NoHLA Northwest Health Law Advocates **2026** Year In Review

Together, we kept care within reach.

A message from NoHLA's Co-Executive Directors

Dear friends,

For many people in Washington, 2026 brought fear about health care. Federal cuts put coverage at risk, and state leaders faced hard choices.

Yet, communities across our state gave us reasons to hope. Washingtonians across the state shared their experiences, partners worked together, and your support helped Northwest Health Law Advocates (NoHLA) defend coverage in court, protect health services, and push for more affordable care.

Thank you for your trust and generosity. There is much more to do, but this year has shown us what we can accomplish together.

With hope and gratitude,

Emily Brice & Daphne Smith
NoHLA Co-Executive Directors



Halting Medicaid cuts

In August, **NoHLA and Neighborhood House sued** the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services over a new Medicaid policy tied to H.R.1, a federal budget law.

On September 30, a judge temporarily paused planned cuts set to start on October 1.

The order applies to hundreds of immigrants in Washington who are lawfully present in the U.S. and receive Supplemental Security Income (SSI), a benefit for older adults and people with disabilities with very low incomes.

The case is ongoing. For now, the pause helps protect coverage for some while the court reviews the policy.





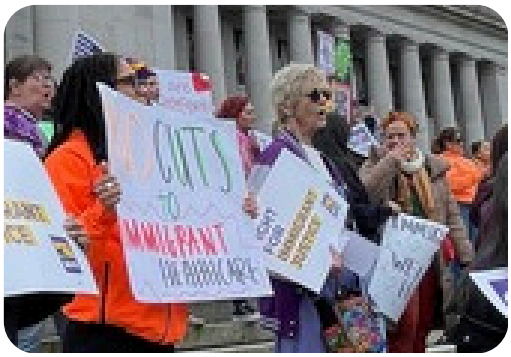
Coming together for care

Our sold-out *Mending Health Care with Community* event brought advocates, community partners, and experts together to explore health care challenges and solutions to federal cuts that threaten care.

We also **launched the No Cuts to Health Care coalition** with SEIU 775 and other partners to protect coverage and services.

NoHLA leveraged health law to shape statewide policies.

In a short legislative session, state lawmakers faced major choices about health care. NoHLA collaborated with partners across the state to share facts, tell stories, show up as health law experts, and call for health justice.



By the numbers

60 days in the legislative session

346 organizations mobilized

21 testimonies at the legislature

Real wins for a more *just* Washington

NoHLA advocacy, together with partners, advanced these outcomes for the state in 2026:



5000+ more health coverage spots

Washington added spots this year for immigrant residents who had few affordable coverage options.

$25 million more for affordable health insurance



Washington approved additional funding for Cascade Care Savings to help people pay for Healthplanfinder plans.



Three kinds of therapy protected

People with Apple Health (Medicaid) **kept coverage** for physical, speech, and occupational therapy.



Hospital financial aid protected

Lawmakers rejected stricter residency proof rules for hospital "charity care," helping keep financial aid available for Washingtonians who need it.

Stronger review of health care deals



Expanded oversight authority of the Attorney General over health business transactions impacting prices and access, like mergers and acquisitions.

This work takes all of us.

People, groups, and communities across Washington worked together to make these changes possible. **Your support helps** bring NoHLA's legal skills, research, and community voices to this work.



Community connections.
Meaningful change.

When health coverage was canceled, NoHLA listened and took action.

This summer, Washingtonians received unexpected notices saying their Apple Health Expansion coverage had ended. A community-based organization heard their concerns and contacted NoHLA.

We brought the problem to state officials, who found and fixed a system error. **Coverage was then restored for the people affected.**

This is the power of trusted partnerships: community voices and NoHLA's health legal expertise working together to protect access to care.



The advocacy work behind lasting progress

Health care policies shape whether people can get coverage, afford treatment, and receive the services they need. NoHLA brings legal expertise and community experience to the decisions that affect those rights.

Fair health care prices for Washingtonians

Our **Fair Health Prices WA coalition** led the call for affordable care, leveraging our seat on the **Health Care Cost Transparency Board** to examine high costs and video storytelling to show policymakers their impact.

Better coverage for immigrants

At a time of federal threats, we lifted up community needs through our **Immigrant Health Implementation Workgroup**, survey of impacted people, and economic analysis of state coverage options.

Accountabiity for patient rights

After years of stalled state action, our advocacy sparked **patient protections from hospital debt,** including new state rules and an amicus brief that helped secure a state Supreme Court win.







Growing with gratitude

This year, we welcomed two new board members and staff in development, communications, litigation, and bookkeeping. We also honor outgoing board members **Lori Buchsbaum** and **Laura MacPherson** for their leadership and service.

Northwest Health Law Advocates
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Health care should be within reach for every Washingtonian.

Northwest Health Law Advocates (NoHLA) is a nonprofit working to make fair, accessible, quality health care a right for all. We use legal and policy advocacy, mobilize coalitions for change, and help communities understand their rights.

Thank you for being part of this work.

Your partnership, advocacy, and generosity have all made a tremendous difference in the last year.

Give today

Support health justice in Washington.