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Can empathy be a bad thing? New thinking on the right says 'yes'

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[Empathy](#) , the act of understanding and sharing the feelings of others, has long been the underpinning of religious, humanitarian, and philosophical teachings.

Now, there's a new perspective increasingly heard in conservative circles: Empathy isn't always a good thing. Elon Musk, for example, recently said that we have to fight against "[civilizational suicidal empathy](#) ," something he believes is weaponized by Democrats to 'import' as many immigrants without legal status as possible. It's also being preached from right-wing pulpits by pastors who say empathy's OK but that [not everyone's deserving of it](#) .

NPR's [Sarah Mccamon](#) and Stanford professor [Jamil Zaki](#) , author of "The War for Kindness: Building Empathy in a Fractured World" explore the issue.

This article was originally published on [WBUR.org](#).

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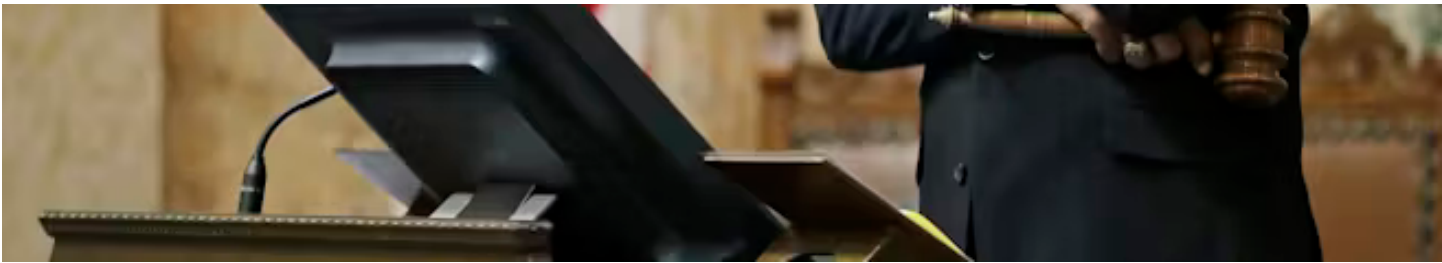
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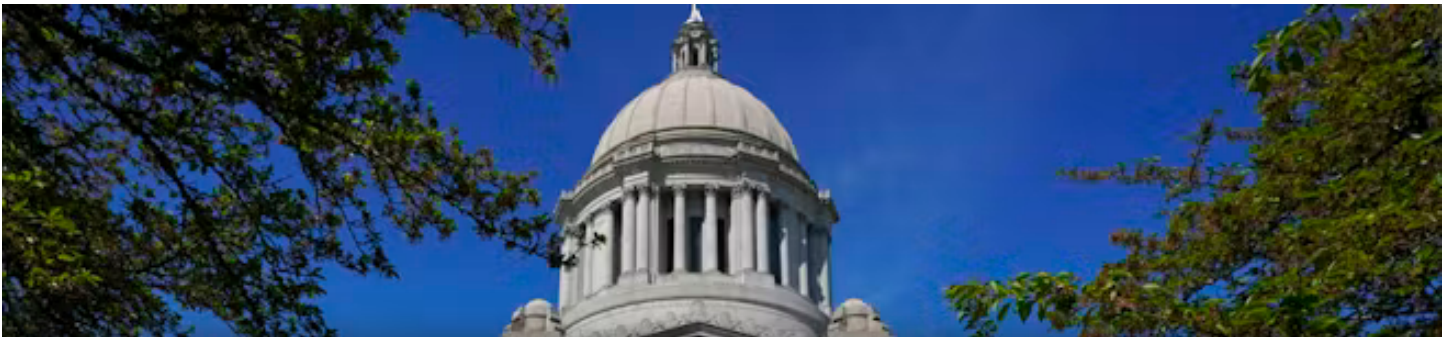





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