

# *Growing our* **IMPACT**



*Scott Rasmussen at WPC's Solutions Summit, signing his latest book, *The People's Money*.*



*WPC's annual Legislative Briefing in Olympia.*



*Dr. Ben Carson at WPC's Annual Dinner.*



*Sen. Andy Hill, Reason Foundation's Leonard Gilroy and Hon. Brian Sonntag addressing a panel at WPC's Western Washington Solutions Summit.*

# **2013 ANNUAL REPORT**



# East of the CASCADES

No other research organization in Washington state is committed to Eastern Washington like Washington Policy Center. WPC opened its first Eastern Washington office with Eastern Washington Director Chris Cargill nearly five years ago and has since increased in stature as the most trusted public policy organization in the region.

In 2013, WPC held nearly a dozen events in Eastern Washington, including our Annual Dinner, Health Care Luncheon, Solutions Summit and Wake-Up Forums. Collectively, nearly 2,000 attended our Eastern Washington events last year.

The Wake-Up Forums - which connect constituents to their legislators via video conference during the legislative session - have been a model for citizen participation in the legislative session. WPC is proposing to extend an opportunity for all citizens of the state to participate and testify - not just those living close to Olympia - using technology that is readily available.

Commitment to Eastern Washington is about more than events - it's about impact. And that's why WPC ideas and recommendations are being used by lawmakers and citizens across Eastern Washington to change their communities for the better. In 2013, WPC was proud to recommend changes to the way cities in Eastern Washington raise the financial burden they place on citizens. WPC suggested a two-thirds supermajority requirement to raise taxes at the local level. In February, Spokane voters approved the charter change. In November, Yakima voters followed suit. Because of WPC's work and your support, it now takes more agreement by lawmakers to increase a citizen's tax burden.



*In 2013, Spokane voters approved WPC's supermajority amendment recommendation.*

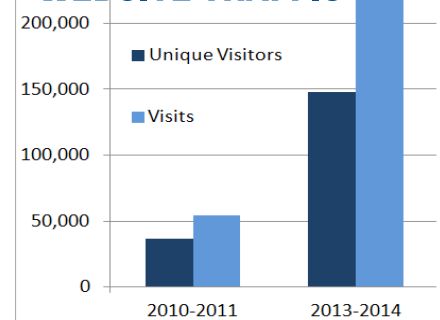


*WPC's 1st Solutions Summit in the Tri-Cities was attended by more than 300 citizens, elected leaders and experts including Dr. Shelley Redinger of Spokane Public Schools (above left) and Cindi Williams of the Washington State Charter Schools Commission (above right). The half-day policy conference was covered extensively by newspapers and television stations throughout the mid-Columbia.*

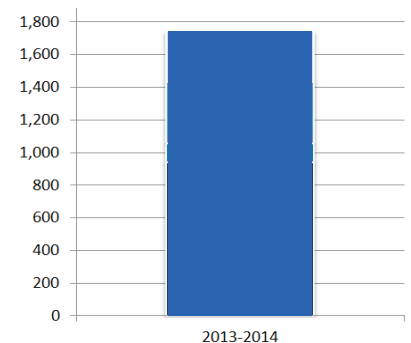
## TOTAL EVENT ATTENDANCE

# 4,260

## WEBSITE TRAFFIC



## MEDIA APPEARANCES



*WPC appeared in the media an average of*  
**5**  
*times per day*

## 2012 REVENUE:

# \$2,014,292

## 2013 REVENUE:

# \$2,273,556

*Support for WPC's work increased by*

# 12

## PERCENT

*for our best year yet*

## CENTER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

The *Wall Street Journal* named Environmental Director Todd Myers one of their Energy and Environment Expert Panelists. Todd wrote several pieces for the *Journal* during the course of the year on a range of issues.

The Environmental Center also had a strong influence on the direction of climate policy in Washington. Governor Inslee included a key metric of environmental effectiveness we proposed in his signature climate legislation. That information was later useful in highlighting proposals that had high cost and low environmental benefit, such as the low-carbon fuel standard proposed by the Governor. Todd was also quoted nationally regarding the Pacific Coast Climate Action Plan.

