

S2081/H3920

An Act to Protect Access to Confidential Healthcare

This legislation would allow insureds who are legally able to consent to health care to choose a preferred method of receiving summary of payments/explanation of benefits forms (EOB). The legislation prohibits EOBs from being sent if there is no payment liability and prohibits the description of sensitive health care services on EOBs.

Jane Doe Inc. supports this legislation because it addresses privacy concerns that can create harm and potential physical danger for survivors. Sensitive information that is disclosed in the EOB violates a basic right to privacy for a person enrolled as a dependent on another person's health insurance policy. This bill offers a practical solution to ensure that patients can access needed medical care without fear of stigmatization or discrimination by family, peers, or employers.

Lead Sponsors: Senator Karen Spilka
Representative Kate Hogan

S735

An Act Relative to Transgender Anti-discrimination

This legislation adds "gender identity" to existing Massachusetts civil rights law for public accommodations. This bill also requires any public accommodations that segregate access based on a person's sex to grant admission to any person consistent with their gender identity.

Jane Doe Inc. supports this legislation because gender-based violence is rooted in the understanding and experience of oppression as manifested in sexism, racism and homophobia and other forms of discrimination. Transgender people throughout the Commonwealth are often harmed by harassment, discrimination and violence. This bill addresses the need for equal protections for transgender patrons in public spaces.

Lead Sponsors: Senator Sonia Chang-Diaz

S2062/H3754

An Act Relative to Healthy Youth

This legislation requires schools that provide sexuality education to provide medically-accurate, age-appropriate information. The bill includes education on healthy relationships free from violence, intimidation or coercion.

Jane Doe Inc. supports this legislation because comprehensive, school-based, sexuality education provides the opportunity for young people to learn how to make positive, informed and empowered decisions about their health and relationships. The bill does not create a mandate for sexual health education but does ensure that when sexual health is taught in schools, students are receiving the best, most accurate information available in order to promote positive sexual health. A culture in which sexuality is a positive force in each person's life is one in which sexual violence is no longer tolerated and ultimately no longer occurs.

Lead Sponsors: Senator Sal DiDomenico
Representative James O'Day

S1258/H1228**An Act to Restore Community Trust in Massachusetts Law Enforcement**

This bill aims to rebuild the trust lost between communities and local law enforcement, increase public safety, ensure that local tax dollars are well spent, and avoid entangling local agencies in unconstitutional detention that has the potential of creating legal liability. It does this by limiting voluntary local cooperation with ICE's deportation dragnet, and drawing a clear line between the roles of federal immigration enforcement and local public safety officials.

Jane Doe Inc. supports this legislation because without the separation of state and federal agencies, and the separation of criminal and administrative legal proceedings, immigrant victims of sexual and domestic violence will continue to avoid seeking help from law enforcement and service providers. Without this law, the justice system's ability to arrest and prosecute batterers, rapists and traffickers is compromised and contributes to compromised public safety.

Lead Sponsors: Senator James B. Eldridge
Representative Evandro Carvalho

S2107**An Act to establish pay equity**

This bill mandates equal pay for comparable work regardless of gender. It allows employees to disclose their wages, even if the employer disagrees and requires that employers tell employees about this wage transparency.

Jane Doe Inc. supports this legislation in order to close the wage gap for individuals based on gender. Women make up a significant portion of the workforce in the field of sexual and domestic violence. Women also experience sexual and domestic violence in high numbers and their access to economic resources is critical to seeking safety and healing for them and their families.

Lead Sponsors: Senators Patricia Jehlen and Karen Spilka
Representatives Jay Livingstone and Ellen Story

Other critical Legislation needed to support victims and survivors

H2145	An Act relative to the creation of the interagency council on management of adult and juvenile sex offenders
H2985	An Act relative to safe driving
S1134	An Act relative to enhancing sexual assault evidence kit collection
S958/H1716	An Act relative to defense against abusive waivers act
S1116/H1530	An Act establishing civil and criminal penalties for the female genital mutilation of minors

For further information please contact:

Maureen Gallagher, Policy Director
Jane Doe Inc., 14 Beacon Street, Suite 507, Boston, MA 02108
Ph: 617.557.1808 mgallagher@janedoe.org