



April 8, 2015

The Honorable Frank Chopp, Speaker of House
Members of the WA State House of Representatives
Olympia, WA 98501
Cc: Members of the WA State Senate

Dear Speaker Chopp and Members of the WA House of Representatives:

On behalf of more than [100 participating organizations](#), representing the diverse interests of people across our state, thank you for your leadership in proposing a more fair solution to Washington's revenue problems. Washington United for Fair Revenue supports the House proposal (HB 2224) as a good first step towards addressing our state's unfair, unstable and chronically inadequate revenue system.

Washington State [ranks dead last in the nation for revenue fairness](#) because some are not asked to pay their fair share. Washington has been trapped in a perpetual cycle of revenue crises, and it's getting worse despite our growing economy. As a result, Washington falls far short of raising adequate revenue to fund our basic needs, such as public education, senior services, early learning, mental health services, colleges, and many other critical services essential to our economic growth and prosperity.

Washington's wealthiest residents pay only 2.4% of their total income in state taxes. Middle-class families pay four times that rate, while low-income families pay seven times that rate, with a [disproportionate impact on communities of color](#). Last year, five of our biggest industries combined — aerospace, high-tech, agriculture, timber and mining — contributed only 4% of all the B&O taxes collected while Washington's smaller businesses were responsible for paying the rest.

We support revenue proposals that are:

- **Fair:** Do not worsen Washington State's disproportionate tax responsibilities on small businesses and hard-working Washingtonians;
- **Accountable:** Transparent, hold everyone to the same rules, and are enforceable and open to public scrutiny;
- **Shared:** Everyone pays their fair share according to their ability, no one group singled out to enjoy unfair special benefits or bear disproportionate responsibility;
- **Sufficient:** Generate the resources needed for investments that promote shared prosperity; and
- **Stable:** Maintain these investments through good and bad economic times.

The House budget takes a step in the right direction by making sure our wealthiest residents are held responsible for their fair share through a capital gains tax, and by increasing accountability through closing tax breaks for large profitable corporations. We are also encouraged that the House continues to work on including the Carbon Pollution Accountability Act in the budget moving forward. This polluters-pay solution should be part of a fair revenue package.

We urge Washington's legislators to adopt a budget that raises sufficient revenues to meet our residents' needs and move our tax system in a more fair direction, including capital gains taxes, price on carbon, and closing corporate tax loopholes.

Your continued strength and leadership are critical over the next weeks as you represent the interests of all Washingtonians during talks with the State Senate's budget negotiators.

Sincerely,

Washington United for Fair Revenue

Participants include: AARP Washington * Addus Homecare * American Academy of Pediatrics - Washington Chapter * American Federation of Teachers Washington, AFL-CIO * Anti-Hunger and Nutrition Coalition * Association of Pediatricians * Association of School Principals * Building Changes * Catholic Charities of Spokane * Children's Alliance * Church Council Of Greater Seattle * Climate Solutions * Columbia Legal Services * Community Health Network of Washington * Community Health of Central Washington * Community Youth Services * Developmental Disability Coalition * Earth Ministry * Eastern Washington Voters * Economic Opportunity Institute * Elder and Adult Day Services * Entre Hermanos * Equal Rights Washington * Equity in Education Coalition * Faith Action Network * Food Lifeline * Friends Committee on WA Public Policy * Full Life Care * FUSE * Futurewise * Head Start and Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program (ECEAP) Association * Housing Development Consortium Seattle- King County * International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers District 751 * Jewish Federation * King County Coalition Against Domestic Violence * King County Democrats * League of Education Voters * League of Women Voters of Washington * Legal Voice * Main Street Alliance * NARAL Pro-Choice Washington * National Alliance on Mental Illness * National Association of Social Workers - WA Chapter * National Organization for Women WA State * Northwest Harvest * Northwest Health Law Advocates * Northwest Progressive Institute * Nutrition First * One America * Parents Organizing for Welfare and Economic Rights * Peace and Justice Action League * Planned Parenthood Votes! Northwest * Professional & Technical Employees, Local 17 * Professional Engineering Employees in Aerospace * Public School Employees of WA/SEIU Local 1948 * Puget Sound Advocates for Retirement Action * Puget Sound Sage * Real Change * Resident Councils of Washington * Retired Public Employees of Washington * Safeplace * School Nurse Organization of Washington * Seattle Council of Parent, Teacher and Student Associations * Seattle Human Services Coalition * SEIU Healthcare 1199NW * SEIU Healthcare 775NW * SEIU Local 925 * SEIU WA State Council * Smith-Barbieri Progressive Fund * Statewide Poverty Action Network * Tax Sanity * Teamsters Joint Council No. 28 * The Lands Council * Transportation Choices * UAW Local 4121 * United Food and Commercial Workers 21 * WA Assn. of School Administrators * Washington Association of Community and Migrant Health Centers * Washington State Budget and Policy Center * Washington Community Action Network * Washington Conservation Voters * Washington Education Association * Washington Eldercare Alliance * Washington Environmental Council * Washington Federation of State Employees, AFSCME Council 28 * Washington Health Care Association * Washington Hospital Association * Washington Low Income Housing Alliance * Washington Progress Alliance * Washington Public Employees Association * Washington State Council of Fire Fighters * Washington State Hospital Association * Washington State Labor Council, AFL-CIO * Washington State Nurses Association * Washington State Parent Teacher Association * Washington State School Retirees' Association * Washington State Senior Citizens Lobby * Washington Student Association * Win/Win Network * YouthCare * YWCA Olympia * 48th District Democrats