



Viewpoint

THE QUARTERLY MAGAZINE OF WASHINGTON POLICY CENTER

WINTER 2015

Are taxes going up?

The Legislature
is in session

IN OUR WINTER ISSUE

**Does more Medicaid spending
improve the economy?**

**Don't hamper growth with a
capital gains tax**

Key facts about right-to-work

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Viewpoint

THE QUARTERLY MAGAZINE OF WASHINGTON POLICY CENTER

WINTER 2015

Dear Friends,

The 2015 Legislative Session has begun and once again WPC is in the thick of things.

The session started with an extraordinary move as the Senate affirmed a rule requiring a two-thirds majority to raise new taxes. This voter-approved measure has been a long-standing WPC recommendation and the Senate's action to affirm it goes a long way to support fiscal discipline at this important time in Washington state. Policies and priorities are being established which will impact Washingtonians for years to come and WPC is an essential, impactful voice during this crucial legislative session.



The current session is of particular importance. The Governor has called for tax increases and a sweeping environmental regulation which includes a controversial "cap-and-trade" regulation. All this while solutions to much-needed education reform and the *McCleary* ruling remain unclear, and big issues like transportation and labor reform need action.

A contingent of WPC board members is scheduled to meet in person with legislative leaders before the session ends. This will provide an opportunity to supplement our flow of written research and analysis with in person dialogue.

2014 ended with a flurry of WPC successes. Sometimes I just can't believe how hard the WPC staff works – and how much they accomplish.

This issue of *Viewpoint* provides a closer look at 2014 successes including:

- Our recent, successful statewide Solutions Summit policy conferences held in both Bellevue and the Tri-Cities;
- WPC's Young Professionals group and the exciting progress it is making;
- A look at our Eastern Washington office and our impact east of the Cascades;
- And our cover story on the very real possibility of tax increases this session.

WPC's exclusive Pillar Society includes supporters who pledge to provide at least \$15,000 in support over a three year period. The Pillar Society is growing and enjoying various invitation-only events allowing interaction with other Pillar Society members and with prominent thought leaders. While the Pillar Society provides a unique opportunity for supporters able to participate at a high level, WPC needs and appreciates your support at any level.

As your new Chairman, I am honored to be associated with one of our nation's premier policy research and analysis organizations. The American promise of liberty, democracy and opportunity rests squarely on the prerequisite of an informed citizenry. WPC does the heavy lifting necessary to provide Washingtonians the information and analysis they need to keep our American dream alive and on track.

Thank you for supporting WPC and its exceptionally dedicated, hard working staff.

Craig Williamson
WPC Board Chairman



Minimum Wage panel at the Solutions Summit

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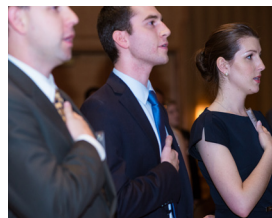
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WPC's 2015 Jennifer Dunn-Thomson Scholarship



2014 scholarship recipient,
Stephanie George

For details on this scholarship and Jennifer's life,
visit: www.washingtonpolicy.org/jenniferdunn

Application Deadline: April 15, 2015

In 2005, Washington Policy Center honored Congresswoman Jennifer Dunn with our annual Champion of Freedom Award "for her contributions throughout her distinguished Congressional career."

We continue to honor her legacy by presenting the 5th Annual Jennifer Dunn-Thomson Scholarship through the Jennifer Dunn-Thomson Fund for America's Future. The \$5,000 scholarship will be awarded to a female college student who embodies Jennifer's values of leadership and commitment to public service and free-market principles.

WPC's Young Professional 2015 Debate Series



In April 2014, WPC Young Professionals hosted their first statewide debate series on the minimum wage issue at Kane Hall at the University of Washington and Gonzaga University's Wolff Auditorium, with more than 450 students, elected officials and interested citizens.



The debates stirred national attention and local interest alike. As a result, we are proud to announce the 2nd Annual Statewide Young Professionals debates series to take place at WSU, UW and Gonzaga.



The minimum wage debate
Is an increased minimum wage an opportunity creator or job killer?

