

# 2026 State Legislative Priorities

## **Hopelink is a nonprofit organization working to end poverty in North and East King County.**

As a Community Action Agency, our programs and resources are the foundation families and individuals depend on to stabilize and build pathways out of poverty. From July 2024 through June 2025, more than **73,000 individuals** relied on Hopelink's services to meet basic needs.

Low-income Washingtonians are in deep crisis, forced to make impossible choices between rent, food, healthcare, utilities, transportation, and employment as rising costs, stagnant wages, and systemic inequities push households into deeper instability and make recovery increasingly difficult.

Though Washington State faces a significant budget shortfall, compounded by the impacts of H.R. 1 and other federal policy changes that threaten health care access, food security, and housing stability, **the Legislature must protect funding for essential state services and benefit programs that prevent deeper poverty and keep Washingtonians housed, healthy, and economically stable.**



### **Economic Stability**

Benefit programs like TANF (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families) are a lifeline for struggling families. Many Washington families rely on these programs to regain stability after hardship. We ask the legislature to protect funding for TANF and other programs that are critical to maintaining the economic stability of a household.



### **Food Security**

Food security programs are critical to overall stability. People experiencing food insecurities will often forgo other critical needs to keep food on the table, exacerbating related challenges like housing security, consistent health care, and other basic needs. We ask the legislature to protect funding for SNAP, FAP, school meals, and resources that allow for greater access to culturally relevant foods and fresh food options.



### **Affordable Housing**

Affordable housing is key to household security and avoiding displacement. We ask the legislature to protect investments in affordable housing, subsidies to help families remain securely housed, and policies to address exclusionary zoning practices that have resulted in systemic inequities in housing access.



### **Transportation and Mobility**

Hopelink firmly believes that mobility is an inherent right for all. We are committed to advocating for equitable, accessible, affordable, dependable, and safe mobility and infrastructure policies throughout Washington State. We ask the legislature to protect funding for transportation and mobility.



### **Access to Health Care & Behavioral Health**

All Washingtonians should have access to healthcare that meets their needs. We ask the legislature to protect access to quality and affordable health care and supportive resources that address and ensure health equity for all community members, including the Non-Emergency Medical Transportation (NEMT) program. Additionally, we ask the legislature to safeguard community behavioral health and crisis response system investments.



### **Support for Progressive Revenue**

We encourage revenue options that right-size our regressive tax system and provide investments in critical programs and services. We request that any new revenue be progressive, and be paired with a corresponding reduction in existing regressive taxes to reduce the disproportionate burden carried by low income people in our current tax system.

#### **For More Information:**

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**hopelink**