

Winter 2018



# Viewpoint

THE QUARTERLY MAGAZINE OF WASHINGTON POLICY CENTER



WASHINGTON POLICY CENTER'S NEW

# CENTER *for* WORKER RIGHTS

A mileage tax is an invasion  
of your privacy and wallet

P. 5

Ending the union's skim of home  
health care wages

P. 9

- 3** Leaving a lasting legacy
- 5** A mileage tax is an invasion of your privacy and wallet
- 6** “Urban enviro-imperialism” is harming state water management policy
- 7** WPC’s new Center for Worker Rights
- 9** Key Findings: Ending the union’s skim of home health care wages
- 10** Key Findings: Overview of public school choice programs
- 11** East of the Cascades
- 13** WPC’s 2017 Annual Dinners
- 14** Calendar

---

## HAPPY HOLIDAYS!

---

*From everyone at Washington Policy Center*

---



# Viewpoint

THE QUARTERLY MAGAZINE OF WASHINGTON POLICY CENTER

Dear friends,

Washington Policy Center has had another impactful year, thanks to generous supporters like you, the sound management of our volunteer Board, and our hard-working professional staff.

We held blockbuster Annual Dinners in both Spokane and Bellevue, hosted several well-attended events for our Young Professionals program, exceeded our fundraising goals, expanded impact through our new Agriculture Initiative – and most importantly continued to produce high-quality studies on public issues. We garnered ever more major media coverage of our work, including more exclusive opeds in the top papers in our state.

WPC works every day to make sure the public debate in our state is not solely dominated by big-government special interests who pursue their own advantage by imposing an ever-growing financial burden on the people. We want to be sure a wide range of voices are heard, and that each of us is always free to support the organizations and causes in which we believe.

For that reason, we are carefully watching for state legislation to intimidate effective non-profit organizations like ours that we expect will be introduced during the 2018 legislative session.

Some lawmakers want to expand state power by making independent non-profits like Washington Policy Center report personal information about donors to an online government database. The same rule would be imposed on other non-profit civic groups, like the ACLU, the YMCA, the PTA, parent clubs, environmental groups and local community organizations.

The proposed reporting requirement would undermine the rights of all citizens because the state would start monitoring private civic activity that does not involve taxpayer money in any way, and does not involve donations to candidates or political campaigns.

Disclosure and transparency is for government, so officials can be held accountable, not to pry into the private lives of citizens. Fear of being “outed” on a state-run website would have a chilling effect on charitable giving and on the civic life of communities across Washington.

Voluntary civic engagement is essential for the health of our democracy. Everyone should be free to support the private non-profit causes of one’s choice without fear of harassment or intimidation.

For that reason, Washington Policy Center will continue to monitor and report on this intimidation effort.

Stay tuned for more information and analysis in 2018 as we continue our work to improve lives in Washington State.

P.S. Right to work is an emerging issue of enormous importance in our state – We are ramping up our research and opening a new center (see page 7) in support of this most fundamental policy issue. Your support will be critical.



Craig Williamson  
Chairman, Washington Policy Center



## Board of Directors

Craig Williamson, *Chairman*  
John Otter, *Vice Chairman*  
Heidi Stanley, *Treasurer*  
Anne Cowles, *Secretary*

Richard Alvord  
Bill Baldwin  
Dave Barber  
Kevin Bouchey  
Roger Bowlin  
Artie Buerk  
Jim Coles  
William Conner  
John Connors  
Kathy Connors  
Hon. Kemper Freeman Jr.  
John J. Hennessy  
Matt McIlwain  
Daniel Mead Smith  
Dr. Rhonda Medows  
Hon. George R. Nethercutt Jr.  
Hon. Mary Odermat  
Mark Pinkowski  
Greg Porter, *Pillar Society President*  
Sarah Rindlaub  
Phil Scott Schlaepfer  
Irene Song  
Hon. Brian Sonntag  
Randy Talbot  
Robert Tippet  
Janet True  
Roberta Weymouth  
Len Zarelli

*Viewpoint* is the quarterly magazine of Washington Policy Center, an independent Washington state-focused think tank.

