ends



TAKEAWAYS (CONTINUED)

Furthering community engagement

Although session wrapped up for the year, there is never a shortage of ways we can directly engage the community in the legislative process. How can we ensure we're continuing to keep community engagement, even outside of the legislative session?

- Recognize and direct civic engagement efforts around lesser involved groups (ex: youth, rural communities, smaller tribal nations, ethnic groups, etc.)
- Educate the public on APIC WA's 2024 legislative priorities earlier on
- Continuing direct, one-on-one legislator engagement in between legislative sessions
- Reflecting on current engagement to understand the community's ongoing needs and requests

How can we unite community groups with differing perspectives on our campaigns' goals?

How far in advance should APIC start preparing for next session to ensure optimal success?

Questions to ask moving forward

In what ways can we provide support as we transition into more in-person spaces?

How can we engage legislators who hold different political ideologies in our legislative priorities?



CHALLENGES FACED

Maintaining communication with legislators

With the help of our champions, many legislative priorities made it to the Governor's desk this year. However, a set of challenges can appear when we connect with our busy legislators. Given the resources we have, it's important to continue asking ourselves the following questions:

- What are the best methods to build relationships with legislators?
- How can we maintain communication between legislators and coalition?
- How can we begin to engage with legislators with differing value sets?



Legislative Days 2023 - Virtual Meeting with Senator Billig


Reflection and prioritization

Additionally, external facing hurdles were encountered during this session. Certain bills and campaigns faced dissent, dis/misinformation propped up by corporations and organizations known to hold sway over the public's opinion. While we continue to contend with these difficulties, many crucial lessons were learned, and it is important to reflect on these takeaways to continue to improve and develop our collective advocacy. How can we work against these hardships in the next legislative session with priorities that did not pass?


Outcomes of 2023 Legislative Priorities

Part 2


BILLS

 **Unemployment Insurance for All** (HB 1095/SB 5109) Create a permanent unemployment insurance program through the Employment Security Department, available for all undocumented workers.

Outcome: Did not pass legislation


 **Guaranteed Basic Income** (HB 1045) Implementation of a two-year pilot GBI program, which would provide monthly cash payments to vulnerable working communities whose income is at or below 200% FPL.

Outcome: Did not pass legislation


 **Wealth Tax** (HB 1473/SB 5486) Target WA state's large gap in wealth equity and create a more fair tax system by enacting a property tax on financial property—such as stocks, bonds, and trade names—that cost over \$250 million.

Outcome: Did not pass legislation

CAPITAL BUDGET

 **Refugee Artisan Initiative** (Budget request: \$778k) Remodel a 7500 square foot space in Lake City into an urban manufacturing space and art gallery to showcase the talents of refugee and immigrant women's artisan creations.

Outcome: Not included in final capital budget

 **UTOPIA Mapu Maia Clinic** (Budget request: \$700k) Construct a drop-in clinic with extended operating hours to provide substance use and mental health-related services to the 2SLGBTQIA+ community.

