



WORLD SCHOOLS DEBATE

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**DECEMBER 2021**  
**SAMPLE MOTIONS**



## WSD Sample Motions: December 2021

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#### Prepared Motions:

1. This House would cease the prosecution of victimless crimes.
2. This House regrets the rising influence of nongovernmental organizations in global policymaking.
3. This House supports the continued innovation and adoption of disruptive healthcare technologies.
4. This House supports the development of progressive vaping policies.
5. This House would criminalize industrial, commercial, and institutional food waste.

#### Impromptu:

1. This House supports merit pay for teachers.
2. This House believes that international human rights treaties help reform oppressive governments.
3. This House would make voting compulsory in all democratic countries.
4. This House believes that, on balance, the application of law achieves justice.
5. This House believes that the benefits of direct-to-consumer genetic testing outweigh the risks.

## Prepared Motions:

### 1. This House would cease the prosecution of victimless crimes.

**Context:** A victimless crime is an illegal act that only involves the perpetrator or occurs between consenting adults. Common examples are recreational drug use, gambling, and sex work. Some see societal benefits to discontinuing the prosecution of these crimes, while others argue the danger in removing a valuable deterrent.

**Prop:**

1. Declining to prosecute victimless crimes would decrease incarceration rates.
2. Prosecuting victimless crimes often means prosecuting people for violations of unjust laws or people that find themselves victims of circumstance. The law should not be used as a tool to further victimize marginalized people.
3. Many “perpetrators” of victimless crimes are victims themselves, and the prosecution process creates re-traumatization and increased barriers to mental health support and resources.

**Opp:**

1. Prosecution serves as a deterrent to committing crime.
2. Prosecutors can already choose not to prosecute victimless crimes if they want to. It makes more sense to let prosecutors decide than to remove the option altogether.
3. One common alternative to prosecuting these crimes in criminal courts is the application of fines, which, if gone unpaid for long enough, can still result in jail time in some situations.

## 2. This House regrets the rising influence of nongovernmental organizations in global policymaking.

**Context:** NGOs are playing an increasingly significant role in global governance, both through direct engagement with United Nations processes and by working to advance and address global concerns in domestic settings.

**Prop:**

1. NGOs can have a limited understanding of the communities they serve, making them poor advocates for the needs of those communities.
2. NGOs are not necessarily equipped to weigh and understand the complexities of global government processes before becoming participants in those processes.
3. NGOs are meant to operate apart from government intervention to avoid corruption. Close involvement with the government decreases the efficacy of that strategy.

**Opp:**

1. NGOs have created significant outcomes historically. For example, the International Committee of the Red Cross lobbied to create the first Geneva Convention, which led to the development of the field of international humanitarian law.
2. NGOs often focus on participatory development systems that can be maintained by the people who live in the area, and participation in policymaking can strengthen and support those efforts.
3. Advocacy NGOs have powerful opportunities to shape policy in crucially important areas.

### **3. This House supports the continued innovation and adoption of disruptive healthcare technologies.**

**Context:** Disruptive innovations cause radical change to a field or industry, usually permanently altering the way a task or process is performed. Disruptive healthcare innovations tend to focus on technology, patient-centered care, and third-party advancements.

**Prop:**

1. From medical-history tracking to virtual diagnosis to 3D-printed prosthetics and beyond, data usage and assistive technology innovations are creating incredible medical outcomes.
2. Diagnostic tools have been revolutionized with the creation of precision medicine, which uses genome sequencing to help identify DNA mutations that a patient may be vulnerable to, making diagnosis and treatment more accurate and precise.
3. Immunotherapy developments may create some promising options for cancer treatment in the near future when coupled with specific drugs and vaccines.

**Opp:**

1. Innovation is fundamentally experimentation, which has problematic ethical implications in the field of medicine.
2. Increased reliance on technology increases the risk that that technology will fail and worsens the impact if/when it does.
3. Some experts argue that medical professionals' clinical skills are in decline because of the increase in readily available medical technologies, which can't always do a better job than humans can.

#### 4. This House supports the development of progressive vaping policies.

**Context:** As vaping becomes ever more popular, parents, health experts, and political leaders continue to express concerns about associated health risks, which are still largely questionable given how little time experts have had to study the effects of vaping. However, experts agree on one thing: smoking is worse than vaping. Some argue that regressive vaping policies like liquid flavor bans cut off consumer access to vaping as a smoking reduction or cessation tool.

**Prop:**

1. Data has shown that vaping is the most successful smoking reduction/cessation tool available today, even more effective than traditional nicotine replacement therapies.
2. Vaping has fewer and less serious health risks than traditional tobacco consumption through cigarette smoking, which causes cancer and premature death, among other issues.
3. Vaping has led to a reduction in smoking in every age group surveyed, especially teens.

**Opp:**

1. Vaping establishes nicotine addiction in people who have not previously consumed nicotine in any other form, and has increased nicotine addiction rates overall.
2. Vaping is safer than smoking, but that doesn't make it safe. It still involves the impacts of nicotine consumption and has unique health risks as well.
3. Vaping is marketed specifically and successfully to teens. More teens report vaping than have ever reported smoking cigarettes in the past.

## 5. This House would criminalize industrial, commercial, and institutional food waste.

**Context:** Global food insecurity remains an urgent concern despite the fact that the world produces more than enough food for everyone. Criminalizing food waste is one strategy that can be used to facilitate more effective distribution of food to combat food insecurity. In countries who have criminalized food waste, it is most often mandated that excess food be donated to food banks, composted, or converted into animal feed.

