



Inslee signs abortion access legislation

Measure follows an Idaho bill that would allow potential family members to sue abortion providers

By **RACHEL LA CORTE**
ASSOCIATED PRESS

OLYMPIA — A Washington state measure that prohibits legal action against people seeking an abortion and those who aid them was signed into law Thursday by the governor, in a move designed to rebut recent actions by conservative states.

"We know this bill is necessary because this is a perilous time for the ability of people to have the freedom of choice that they have enjoyed for decades," said Gov. Jay Inslee, a Democrat.

The signing comes just days after the Legislature in neighboring Idaho approved a bill that allows lawsuits by poten-

tial family members to enforce a ban on abortions performed after six weeks of pregnancy.

Conservative legislatures in several states have either passed or proposed new abortion restrictions in anticipation of possible changes to the landmark 1973 Roe v. Wade ruling from the U.S. Supreme Court.

Washington's measure, which takes effect in June,



Inslee

prohibits the state from taking any action against an individual seeking to end their pregnancy or for assisting someone who is pregnant in obtaining an abortion.

The language is in response to a Texas law, which took effect last September, and which bans abortion after roughly six weeks of pregnancy and makes no excep-

tions in cases of rape or incest. The enforcement of the law is left up to private citizens, who can collect \$10,000 or more if they bring a successful lawsuit against a provider or anyone who helps a patient obtain an abortion.

On Tuesday, Idaho's Legislature sent a bill to Republican Brad Little that is modeled off the Texas law. The measure bans abortion after six weeks

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The pipes, the pipes are calling



Austin Johnson/Tribune

The Clearwater Pipes and Drums play some traditional Irish music at Hogan's Pub in Clarkston on Thursday, Saint Patrick's Day, to cap off their musical walking tour of downtown Clarkston. This is the first time the group has played for a live audience at Hogan's in three years.

Taking a turn for the worse

Study finds SUVs, pickup trucks hit pedestrians more often than cars

By **TOM KRISHER**
ASSOCIATED PRESS

DETROIT — Drivers of bigger vehicles such as pickup trucks and SUVs are more likely to hit pedestrians while making turns than drivers of cars, according to a new study.

The research released Thursday by the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety points to the increasing popularity of larger vehicles as a possible factor in rising pedestrian deaths on U.S. roads. The authors also questioned whether wider pillars holding up roofs of the larger vehicles make it harder for drivers to spot people walking near the corners of vehicles.

"The link between these vehicle types and certain common pedestrian crashes points to another way that the increase in SUVs on the roads might be changing the crash picture," said Jessica Cicchino, a study author and vice president of research for the institute.

Although the study mentioned previous research showing blind spots caused by the "A-pillars" between the windshield and the cabin, the authors said more study is needed to link the blind spots to the increased deaths.

In 2020, the last year for which complete statistics are available, 6,519 pedestrians were killed in the U.S., according to government data. That's up 59% since 2009, and a 4% increase from 2019, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration said.

Over the same time period, SUV and pickup truck sales have skyrocketed. In 2009, pickup trucks, SUVs and vans accounted for 47% of all U.S. new vehicle sales, according to *Motorintelligence.com*. Last year, light trucks were more than three-quarters of new vehicle sales.

Not all SUVs and pickup trucks have the blind spots, though. Compact SUVs, for instance, are now the largest part of the U.S. market.

The study also found > See **TURN**, Page 5A

Robot ready to take on the world

After winning state competition, Asotin robotics team heading to world championship in Dallas

By **KAYLEE BREWSTER**
OF THE TRIBUNE

Robots might not be taking over the world, but the Asotin Robotics team is hoping theirs will take over the world championships.

Asotin High School juniors Aiden Weber, Rylan Holland and Tristan Hoffmann won the Excellence Award at the Washington State VEX Robotics Championship in Bellevue, Wash., on Sunday. The team will next compete in May at the world championship in Dallas against the top 1,000 robots from 50 different countries.

The award was given to the Asotin team — named Off the Chain — for how well they did in every aspect of the competition, which includes battling against other robots, solo skills, interviewing and journal creation.

The battle portion of the competition involves collecting goals and keeping them away from the other robots (much like the game Capture the Flag), placing rings on the goals and balancing on a podium 14 inches off the ground. The solo skills involve the robot completing various tasks with-

out a driver, requiring the team to create code for the needed skills. The interview allows students to describe their robot, and the journal explains their engineering process.

The game for the competition changes every year, so the first step is to figure out what the robot needs to accomplish in the game. Then, it's a matter of getting the parts and using them efficiently to create the robot with a limited amount of materials. The team's coach, Tim Weber, has been coaching for five years. Tim Weber is Aiden Weber's dad, and he funds the high school team, as well as four middle school teams by applying for grants.

Aiden Weber likes the challenge of figuring out the game and how to get the robot to perform the necessary moves. "Also just playing around with it (the robot)," he said.

Then, the coding comes into play.

"We have the robot, now we got to make it work," Holland said, which involves Holland coding the robot. As a kid, he used Legos to build robots, so he jumped at the chance to

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Austin Johnson/Tribune

Asotin High School juniors Tristan Hoffmann, from left, Aiden Weber and Rylan Holland are seen with their robot, ROUS — short for Rodent of Unusual Size, named after the fearsome creature in the movie "The Princess Bride." The Asotin robotics team, Off the Chain, is taking ROUS to the VEX Robotics World Championship in Dallas after they won the Excellence Award at the Washington State VEX Robotics Championship on Sunday in Bellevue.

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Coming in Saturday's Tribune

The WSU women's basketball faces Kansas State in the NCAA Tournament on Saturday morning. For a preview of the game, see **SPORTS**.

