

8This is 91.9 FM KPTZ Port Townsend, I'm Diane Urbani de la Paz with local news and commentary for Friday, April 28.

The *Seattle Times* reports that on Thursday, Governor Jay Inslee signed five bills to preserve access to abortion. The governor said, “We are here to proclaim very vocally and very forcefully that we will not allow any state or any Trump-appointed judge to jeopardize a woman’s right of choice in the state of Washington.” Governor Inslee also signed a bill making it so Washingtonians with private insurance will no longer have to pay copays or meet their deductible to get an abortion. Another bill which Inslee signed will protect doctors and other providers from discipline solely for providing abortions or gender-affirming care. And yet another signature from the governor protects patients from prosecution originating in other states for seeking an abortion.

The two other bills Inslee signed include Senate Bill 5768 authorizing his strategy to direct the Department of Corrections to purchase a stockpile of the mifepristone abortion pill amid uncertainty over the pill’s approval status. Last Friday the U.S. Supreme Court halted earlier rulings restricting the abortion pill, allowing it to remain available.

And finally, House Bill 1155, signed by the governor, sets up safeguards for health information that people provide to companies – such as makers of period-tracking apps – and to prohibit zeroing in on the location of health providers via geofencing in order to find and collect health data about consumers.

And you heard KPTZ news report last week that a ban on 50 kinds of firearms had passed the state legislature. That bill was on its way to Inslee and he did sign it into law this week. Sales of AR-15s are now against the law in Washington, as are sales of dozens of other firearms the state classifies as assault weapons. The Axios news service reports that the new ban, which took effect immediately, makes Washington the 10th state to outlaw sales of military-style firearms. The others are California, Connecticut, Delaware, Hawaii, Illinois, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Jersey, and New York. Washington, D.C., also has similar restrictions in place. Mind you, the ban does not affect the weapons people already have. It applies to their sales and manufacture.

In Sasquatch news, the Bigfoot Field Researchers Organization has announced that our neck of the woods has the most sightings of the creature in the whole United States. Axios reports that nearly every state has reported sightings of the mythical Bigfoot. Washington leads the country, though, with 710 reports.

Cryptozoologist and author David George Gordon, said, “This is the land of the weird.” One of his books is *The Sasquatch Seeker’s Field Manual: Using Citizen Science to Uncover North America’s Most Elusive Creature*. Here in Washington, there have been 9.12 sightings per 100,000 population. As it happens, Washington is estimated to be home to at least 270,000 deer and 60,000 elk, which are believed to provide suitable prey for Bigfoot, according to *Bonus Insider*. Most of the good sightings have been in Eastern Washington, said Gordon, where, quote, “there’s just miles and miles of nowhere.”

This is the final weekend for the photography exhibition titled “Wet: Reflections on Water.” This is a show of many styles, all exploring the power and beauty of water on Earth. “Wet” awaits at the Jeanette Best Gallery, which is on Water Street at Quincy Street in downtown Port Townsend. The curator’s choice and merit awards have been presented, so you can see who won those. And if you have feelings of your own about the photos you

see, you can cast a ballot in the People's Choice Award voting box. The gallery is open noon to 5 today through Sunday.

KPTZ 91.9 FM brings you local news at noon and five Monday through Friday and at noon on Saturday. You can contact us through news@kptz.org. This is Diane Urbani de la Paz. Thanks for listening.