**Prop:**

1. Criminalizing food waste incentivizes redistribution to help increase access to food, which is a fundamental human right.
2. Financial penalties enabled by criminalization motivate industry and institutional leaders to pursue creative solutions to food waste. Conversely, most food waste criminalization systems award tax-based incentives for food donations.
3. As a society, we have a moral obligation to fight starvation.

**Opp:**

1. The financial cost of food waste is meant to be attached to industries & institutions, but can easily be passed off to consumers instead. For example, China's law criminalizing food waste enabled restaurants to fine patrons who left uneaten food on their plates, allowing restaurants to bypass the consequence without changing the way food is used or distributed.
2. The implementation of food-waste-elimination programs creates costs related to hiring, training, and infrastructure, and those costs impact medium and small institutions, restaurants, and grocery stores most (larger facilities often have these programs in place already).
3. Criminalizing food waste can create a tradeoff with environmental aims, since small, local grocers and food producers often have the most environmentally favorable practices but the fewest resources to manage food waste.

## Impromptu:

### 1. This House supports merit pay for teachers.

**Context:** Teacher merit pay is a controversial education reform strategy that offers financial incentives to teachers who meet certain criteria, usually involving improved student scores on standardized tests. (see info slide)

**Prop:**

1. Merit pay improves teacher recruitment and retention.
2. Teachers produce better results when given a monetary incentive. Data shows a positive correlation between teacher merit pay and high student scores on international standardized tests.
3. Teachers are often underpaid, and merit pay allows them to increase their earning potential.

**Opp:**

1. Merit pay is controversial and is not typically supported by teacher unions.
2. Merit pay is often awarded on the basis of incomplete and/or subjective data, including administrators' evaluations and students' standardized test scores, making it difficult to implement fairly.
3. In a school environment, collaboration between colleagues is crucial; merit pay creates a competitive environment that severs that collaboration.



## 2. This House believes that international human rights treaties help reform oppressive governments.

**Context:** Widespread human rights violations have been getting international attention and coverage in recent history, and one response to those violations has been the development and voluntary ratification of 9 core human rights treaties, the results of which have been mixed. (see info slide)

### Prop:

1. Human rights treaties enable other countries to intervene (through foreign aid negotiations, military assistance, etc.) when a government is violating its citizens' rights.
2. Human rights treaties have resulted in observable progress in many countries and situations. For example, both Japan & Columbia have made observable improvements in women's rights since ratifying the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women.
3. Ratification of human rights treaties can create more informed citizens who are better able to advocate for themselves because treaties codify expectations for how people will be treated by their government.

### Opp:

1. Human rights treaties don't stop treaty parties from committing human rights violations like torture, child labor, and widespread authoritarianism, and those violations are often committed with impunity.
2. Powerful world governments continue to conduct economic business with major human rights violators, both communicating and supporting the notion that human rights treaties are only selectively enforced.
3. Human rights treaties are generally written in vague, idealistic language that can be difficult to interpret and even more difficult to enforce. They also face inconsistent ratification & implementation because not all countries agree on what rights their citizens should have access to.

### 3. This House would make voting compulsory in all democratic countries.

**Context:** Some democratic countries have compulsory voting, and others don't. Voluntary voting numbers have been on a mostly downward trend in democratic countries in recent years, meaning that fewer and fewer people are voting voluntarily in those countries. (see info slide)

**Prop:**

1. Compulsory voting means the outcome of elections is more representative of the will of the people.
2. Compulsory voting forces candidates to campaign for the support of all the people they would serve, not just the people they expect to vote.
3. Voting is a crucial component of democracy, & making it compulsory will force all citizens to participate in one part of that democratic process, while also combatting voter suppression by removing barriers to registration.

**Opp:**

1. People have (or should have) the right not to vote.
2. Not all people have access to information or education about potential candidates, which will mean the number of uneducated voters will increase if voting becomes compulsory.
3. Compulsory voting is difficult to enforce, and violations are not easy to prosecute.

#### **4. This House believes that, on balance, the application of law achieves justice.**

**Context:** The relationship between law and justice has been a political and philosophical topic of conversation for centuries, but the question of how (or if) law supports justice has become especially important in discussions of justice system reform in recent years. (see info slide)

**Prop:**

1. Judicial processes were created for the express purpose of pursuing justice.
2. Prosecution & sentencing can result in just outcomes.
3. Law can guide society in pursuit of justice by codifying the values that are held by the people within that society (constitutions from different countries, for example).

**Opp:**

1. Some applications of law create or maintain injustice, and law can be used as a tool of oppression.
2. Law reflects the values of those in power, which are not necessarily aligned with the pursuit of justice.
3. Legal recourse is not available to many people who are victims of injustice, especially when that injustice is created/perpetuated by government(s).

## 5. This House believes that the benefits of direct-to-consumer genetic testing outweigh the risks.

**Context:** Direct-to-consumer genetic testing products have become increasingly popular and accessible over the past several years, leading to increased consumer access to health and ancestry data. (see info slide)

**Prop:**

1. DTC genetic testing increases awareness of genetic diseases and provides personalized data about risk factors for those diseases, as well as other individualized health information.
2. DTC genetic testing creates more opportunities for people to find and connect with biological family members that they may not otherwise be able to locate.
3. DTC genetic testing is both less expensive and more accessible than testing in a doctor's office.

**Opp:**

1. DTC genetic testing companies are not generally subject to much regulation or oversight, and results are not always complete and/or reliable.
2. The collection and storage of DTC genetic testing data creates opportunities for privacy violations on a legal and ethical level.
3. Unexpected results from DTC genetic testing can create negative emotional impacts.