Outcome: Not included in final capital budget

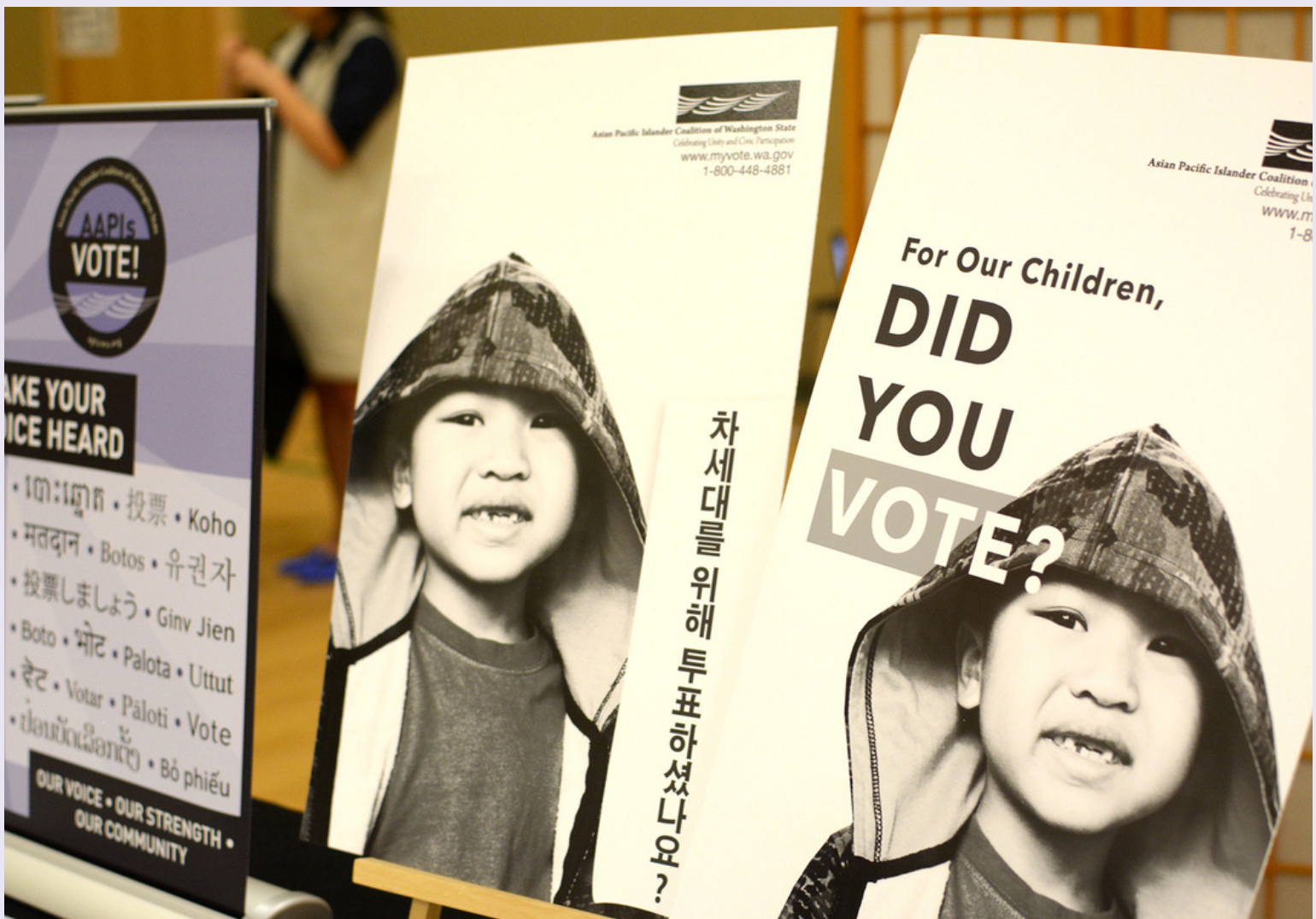


Legislative Days 2010 (Credit Unknown)

NEXT STEPS

It is never too early to begin preparing for the next session. We asked coalition members what work and resources were useful during the session, and the types of actions they wish to have moving forward. Down below are a few specific asks:

- Kickstarting groundwork events far in advance (ex: beginning listening sessions in the fall)
- Determining more holistic approaches toward APIC's legislative priorities—what social determinants of health stand on the sidelines of our work?
- Continue consistent bill tracking updates and provide more tutorial written materials (ex: capital/operating budget walk-throughs, how to formulate budget proposals, etc.)



Legislative Days 2017 (Credit Unknown)