*Viewpoint* designed and edited by **August Bress**

# Leaving a lasting legacy:

## Joe and Susan Rumble, Wenatchee, WA

Joe and Susan Rumble joined Washington Policy Center as members in 2010 after attending a luncheon event in Wenatchee to celebrate the opening of WPC's Eastern Washington office.

Over the years, Joe and Susan became active members of WPC, supporting our new expansion in Eastern Washington with monthly donations.

In January of 2016, Joe died peacefully in his sleep at his home on his orchard in Monitor. Shortly after his passing, we were informed that Joe had listed WPC as a beneficiary in his will, leaving a Legacy gift to support the growth and important work at Washington Policy Center.

Joe attended the University of Idaho with the intention of pursuing a degree in forestry, but was drafted into the Navy in February of 1946. He was sent to the Navy Class A electronic service schools at Great Lakes, Illinois; Ward Island, Texas; and Memphis, Tennessee. He was honorably discharged in 1947. Ever since, he maintained that "Red, White and Blue runs through my veins."

He re-enrolled at Idaho in the fall of 1948. He learned that jobs in forestry had become scarce, so he methodically went from department to department asking how their job market was. When he came to the College of Mines, the dean told him, "If you can't find a job, I will hire you myself!" Joe became a mining engineering student then and there. He graduated from the University of Idaho in 1952 with bachelor's degrees in both mining engineering and metallurgical engineering.

Joe met Susan Stewart at a square dance in Vancouver, and they were married January 21, 1989. They shared twenty-seven years of adventures, hiking and biking many areas throughout the U.S., including the entire Appalachian Trail.

Joe was an active person and enjoyed running, biking, racquetball, skiing and hiking, and a continuing quest for adventure. He was a founding member of the Mission Ridge Ski Patrol, participated in the Alpine Roamers Hiking Club, and summited Glacier Peak, Mt. Rainier,

Mt. Adams, and Mt. Hood. He was involved in just about every fitness class and activity available at the Wenatchee YMCA in the 50s and 60s, and was one of the leaders of their 1966 and '67 Canadian canoe trips. At the age of 70, he started paragliding, and completed over 100 flights.

Joe and Susan built their retirement home overlooking an apple and pear orchard. He designed a good trail with switchbacks on the hill behind the house and climbed it nearly every day (sometimes twice) for over twenty years. He hiked it for the last time in mid-December of 2015, just a few weeks before he entered his third and final retirement on January 5, 2016. Susan provided loving support for him during a series of strokes, helping him to rally after each one to climb another hill and walk another mile.

Joe had six children and twelve grandchildren. His legacy lives on at Washington Policy Center, working to make Washington state a better place for them.

Susan discussed her and Joe's support and Legacy gift with Washington Policy Center.



**Joe and Susan at the midpoint of the Appalachian Trail. July, 1993**



**WPC:** How did you and Joe get involved with Washington Policy Center?

**Susan:** We were supporters of the Freedom Foundation. They mentioned you and we followed up and saw that you were free market-oriented and you were doing great work. Then, when you opened the Eastern Washington office, we were like, Whoa! here it is, this is in our back yard, this is for us! That is how it started.

**WPC:** How did the opening of our Eastern Washington office get you more involved with WPC?

**Susan:** We started attending those early morning breakfast events in Wenatchee. Painfully early, perhaps, but very informative. We were able to learn about not only what was going on around our state, but what was happening in Eastern Washington—touching on issues that directly affected us.

**WPC:** Why did you decide to become financial supporters of WPC?

**Susan:** The free-market emphasis and the things you stand for are really great. Joe was very generous with his kids and contributed to his grandkids' college. But he always felt that giving them a better world to live in was more important than giving them money. He saw that WPC's work was advancing what he believed in and made our state a better place to live.

**WPC:** Why did Joe decide to list Washington Policy Center in his will?

**Susan:** Joe listed WPC as a beneficiary because it is something he truly believed in. It's important to know that his legacy gift is our way of being involved and helping WPC grow and do the work that you do. He was able to invest in a better place for his children and grandchildren to live, even after he was gone.

**WPC:** What value does WPC bring to our state?

**Susan:** Common sense. Thorough research. It's not one-sided. You look at the facts and communicate your findings very well to people across the state.