Tuesday, February 24, 2015

**Washington State University Goertzen Hall 21
(formerly CADD) 7:00 - 8:30 p.m.**

The climate change debate
What is the best way to tackle climate change?
Government or the free market?

Tuesday, April 14, 2015

**University of Washington Kane Hall 120
7:00 - 8:30 p.m.**

The climate change debate
What is the best way to tackle climate change? Government or the free market?

Wednesday, April 15, 2015

**Gonzaga University Wolff Auditorium
7:00 - 8:30 p.m.**

Learn more and register for these FREE events by
visiting www.washingtonpolicy.org/2015-debates

Thanks to our valued supporters, 2014 was the most successful year in WPC's history!

After a fantastic 2014, our organization finds itself on solid financial footing. Our goal remains the same, to ensure that our state stays among the best places to raise a family, earn a living and run a business. We work hard for you, providing research and clear policy analysis, advancing our goal of spending discipline, low taxes and limited government. By donating to WPC, you are putting your dollars toward a time-tested, professional organization that will fight for your principles long into the future. Be assured that we provide our policymakers, especially now during this pivotal Legislative Session, and voters, the information they need to make fiscally responsible choices.

You have felt our success in your pocketbook – just a few recent examples include: research produced by our Coles Center for Transportation was instrumental in defeating King County Metro Transit's Proposition 1 last spring, saving taxpayers over \$1.5 billion. And just a few weeks ago, our state Senate passed another WPC-supported measure – they voted in a special rule to require a two-thirds majority for any new tax increases (including the governor's proposed capital gains tax).

WPC is also working to improve our children's education by defending the Charter School bill that we helped pass in 2012. Labor reform is another key issue we are working on, to provide workers more freedom in their workplace by ending forced union membership in our state. Our impact continues to increase: WPC's research appears in the media an average of over five times per day.

Evening in the desert



Major donor lunch



VIP reception at Annual Dinner

SUPPORT WPC BY JOINING THE PILLAR SOCIETY

WPC receives no government funding; we're a non-profit, independent organization funded by you, our valued supporters. WPC is supported exclusively by concerned citizens, business owners and select charitable foundations who recognize the value of our work. These are people who know what we know: **policy matters**.

To support WPC's vital work and new endeavors, and to ensure our impact continues to grow, WPC launched the Pillar Society. The Pillar Society distinguishes donors who make a substantial pledge which is paid over three years (pledges begin at \$5,000 per year). We're pleased to report that the program is a huge success with over 70 members! We would like to sincerely thank our current Pillar Society members and urge you to join with us!

Along with the prestige of being a WPC Pillar Society member, benefits include premier tables at our conferences and Annual Dinner (reserved before the event sells-out!), varying recognition throughout the year and invitations to private events with key public officials and thought leaders. We listened to you—our supporters—many of whom told us they want to increase or maintain their financial support of WPC, but that they only want to be asked for a gift one time per year. The Pillar Society answers this need.

We hope you will consider joining our Pillar Society. We stand with you and we are honored to have your trust. For more information, please contact WPC's Development Director, Stephanie True, at (206) 937-9691 or strue@washingtonpolicy.org

East of the CASCADES

Connecting Eastern Washington to Olympia



When the Washington state legislature convened its 2015 legislative session on January 12th in Olympia, lawmakers knew that, thanks to Washington Policy Center, citizens in Eastern Washington would get a front row seat.

Throughout the session, WPC connects state

legislators to districts across Eastern Washington using video conference technology. The weekly legislative 'Wake-Up Call Forums' are a public service of Washington Policy Center in partnership with Wake-Up Call Fine Coffee.

Each Wednesday morning through the session, WPC invites lawmakers from across the state to video conference with citizens at select locations.

Additional Wake-Up Forums are scheduled for the following locations:

March 4th – Spokane
Valley Hospital Health & Education Center

March 11th – Tri-Cities
Tri-City Regional Chamber

March 18th – Yakima
Yakima Chamber of Commerce

March 25th – Moses Lake
Moses Lake Chamber of Commerce

April 8th – Tri-Cities
Tri-City Regional Chamber

April 15th – Spokane
Valley Hospital Health & Education Center

Each forum begins at 7:00am.