The City of Spokane also adopted a WPC-proposed change to its climate policy, requiring examination of the effectiveness of policies included in its climate strategy. WPC analysis was also a part of the most high-profile environmental debate of the year regarding the labeling of biotechnology crops. Our analysis of I-522 was mentioned by media outlets and referenced during the campaign.

## CENTER FOR EDUCATION

In 2013, as part of WPC's Initiative 1240 Follow-Up Project, the Center for Education's Liv Finne reported on the implementation of the new charter school law approved by voters in November 2012. The Center published *"How to Open a Charter School in Washington State"* and *"Summary of the lawsuit against charter schools."* The Center also published numerous blog posts describing the plans and hopes of school districts and communities applying to open charter schools to disadvantaged school children across the state. The Center also examined charter school funding to ensure charter school students receive equitable funding, as required by the charter school law.

The Center for Education also published school performance results on the State Board of Education's School Achievement Index and continued its reporting on school finance issues in conventional public schools. The Center also followed gubernatorial efforts to improve the schools with *"Inslee's next assignment: the teachers' union"* and the policy brief *"Governor Gregoire's Education Legacy."*

## CENTER FOR GOVERNMENT REFORM

63 percent of statewide voters followed our recommendation to reject Initiative 517 (changes to the initiative system) saving the state and businesses years of costly litigation to determine if the measure infringed on private property rights. Voters in Yakima and Spokane also followed our recommendation to enact a local supermajority vote requirement to raise taxes.

Lawmakers continued to show interest in Center Director Jason Mercier's proposal to replace the state's hated Business & Occupation tax with a Single Business Tax, providing us the opportunity to present on the issue at legislative work sessions.

Three bills also passed the legislature and were signed into law by Governor Inslee in 2013 reflecting WPC recommendations: providing additional transparency for state capital and transportation projects (HB 2058), requiring an inventory of state fees (SB 5751) and requiring a performance statement before tax preferences are enacted (SB 5882).



## CENTER FOR HEALTH CARE

WPC continues to actively participate in the debate over the Affordable Care Act, or Obamacare. Health Care Policy Analyst, Dr. Roger Stark, has testified twice before Congress on several aspects of the ACA. He has been busy speaking to groups across the state. People in our region want to know what's in the ACA and more importantly, how the new law will affect them.

The 12th Annual Health Care Conference, scheduled for May 13th, will be devoted to the implementation of Obamacare with emphasis on the impact to businesses. Katie Mahoney, the Executive Director of Health Care Policy with the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, will be the featured luncheon speaker in both Bellevue and on May 14th in Spokane.

WPC updated our popular *"Impact of the ACA on Washington State"* publication and released the new version that provides a concise review of the law and discusses the impact of the ACA on various demographic groups in our state.

## CENTER FOR SMALL BUSINESS

The Center for Small Business' Erin Shannon was invited by lawmakers to testify before the legislature on 18 bills related to WPC recommendations to improve the state's small business climate.

WPC responded to the growing minimum wage debate by releasing a comprehensive study of the City of SeaTac's controversial initiative mandating an unprecedented \$15 minimum wage, paid sick leave and other requirements for some workers. The study received national attention and WPC was quoted in *The Chicago News Tribune*, *Los Angeles Times*, *Washington Post* and *Businessweek*.

The Center wrapped up the year with the highly successful "Is Right-to-Work Right for Washington?" small business panels with standing room only at WPC's first ever Solutions Summit in Tri-Cities and Bellevue. The day after participating in the panel, Senator Baumgartner called on Governor Inslee to convene a special session to pass "right-to-work" legislation.

## COLES CENTER FOR TRANSPORTATION

In May 2013, the Skagit River Bridge collapsed. In response, state leaders immediately began building a replacement span to keep traffic flowing on Interstate 5. By September, the permanent span was put in place. WPC's Coles Center for Transportation recommended using the lessons learned on the bridge rebuild on every road and bridge project in the state, by reducing costs and unnecessary delay.

A number of WPC recommendations were reflected in legislative proposals. Center director Bob Pishue testified by invitation before state leaders on the importance of congestion relief, the diversion of transportation tax dollars to other purposes, and the artificial policies that increase the cost of building roads and bridges.

WPC also commissioned our biennial transportation poll, showing voters are dissatisfied with how state officials are managing Washington's transportation problems.