**WPC:** What do you enjoy most about your Legacy Partner membership?

**Susan:** Just knowing that I'm helping to support the free-market, common sense work that you do would be enough, but attending your Annual Dinners and celebrating freedom with hundreds of like-minded people in the same room is the icing on the cake. I attended both the Spokane and Bellevue dinners this year. The Bellevue Solutions Summit was also excellent.

If you have already included Washington Policy Center in your estate plans, please let us know so we can recognize your commitment to our shared ideals.

Please contact WPC's Development Director, Sydney Jansen at [sjansen@washingtonpolicy.org](mailto:sjansen@washingtonpolicy.org) or (206) 937-9691 to learn more about how you can include WPC in your estate plans.

# A mileage tax is an invasion of your privacy and wallet



**BY MARIYA FROST, Director, Coles Center for Transportation**



**This article was originally published in *The Seattle Times***

State transportation officials say they want to impose a tax on every mile you drive. A test of the new tax, which officials call a Road Usage Charge, begins in early 2018. Led by the Washington State Transportation Commission (WSTC), the pilot project will simulate what it could be like for drivers to pay a tax on every mile they drive and, officials hope, get the public to accept the new tax.

**The Seattle Times**



The commission claims this would be a replacement and not a supplement to the gas tax, although they also say the gas tax would likely stay in place to ensure that out-of-state drivers pay for their use of Washington state roads.

Despite admitting uncertainty about the future, transportation officials seem absolutely certain there will be a fuel-tax revenue crisis. The commission blames fuel-efficient and electric vehicles for government projections of slowing in the increase of yearly fuel-tax revenue. They insist a mileage tax will ensure everyone pays for the roads they use.

In principle, the commission is right — everyone should help pay for their use of roads. The good news is that we already do, and with reasonable voter-approved adjustments, can continue to do so into the future.

Washington state drivers already pay the second highest gas tax in the nation, a combined state and federal total of 67.8 cents per gallon. The last 11.9 cent hike was approved just two years ago to fund the \$16-billion, 16-year Connecting Washington transportation package. In addition to the gas-tax increase, the annual renewal fee for electric vehicles increased by 50 percent to \$150. Despite these significant increases, transportation officials still say they do not get enough money.

Even a continued increase in the gas tax seems unpalatable to the commission. Despite this, the commissioners say they want a mileage tax. What makes the mileage tax so appealing to them? A recent interview on TVW's "The Impact" sheds some light.

On Sept. 27, the WSTC's Executive Director Reema Griffith was asked if a mileage tax could be leveraged to "influence motorist behavior" to achieve "social objectives" like "reducing energy use, greenhouse gas emissions and congestion, or encouraging transit use." These social objectives were pulled directly from the WSTC's own 2013 study.

Griffith complained the gas tax is too "one dimensional." Government is not able to collect enough private data about driving behavior. She states, "We don't know who's filling, what kind of car it's going in, what your car's mileage is, we don't know anything. So we're kind of blind and it's just collected and we're done, it's a flat rate."

From the public's perspective, that is exactly why the gas tax is the best method of payment for roads. It is simple. It is cheap to collect. It respects our privacy. It is also protected by the state's 18th Amendment, ensuring that the tax drivers pay is used for highways. It's understandable that government officials like Griffith say they feel "blind," perceiving this as a loss of control over private information and money, but that is a gain for the freedom of the traveling public.

A mileage tax, Griffith explained, creates a "three-dimensional world where ... we'll understand how you're driving — does the fact that you now know how much you pay for a trip change how many trips you make? That's something we're going to learn in the pilot ... It opens the door for policymakers to start rethinking maybe — what are our policy objectives for transportation?" Those objectives, however, should not be set by politicians, but by drivers.

In response to a later question, Griffith adds, "If they want to layer on some different objectives for maybe urban areas or to invest in all-weather roads or enhance snow removal on the pass ... they can consider different rates in certain zones or certain locations. It kind of opens the door to all that again."

That is one "door" many drivers do not want to see the government open — ever — particularly in a state where transportation policy is increasingly driven by political ideology rather than the actual public demand. The opportunity government officials see in the mileage tax is also the reason this will likely not be a "replacement" for the gas tax, because the mileage tax would serve an entirely different function.

