

Education, Health Care
& Clean Air and Water



Resources for Kids, the Elderly,
Disabled & Working Families

A COALITION WORKING TO PROTECT OUR FUTURE WITH

A FAIR, HUMANE AND SENSIBLE BUDGET IN WASHINGTON STATE

Protect Our Future Take A Balanced Approach

Washington's prosperity and our chance to compete in the global economy depend on our quality of life and our well-educated workforce.

It's time that we stand together as a state to protect the public services that educate our children, train our workers, offer affordable healthcare, address equality and civil rights, protect our environment, and the health and safety of our communities.

The recession has already led to \$5 billion in cuts to essential services, while our need for those services has increased as our families continue to struggle. Further cuts will cost us all more by foregoing prevention and pushing people into expensive last resorts.

There is a better way forward. Thirty other states have taken a balanced approach to the budget, one that combines cuts with new revenue to keep essential services in place.

A Balanced Approach

We have been scrutinizing every dollar we spend on education, health care and other critical services, but tax loopholes and subsidies have escaped the same scrutiny. It's time to level the playing field.

- Prevent deeper cuts to education, healthcare and other programs by keeping all funding options on the table, including ending tax subsidies to special interests such as out-of-state banks, private jet owners, and elective cosmetic surgery.
- Continue to reform the tax exemption system by making it more accountable and transparent, subjecting it to at least the same level of scrutiny as all other spending.
- Work to recover the hundreds of millions lost each year due to tax evasion.
- Understand that I-1053 does not take revenue options away. It just requires a more strenuous process for new revenue proposals. Recent public opinion research shows strong public support for a balanced approach that includes some new revenue.

We know the people of Washington support a strong education system, affordable health care, and the essential public services that provide the foundation for our quality of life.

If the legislature cannot reach a two-thirds majority agreement then the voters deserve the opportunity to decide.

What's At Stake

We face an additional \$4.6 billion deficit in 2011-2013. To move Washington forward towards a stronger economic future, we should close some of the hundreds of special interest tax subsidies that cost our state billions each year, and we should consider other revenue options that give the voters a chance to restore some of the worst of the proposed cuts.

Relying solely on cuts to close the budget gap has far-reaching consequences that would devastate thousands of Washington families, worsen existing inequalities, harm our economic recovery and jeopardize our future.

Projected impacts of an all-cuts budget include:

- **100,000 people lose their health insurance** – including almost 30,000 children – and the total number of uninsured in Washington skyrockets past one million.
- **Class sizes continue to swell**, early learning programs for children under age 5 are slashed, school districts in less wealthy areas fall further behind, and college tuition continues to skyrocket
- **50,000 seniors** can't afford their medications and tens of thousands of seniors and people with disabilities lose independence and dignity as their in-home care is cut.
- **30,000 pregnant women** lose critical prenatal support for the health of their babies.
- We **abandon protection of clean water** and clean up of toxic pollution.
- Working parents across the state **lose access to childcare**, threatening the safety of their children and their ability to work to support their families.

These cuts come on top of the \$5 billion already cut from public services in the past two years. Class sizes are already expanding, teachers have been laid off, and college tuition has jumped nearly 30 percent. 40,000 people have already been pushed off the Basic Health Plan, and the waiting list is now more than 120,000 people, with 300 people added every day.

Why It Matters

We promised our children that we would keep them safe and give them the opportunity to succeed. We promised our parents and grandparents that we would help care for them in their old age. We agreed that everyone in our communities deserves a basic level of support, health and dignity.

We can't afford to break these promises. There is a better way.

The legislature should close tax loopholes, end unjustified tax giveaways and consider other revenue options before cutting deeper into the public health and education systems that are the key to our future prosperity.

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