



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Over 70 Washington Organizations Call on State Lawmakers to Reject Cuts and Go Bold on Progressive Revenue

As the state releases new revenue forecast, non-profit, community, and labor leaders call for state leaders to reject austerity and pass new, progressive revenue

SEATTLE -- A broad coalition of Washington organizations, including community-based nonprofits, women's rights organizations, policy researchers, and labor unions, are calling on Governor Inslee and the Washington State Legislature to move swiftly and pass new, progressive revenue in response to the financial crisis resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic.

"Our state is at a crossroads," says Chris Langeler, chair of Balance Our Tax Code, a statewide coalition of organizations in support of progressive revenue. "Communities across Washington have been devastated by the COVID-19 pandemic. Trying to 'cut our way out' of the state budget crisis will only make things worse. Instead, state leaders must aggressively pursue raising billions in new, progressive revenue to fund critical support programs and protect our investments in childcare, healthcare, and economic assistance for small businesses and unemployed workers."

The letter highlights the need for lawmakers to focus recovery efforts equitably by prioritizing communities of color, immigrant and refugee communities, and low-income families that have been hit hardest by this pandemic. Organizations are urging lawmakers to adhere to these five principles as they consider their response to these economic and public health crises:

- Reject an austerity mindset and raise revenue to protect public services.
- Make permanent fixes to our broken, upside-down tax code by implementing bold, visionary solutions and not short-term incremental changes.
- Lead with equity by centering communities most impacted by COVID-19 and including them in decision-making processes.
- Provide immediate, impactful, and sustained relief in the form of direct cash assistance to families and bolster public services.
- Implement policy responses that are rooted in trust and dignity, not paternalism, by eliminating barriers to vital services and avoiding onerous application processes and work requirements designed to cut people off from the help they need.



"COVID-19 has laid bare the inequities that have been hurting communities for generations", says Juan Jose Bocanegra, Executive Director of [All In for Washington](#), a member organization of the Balance our Tax Code Coalition. "As Washington continues to fight this pandemic, we need lawmakers to bring communities of color, undocumented immigrants, essential workers, and others disproportionately affected by the pandemic to the table to help shape the solutions our communities need most."

"Our conversations with community-leaders and the wide array of organizations signing on to this letter shows that there is overwhelming support for Governor Inslee and legislators to pursue progressive revenue options and reject cuts to critical services. We know from [recent polling](#) that a majority of Washingtonians strongly agree." says Langeler. "We cannot risk repeating the misguided all-cuts approach our state took after the Great Recession. We'd only be digging ourselves into an even deeper hole and making it hard for our economy to recover."

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ABOUT BALANCE OUR TAX CODE

Balance Our Tax Code is a statewide coalition of nonprofit, labor, policy, and community-based organizations working to turn Washington's upside-down tax code right-side up. Washington's tax code has long been rated the worst in the nation. Low- and middle-income families in Washington pay a much greater share of their income in taxes than the wealthiest families in Washington. This perpetuates and exacerbates income inequality and the racial wealth gap. With a balanced tax code, Washington can invest in what families and communities need to thrive and build an economy for the future.