The gas tax has been around for decades because it works. It generates billions in revenue for roads and gives taxpayers power over increases. A mileage tax could deteriorate this clear and fair system at a great social cost to the traveling public — potentially circumventing 18th amendment revenue protections, violating people's privacy and giving government unrestricted power over how drivers' tax money is spent.

# “Urban enviro-imperialism” is harming state water management policy



**BY MADILYNNE CLARK, Agriculture Policy Research Director**



Due to a long heritage of farming in the West with little water, and the habit of saving formed because of the Great Depression, my grandparents are some of the most water conscious people I know.

They set timers on the sprinklers in their gardens, limit baths to one inch deep and when my grandpa is concerned about low water in the well, he imposes a “save a flush” mandate in the house.

As a result of this training, I am still shocked when rural communities and families are accused by the courts of neglecting this precious resource and are subjected to the whims and untested “solutions” demanded by urban environmental advocates.

Environmental expert Myron Ebell, who grew up, like me, in rural Oregon, describes the trend of a population with no connection to rural life believing they have superior knowledge and ability to manage rural communities and the environment, calling it “urban enviro-imperialism.”

Whatcom County and all of Washington state are experiencing that trend because of the Hirst decision issued last year.

Orchestrated by Futurewise, an urban-growth management advocacy group, the ruling in *Whatcom County v. Western Washington Growth Management Hearings Board* (called the Hirst decision) has imposed a large cost on rural communities and families for little measurable benefit to water resources and salmon.

Instead of negotiating an equitable solution for permit-exempt wells, the plaintiffs used their urban and activist support to push a policy decision through the courts. As Justice Stephens’ dissenting opinion stated, “This is not a policy decision we [the court] are at liberty to make.”

Hirst left rural families to bear an excessive burden without having any input in the so-called solution that the courts imposed on them.

Consequences of Hirst are real and painful for many families, but their concerns are dismissed or brushed aside by some politicians. A new study by the Building Industry Association of Washington estimates our state will lose \$6.9 billion in economic activity annually due to Hirst, predominantly in rural communities. This is a high cost, especially when rural areas are still recovering from the Great Recession.

Additional costs of Hirst include \$452.3 million in lost wages, nearly 9,300 lost jobs, \$37 billion in lost property values, and \$400 million in lost state and local taxes. Senate supporters of a “fix” for these high costs have been attacked for putting the state government’s biennial capital budget on hold until a solution to the Hirst decision is found.

However, is this attack against a Hirst fix fair, when the \$4 billion capital budget is compared to the much larger economic consequences of Hirst, held hostage by urban enviro-imperialists?

Supporters of the Hirst decision point to potential benefits to salmon and watershed resources, but when the Hirst decision has effectively prohibited permit-exempt wells which account for less than one percent of Washington’s total water use, our focus would be better spent elsewhere. The Department of Ecology already regulates the impacts of permit-exempt wells under our state’s water law.

At the heart of the matter is the question of, “Who has a say in caring for our resources?” The storyline that has played out since last October shows that using the court system to push through one-sided policy motivated by urban desires without rural input, is a poor approach for our state.

Hirst has not improved our water resources. Instead, the last year has polarized the issue of water rights and Washington state is farther from achieving improved water management through collaborative efforts.

A better solution would advocate for a Hirst fix like the one championed by Senate Republicans, so rural communities won’t bear an excessive burden because of urban whims. Advocating for a practical Hirst fix would advance future efforts to improve water management, as all concerned parties would feel they have a say in caring for our water resources.

Moving forward, Washington state must remember all citizens need a say in managing our state’s resources, not just those backed by urban advocacy groups.



# Washington Policy Center's new CENTER *for* WORKER RIGHTS

By ERIN SHANNON Director, Center for Worker Rights



Thanks to start-up funding from a generous supporter, Washington Policy Center will ring in the New Year by opening an eighth research center that will focus on promoting worker rights and reforming how labor unions operate in our state.

Over the years, it has become clear that opposition to many of the free-market policy reforms recommended by WPC—across a broad range of issues from improving the state's small business climate, to solving the transportation crisis, to reforming the education system, to reducing government spending and increasing transparency—share a common denominator. The primary obstacle to reform is the powerful special interest group that is organized labor.