Electric Trolley or Electric Folly?

by Chris Cargill, WPC Eastern Washington director

In a special election on April 28th, voters in the Spokane Transit Authority (STA) service area (most of the populous portions of Spokane County) will decide whether to raise the sales tax rate from 8.7% to 9.0% - one of the highest figures in the state. If approved, the STA portion of the sales tax would jump 50%.

STA leaders say the "centerpiece" of their more than \$300 million tax plan is a \$72 million, six-mile long electric trolley line. It's their most controversial proposal – and for good reason.

Officials want the electric trolley to run from Spokane Community College, through the Gonzaga and Riverpoint Campuses, west through downtown to Browne's Addition.

STA officials optimistically predict they will attract 880,000 riders per year. In addition to the expensive startup costs, the annual operating costs would be at least \$4.1 million. That means taxpayers would be paying roughly \$4.70 per electric trolley trip. The average STA bus costs taxpayers 20% less to operate.

Many of the trolley passengers would be former bus riders, meaning taxpayers would simply be paying more to move the same people.

Originally, officials wanted an electric trolley with overhead wires. But after public complaints, transit officials now say they want to either put electric power into the pavement or use a claw arms atop the trolley to periodically grab power sources along the route.

Neither system is currently made in the United States, which means the Spokane trolley project would not be ineligible to receive the federal money STA officials have promised.

Supporters also cheerfully claim the \$72-million streetcar would lead to economic development. But experience tells us

that is not likely to happen.

"We have no evidence that streetcars, of themselves, promote economic development in the context of present-day US cities," says David Levinson of the Department of Civil Engineering at the University of Minnesota.



In other cities that have built similar systems, local elected officials have had to make zoning changes and give away billions of tax dollars in incentives to spur development. Supporters admit the giveaways would be needed in Spokane as well. Taxpayers would not only pay to build and run the system, but we would also have to pay businesses to locate along its route.

If there is a real transit need, STA officials could add more buses along the proposed trolley route. Or they could build a less-expensive Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) system, in place in other Northwest cities like Eugene and Everett. Those systems were built for roughly \$25 million each.

Spokane taxpayers are already generous in the amount of money we give to Spokane Transit Authority. In fact, STA gets more public tax revenue than the Spokane Police or Fire Departments.

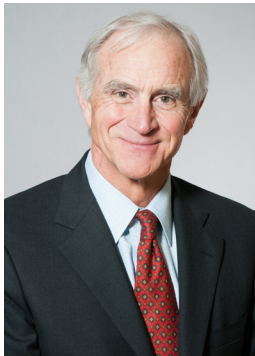
So why spend \$72 million for so little benefit? STA officials have said it's because running the system would be "cool."

The goal of public transit is to move people from point A to point B as efficiently and safely as possible. The proposed electric trolley would give Spokane a super-high sales tax and do nothing more than add to transit costs with no improvement in service.

Does more medicaid spending improve the economy?

by Roger Stark, MD, FACS
WPC Health Policy Analyst

This Opinion/Editorial was featured in The Puget Sound Business Journal.



Proponents of putting more people on Medicaid, the federal program for the poor, say the increased government spending will improve the economy. Is this true?

Medicaid is a health care entitlement that began in 1965. Originally, it provided health insurance to low-income families with children. It has grown to include aid for disability and long-term care. The existing Medicaid costs are covered with both federal and state taxpayer dollars on a 50/50 basis.

One of the main goals of the Affordable Care Act (ACA), or Obamacare, is to expand Medicaid to all low-income adults. The federal government enticed states to expand the program by paying 100 percent of the costs for the first three years and then gradually dropping the federal contribution to 90 percent. To date, 26 states, including Washington state, have accepted the offer electing to expand their Medicaid populations.

The Washington state legislature never voted directly on accepting Medicaid expansion, instead rolling the federal money into the 2013-2015 budget. The issue of Medicaid expansion will need to be revisited by the 2015 legislature.

The Medicaid program has many problems. Tragically, multiple studies show that health outcomes for Medicaid patients are no better than for people with no health insurance. Although the cost of Medicaid to taxpayers has exploded, payments to doctors are very low – in many cases only 40 percent of what private insurance pays. Consequently, fewer doctors can afford to see Medicaid patients and still pay their office overhead. Finding a doctor is a significant problem for Medicaid patients.