2023 Legislative Session Recap

Guest Speakers

Kathy Sakahara, Northwest Progressive Institute

Eliminating Advisory Votes

Emily Vyhnanek, WA State Budget & Policy Center

Working Families Tax Credit

Eli Goss, OneAmerica

UI for Undocumented Workers

Malou Chávez, Northwest Immigrant Rights Project

Immigrant Budget Services

Lee Che P. Leong, Northwest Health Law Advocates

Health Equity for Immigrants

Faaluaina Pritchard, APCC

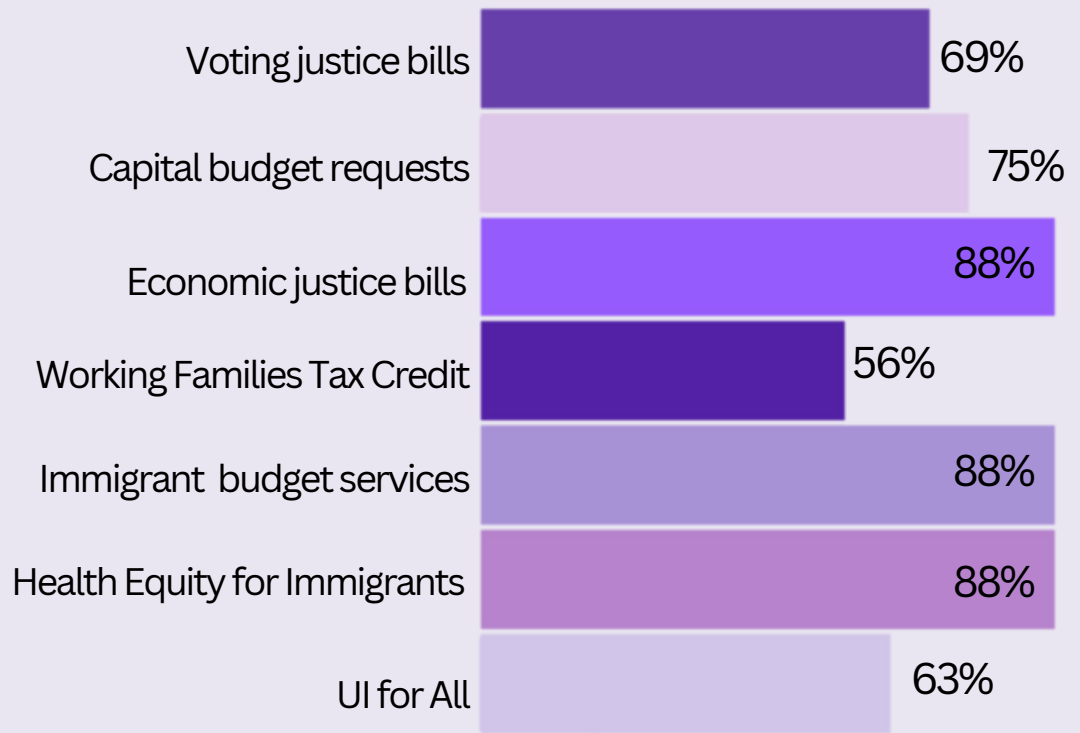
Asia Pacific Cultural Center

Lalita Uppala, IACS

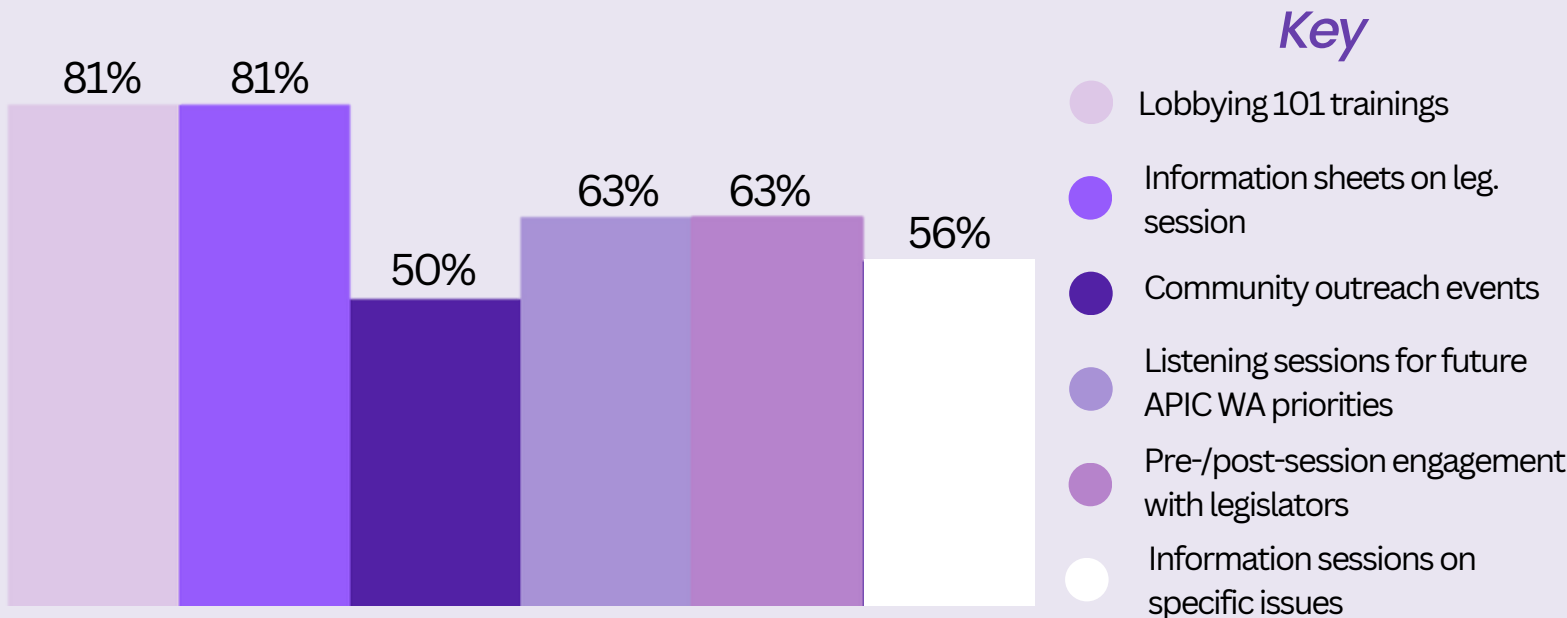
Indian American Community Services

PUBLIC FEEDBACK*

What APIC WA priorities resonated with you/your community?








What legislative actions do you hope to see from APIC WA in the next legislative session?





*Poll results reflect percentage of respondents; each question offered multiple choice answers


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