In spite of these problems, proponents of Obamacare strongly favor expanding the program. Their latest argument is that Medicaid spending provides economic benefits to the entire state. Washington state's Office of Financial Management calculates Medicaid expansion provided an additional \$1.21 billion last year. The

reasoning here is that more Medicaid spending adds new health care jobs and more wages. Those dollars then trickle down to the general economy.

The argument might make sense until you realize that entitlement spending is only half the story. Entitlement dollars must come from taxes, which are taken from other consumer spending. The studies that show an economic benefit from Medicaid neglect to account for other uses of those tax dollars. In other words, if the money wasn't paying for Medicaid, it would go to other economic activities. There might be fewer jobs in health care, but there would be more jobs in other areas of the economy.


It's like bailing water out of the deep end of a swimming pool and pouring it into the shallow end, while expecting the whole pool to get larger in the process.

Entitlements do not create wealth. Health economist Dr. Robert A. Book researched the impact of Medicaid expansion and included the dead-weight burden of taxes to pay for the entitlement. He found that if all states expanded Medicaid, the economic loss to the country would be \$174 billion over 10 years, and the job loss would be a net 206,000 jobs lost per year. Washington state would see a loss of \$13.5 billion over 10 years, with 16,500 jobs lost each year, according to this estimate.

Proponents of Medicaid expansion say Washington state will leave federal dollars "on the table" if we do not expand the program. This argument ignores the fact that state taxpayers are also federal taxpayers. Any expansion of Medicaid is a burden on state taxpayers regardless of which branch of government dispenses the money. Estimates of the total cost to taxpayers for the Medicaid expansion in Washington state alone range from \$17 billion to \$22 billion over the next 10 years.

Instead of forcing low-income people into a poor insurance plan, our elected officials should promote meaningful health insurance choices. Rather than an open-ended entitlement, state officials should strongly lobby the federal government to provide a fixed, block-grant sum of money for our Medicaid patients. The Medicaid budget could then be predictable.

Other states, such as Indiana, have tried innovative health savings accounts and state-funded high-deductible health insurance plans. These plans allow Medicaid patients to make their own health care decisions and find health care in the private market.

Expanding Medicaid gives more people health insurance on paper. It does not, however, give people better access to good care, and it certainly doesn't improve the overall economy. 



Don't hamper growth with a capital gains tax

by Matt McIlwain

Matt McIlwain is a Managing Director at Madrona Venture Group. He also serves as the Secretary for WPC's Board of Directors, which he joined in 2012.

This Opinion/Editorial was featured in The Puget Sound Business Journal.



In December, Gov. Inslee released his 2015-17 budget and tax plan.

If someone told you your budget had increased by \$3 billion the past two years and is expected to increase by another \$3 billion in the next two, you would probably feel good about making ends meet, even if you had important priorities to fund.

That is exactly the increase Washington's elected officials are receiving now from state tax revenues. We are in the middle of a four-year period in which state tax revenues are growing \$6 billion, or about 20 percent, from the \$31 billion the state collected in 2011-2013.

This growth came from a combination of hard-working citizens, increased economic opportunities and a tax strategy that encourages investment and innovation. You might think this substantial increase in revenues would inspire our political leaders to propose a reduction in taxes so that citizens can better invest, spend and donate their money as they choose.

Instead, Gov. Jay Inslee is proposing the opposite — new and increased taxes.

Inslee is proposing a form of income tax called a capital gains tax. By doing so, he is breaking a campaign pledge he made to not create new taxes. The specific proposal is a 7 percent tax on income from investments in your business, home, stocks, bonds and other income defined as a "capital gain."

That 7 percent is on top of the nearly 23 percent you already pay in federal tax on this type of income. At its core, Inslee's new tax would stifle innovation and job growth by discouraging

investment and new talent from coming to Washington.

And, given the \$6 billion increase in revenues we are already enjoying, it is hard to understand why we need any new taxes.

Inslee's proposal would initially allow some exemptions, but the upward trend of all types of income taxes is predictable. Over time, income taxes expand to more people and more types of income. Exemptions get eliminated, and tax rates almost always increase.

Didn't candidate Jay Inslee promise not to raise our taxes when he ran for governor two years ago? Washington is enjoying substantial revenue growth and economic stability. If we can't trust our governor to keep his promise in good times, how can we ever trust Inslee, or future governors, to keep their promises on taxes?

A deeper question is: who do the citizens of Washington trust with their hard-earned income? Four years ago, Initiative 1098 put this question to our state's voters and by an overwhelming majority of 64-36 voters rejected an income tax. So, why does the governor think we want a tax on income now?

Since the income tax was overwhelmingly rejected, our economy has grown. Inslee has no reason to break his pledge.

We are attracting talent, capital and quality jobs to our state at a rapid rate and our pro-growth and opportunity policies need to continue. Let the state Legislature prioritize spending, especially for education, using the additional billions in tax revenue this strategy keeps generating, without creating new taxes.



Key facts about right-to-work

by Erin Shannon, Director,
Center for Small Business

This is from our full policy brief, “Right-to-Work: What it is and how it works” which is available on our website, along with our “Frequently Asked Questions About Right-to-Work Laws.”



The issue of right-to-work, the right of a person to hold a job without having to pay dues to a union, is steadily taking center stage across the country as states strive to improve their ability to create jobs, promote economic development and attract new businesses. Two states, Indiana and Michigan, recently enacted right-to-work laws, also called

“workplace freedom” or “workplace choice,” with more states introducing legislation and debating the issue every year. Currently 24 states have right-to-work laws.

In states with right-to-work laws, workers can choose not to join a union and not pay dues. States without right-to-work laws do not allow workers that choice, instead requiring employees to pay union dues or “agency fees” as a condition of employment.

A right-to-work law does not prohibit employees from joining a labor union, nor does it prohibit them from paying union dues voluntarily. Labor unions still operate in right-to-work states, but the law protects each person’s freedom of association by prohibiting the payment of union dues from being a required condition of employment. The principle right-to-work laws seek to protect is that no one should be forced to choose between paying money to a cause he or she might oppose and making a living.

Opponents says right-to-work laws give non-union members a “free ride” in the workplace, enabling them to benefit from union representation and union-secured benefits without sharing in the cost of negotiating those benefits. They argue the “free riders” ultimately result in more and more workers leaving the union, undermining the stability and financing of the union itself. For that reason opponents often describe efforts to pass right-to-work laws as “union-busting.”

1. Studies show that states with right-to-work laws attract more new business than states without such laws. Right-to-work states typically have a better business climate than non-right-to-work states, with lower unemployment.
2. The cost of living is typically lower in right-to-work states. Once cost of living is accounted for, workers in right-to-work states enjoy higher real, spendable income than workers in non-right-to-work states.
3. Federal law does not obligate unions to represent non-members; unions are allowed to bargain solely for their own dues-paying members under a “members-only” contract. Unions are only required to represent every worker if they choose to invoke federal law giving them the privilege of “exclusive bargaining representation.”
4. Union membership has been declining nationally for three decades. That union membership has declined in right-to-work states because of right-to-work laws is questionable, since union membership is declining in most states as part of a long-term national trend.
5. As private sector union membership continues to decline, public support for labor unions appears to be fading. The emergence of right-to-work legislation in several states is evidence that policymakers and voters are rethinking the role of labor unions in today’s modern workplace.
6. Right-to-work laws do not ban unions or prevent them from serving the interests of their members. Right-to-work laws do not force unions to represent non-paying “free riders” who take advantage of a union’s representation but do not pay their share. Rather, right-to-work laws require unions to give workers a choice about financially supporting those efforts.
7. Recent decisions by the U.S. Supreme Court in *Harris v. Quinn* and *Knox v. SEIU* indicate the Court may be willing to overturn a previous decision (*Abood*) that requires government employees to pay union dues or agency fees, even if they do not want union representation. Such a ruling would likely lead to the same rights for private sector workers.



Are taxes going up?

The Legislature is in session

by Paul Guppy
WPC's Vice President for Research

For more on the capital gains tax, reference Matt McIlwain's op/ed on page eight in this issue.

Mark Twain once observed that “no man’s life, liberty, or property are safe while the legislature is in session.” Like all humorous exaggerations, the quip contains an element of truth. While our elected representatives are meeting in Olympia, no one is quite sure what they will do.

To start the legislative session, Governor Inslee proposed a series of tax increases, including the creation of three new ways for state officials to tax citizens. He is proposing a cap-and-trade system for what he terms the state’s 130 worst carbon emitters. The proposal could increase the price of gas by 30 cents a gallon. The governor counters that gas prices would go up by only 12 cents a gallon to start, though he concedes the cost will go up over time.

Embarrassingly, state officials learned that the University of Washington, Washington State University and a solar panel factory in Moses Lake would fall on the governor’s list of “worst polluters.”

The second new tax is in the form of a costly regulation called the Low Carbon Fuel Standard to mandate fuel additives. One

analysis estimates it would raise gas prices by a dollar a gallon, though the governor disputes it would go that high.

The third new tax Governor Inslee is proposing is a state capital gains tax. Seattle-based start-up investor and WPC board member Matt McIlwain says that would make it harder to attract talent, capital and quality jobs, especially in the fast-growing technology sector that is so important to our economic future. The governor says middle-class investments would be exempt, but no one is sure whether earnings from retirement accounts and home sales might be included some day.

Another proposal in Olympia is a three-part request from Sound Transit officials asking lawmakers to let them increase regressive local taxes on people living in urban King, Pierce and Snohomish counties. Officials want to increase the sales tax by 0.5 percent, raise the MVET tax on cars, trailers and other vehicles by 0.8 percent, and increase property taxes on homes and business properties. Seattle-area representatives support the idea, but other lawmakers may not want to go along on an unpopular tax-increase vote.

The reason is that in the 2014 mid-term elections voters elected a Republican majority to the state Senate and increased the representation of Republicans in the House, while retaining a solid four-seat majority for House Democrats. The new legislature is working on a new two-year budget to fund essential public services and debating how to spend \$3 billion, an 8.6 percent increase, in extra revenue the state will receive in 2015-17.

At over 30 years, Washington has gone the longest of any state continuously served by a Democratic governor. The divided nature of state government means lawmakers and the governor will have to work together to pass a budget and enact reforms that serve the needs of people in Washington.

With five Democratic governors in a row, there is a risk Washington policymakers will fall into consideration of a limited set of ideas promoted by established interests in Olympia. That may make it harder for lawmakers to “think outside the box” and consider fresh ideas for solving our state’s problems. That is one reason it is so tempting for some state leaders to seek tax increases, instead of living within the current rise in state revenue.

Tax-increase advocates say the tax burden has not kept up with the rise in personal incomes. Their assumption is that government officials have a right to receive some set proportion of the money that people earn. Their idea is that if your family is doing better, the state should get a larger share of your income.

A better measure of the need for public services is per-capita spending. As the population grows, the need for key services - roads, schools, safety net social programs - grows as well. By that standard, state spending has expanded massively in recent decades. In fact, inflation-adjusted per capita state spending has increased by 24 percent since 1990.

The good news is that the better families are doing financially, the less need they have for many government services, such as housing assistance or free health care.

The larger question, however, is a moral one. Is it fair for government leaders to raise taxes just because people are more successful? Or should the tax burden be based on society’s objective need for public services? By the second standard the tax burden could actually go down,

as reforms like LEAN management, Priorities of Government budgeting and competitive contracting allow agency managers to deliver better public services at lower cost.

A further consideration is Governor Inslee’s campaign pledge not to raise taxes, promising to veto any tax bill that reached his desk. Now he wants to raise taxes by some \$1.4 billion. However, the \$3 billion in extra revenue working people are providing is enough to fund current public services, add money to education, and still cut regressive taxes if lawmakers so choose.

With the recovering economy, the extra \$3



Washington State House of Representatives

billion in revenue will let the legislature increase spending by about four times the rate of inflation, with the added benefit of helping the governor keep the no-new-taxes promise he made to the people of Washington.

Yes, the legislature is in session but, taxes do not need to go up. Rather than asking for more, it would be a pleasant change to hear our state leaders occasionally say “thank you” to Washington’s working families and businesses for providing them with a tidy 8.6 percent increase in revenue under the current tax system.

SOLUTIONSSUMMIT

WASHINGTON POLICY CENTER'S STATEWIDE POLICY CONFERENCE

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This January, Washington Policy Center was pleased to host our statewide Solutions Summit policy conferences, bringing together over 600 local business and policy leaders from across the state to discuss the important issues facing our state during the Legislative Session and beyond, and a perspective on national issues by key political leaders. This highly anticipated half-day conference was held in Eastern Washington at the Three Rivers Convention Center in Kennewick and in Western Washington at the Hyatt Regency Hotel in Bellevue, making it a truly statewide conference.

In Eastern Washington, WPC was honored to welcome a number of notable guests to speak, including Sen. Michael Baumgartner and Rep. Ross Hunter; and in Western Washington, Hon. Rob McKenna, Sen. Andy Hill, Sen. Doug Ericksen and Rep. Reuven Carlyle. At both conferences were Sen. Curtis King, Cascade Policy Institute CEO John Charles, Forbes Opinion Editor Avik Roy, Seattle business owner Taylor Hoang and former Starbucks President Howard Behar.

The Solutions Summit held panels on a number of topics critical to the issues facing the current Legislative Session, including the Affordable Care Act, education funding and the impact of the *McCleary* court decision, improving transportation efficiencies, our state's budget in light of *McCleary* during the 2015 Legislative



WPC Eastern Washington director Chris Cargill, WPC president Dann Mead Smith, Idaho Governor Butch Otter and WPC board Vice Chair John Otter

Session, innovative environmental solutions for our state and the minimum wage issue.

In Kennewick, WPC honored retiring Congressman Doc Hastings during the opening breakfast and Governor Butch Otter of Idaho keynoted the luncheon. Governor Otter touched on what he did in our neighboring state to reduce the size of government, cut the state budget by one-third during the peak of the recession, all while improving the business climate and focusing on

reforming the education system in Idaho. Governor Otter said, "On education, you look up the numbers and see how much we spend. But folks, that's the wrong barometer. It's not how much you spend, it's how you spend the money."

The recently re-elected governor also praised WPC in his remarks:

"...the work that [Washington Policy Center] does, the research you do, the information you put out arms us as well as we can be armed and should be armed."



Former New York Governor George Pataki addresses Pillar Society and YP members at the reception following the conference



Attendees enjoy the breakout sessions

The following day in Bellevue, the opening breakfast featured Forbes Opinion Editor Avik Roy, who spoke on “Transcending Obamacare” and the growing Medicare expenditures.

Former New York Governor George Pataki headlined the keynote luncheon in Bellevue. He spoke extensively about his time governing New York, a liberal state similar to Washington in many ways, and how he worked to reduce regulations and cut taxes. He also touched on his work on anti-terrorism, as his tenure as governor included the 9-11 attacks.

“I wish we [New York] had an organization like Washington Policy Center when I was Governor...”

-Hon. George Pataki

The former governor also complimented Washington Policy Center, saying “I wish we [New York] had an organization like Washington Policy Center when I was Governor...” He also went on to talk about how important it was to have an organization like WPC that is committed to free-market solutions, so that the next generation can get jobs and succeed.

This year’s Solutions Summit was even more successful than the last one, growing in impact and in attendance statewide, just one week before the start of one of the most important Legislative Sessions in state history. WPC is committed to providing solutions to make an impact on the key policy issues facing our state. Our esteemed guests were able to provide insight and perspective on what to expect this year and in the years to come.



Avik Roy addresses the health care breakout session



Sen. Andy Hill and Rep. Reuven Carlyle discuss the state budget in a breakout session



Bellevue keynote speaker Former New York Governor George Pataki



Retiring Congressman Doc. Hastings opens the Eastern Washington Solutions Summit in Kennewick

Washington**✓**votes.org **NEWS**

WashingtonVotes.org, WPC's long-running independent, legislative information and tracking website, and its WashingtonVotes News will cover all the important legislative action in Olympia this session

WashingtonVotes.org News, under the leadership of Washington Votes Director Franz Gregory, launched in 2014 to provide subscribers with reports about committee hearings, executive sessions, floor action and upcoming roll call votes on important bills and amendments, along with timely comments from key players at the state capitol.

Washington Votes was created in 2001 to keep citizens up-to-date on the thousands of measures that make their way through the legislative process.

To date, the site has covered nearly 30,000 legislative measures and reported over 10,000 roll call votes. It has thousands of registered users and has become an important resource for citizens, government officials, lobbyists and lawmakers to stay current on detailed committee work and House and Senate floor action.

Sign up today at www.washingtonvotes.org/account.aspx to follow your legislators during this year's 105-day legislative session.

✓ A searchable database of all current bills, resolutions and amendments, as well as the votes taken by legislators, with a searchable archive going back to the 2001 Session.

✓ Timely legislative updates of legislation on the move, including plain-language descriptions.

✓ Free daily customizable e-mail updates for subscribers.

✓ A free Weekly Roll Call service reporting on major bills to news outlets across the state, including the voting records of local lawmakers.

✓ Information on how to contact your lawmakers and see their bill sponsorships and voting records.

✓ A comments section that links users to social media.

✓ A Scorecard feature that allows users to track legislative votes based on their own criteria.

✓ The "Missed Votes Report," a popular feature that tabulates the total number of votes taken and missed by individual legislators. The report is distributed to news outlets after session ends, along with any comments by legislators on their voting record.

#WPCYOUNGPROFESSIONALS

Looking into the future

In 2010, WPC launched its Young Professionals group. Led by an active advisory board made up of young business, policy and community leaders, the group has grown significantly over the past year and now includes board leadership, an Events Committee, a Marketing and Membership Committee, Young Professional events, including their own Annual Dinner, and a club at the University of Washington. The group works to educate, engage and empower the next generation of free market leaders in Washington state.



WPC debates at University of Washington



Above: one of the many WPC YP networking events
Left: YP Summer Social



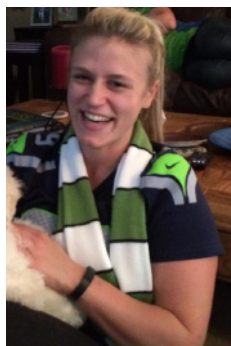
Nathan Rimmer, Chairman

Nathan was elected Board Chair in January 2014 and has led WPC Young Professionals through a successful 14 months. Nathan often addresses attendees at WPC events. You may have seen him most recently at our 2015 Solutions Summit in Bellevue! Nathan is the Manager of Business Development at Pistol Creek Company in

Bellevue. He has been a member of WPC and its Young Professionals group since 2009. He lives in Ballard with his wife, Rosanna.

Samantha Bowman, Vice Chair & Event Committee Chair

Samantha was elected Vice Chair in January 2015 after serving as the Events Committee chair for 2014. Samantha became involved in Washington Policy Center when she won WPC's Jennifer Dunn-Thompson scholarship in 2012, which she used to attend the London School of Economics! Samantha returned to Seattle, joined WPC's YP board and plays a major role in managing WPC's YP events, including our statewide debate series and the popular YP Annual Dinner. Samantha currently works at Microsoft as a Treasury Manager.



Young Professionals Advisory Board

Nathan Rimmer,
Chairman, Pistol Creek
Company

Samantha Bowman,
Vice Chairman, Microsoft
Global Cash Management

Chris Bell,
NAI Black, Spokane

Katie Bering

Austin Bowlin,
PricewaterhouseCoopers

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Contractors Association

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Meet WPC's YP leadership



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*Catch WPC staff statewide as they give
legislative updates weekly throughout
the legislative session.*

770 KTTH
PUGET SOUND

Paul Guppy, Vice
President for Research,
Tuesdays at 8:00 a.m.

590 KQNT
SPOKANE

Chris Cargill, Eastern
Washington Office Director,
Mondays at 7:30 a.m.

KVEW 42
TRI-CITIES

Jason Mercier, Center for
Government Reform,
Fridays at 6:40 a.m.

99.3 KIT
YAKIMA

Chris Cargill, Eastern
Washington Office Director,
Mondays at 7:20 a.m.

560 KPQ
WENATCHEE

Chris Cargill, Eastern
Washington Office Director,
Mondays at 1:00 p.m.

920 KXLY
SPOKANE

Chris Cargill, Eastern
Washington Office Director,
Thursdays at 4 p.m.