Labor unions exert an astonishing level of influence on policymaking in our state. Each legislative session, dozens of good bills die in committee on no more than the spoken opposition of a powerful union insider.

Why do labor unions, especially those in the public sector, enjoy such influence? Because Washington is a forced-unionism state. Workers in our state, including those who work for government, must pay union dues and fees in order to get and keep a job in a workplace represented by a union. Whether those workers want to be represented by a union is irrelevant; they have no rights and no choice. They are forced to pay the union or find another job. The union does not even have to do the collecting; the government automatically takes the money from each worker's paycheck and gives it to the union. Workers never even see their earnings before it is diverted to the union.

Unions then use those forcibly extracted dollars to elect lawmakers, including the governor, who will support their agenda. Those elected officials pass policies that in turn increase unions' power; and the cycle of special interest corruption continues.

It is not a coincidence that as private sector union membership has dropped, union membership in the public sector has swelled. That has been an important part of lawmakers' payback to the unions that helped elect them.

This symbiotic relationship between public sector unions and lawmakers has created an imbalance of power, fed by taxpayer dollars.

The new Center for Worker Rights will promote labor reform policies to end forced unionism, protect worker rights and restore a more reasonable balance of power in our state.

WPC is not alone in believing the time has come to end organized labor's exploitation of workers. Last year, the U.S. Supreme Court was poised to render a crippling blow to labor unions in a case that challenged the forced unionization of public school teachers.



Rebecca Friedrichs speaks at WPC's 2017 Annual Dinner in Spokane

Tired of her union's uncompromising policies that hurt children and teachers, educator Rebecca Friedrichs challenged the forced unionization of public school teachers in the landmark case, *Friedrichs v. California Teachers Association*. Most constitutional experts, legal pundits, the media, and even union leaders, agreed the Court would likely end the forced unionization of public employees.

Unfortunately, the *Friedrichs* case went unresolved after Justice Scalia unexpectedly passed away just one month after oral arguments. But it has paved the way for other cases reviving the legal challenge to the forced unionization of public workers.

The U.S. Supreme Court will soon hear *Janus v. the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees*. The case resurrects Friedrichs' legal arguments against the forced unionization of public workers. If the Court rules in favor of Mark Janus, which appears likely, public employees in the 22 non right-to-work states, like Washington, will no longer be forced to choose between paying the union or keeping their jobs. Every public employee in the nation will be free to choose.

Landmark legal cases in the nation's highest court are not the only recourse for meaningful labor reform. Three Lincoln County Commissioners in Eastern Washington bravely took on labor unions to open up their County's secret collective bargaining process. They believe the public's right to know trumps any union claim of privacy when it comes to negotiating government employees' wages and benefits—which are, after all, funded by taxpayer dollars. Now Kittitas County and two school districts in our state have followed in their footsteps, and several more local governments are considering similar reforms.

Clearly the time is right for labor reform. Our Center for Worker Rights will work with other national and state organizations, such as the Freedom Foundation, that are also dedicated to ending the collusion between the government and labor unions. Together we can protect the rights of all workers in Washington state. To learn more, please contact me at [eshannon@washingtonpolicy.org](mailto:eshannon@washingtonpolicy.org) or (360) 705-6543.



Rebecca Friedrichs receives WPC's 2017 Champion of Freedom award

# Ending the union's skim of home health care wages



**BY ERIN SHANNON, Director, Center for Worker Rights**



I recently published a study on the SEIU union's practice of skimming money from the wages of home health care workers. The key findings are below, and you can read the full Policy Brief at [www.washingtonpolicy.org](http://www.washingtonpolicy.org).

## Key Findings

1. In 1999, the Service Employees International Union (SEIU) began a state-by-state political effort to change the classification of in-home health care and day care providers from private-sector workers to public-sector. Reclassification as a public-sector employee meant the state would technically be considered their employer, and unions could require that those workers join the union and pay dues or agency fees.
2. Under the cover of collecting union "dues" or "agency fees," SEIU has arranged for some states, like Washington, to automatically take a portion of the more than \$41 billion the government sends every year to individual Medicaid recipients and the \$11.4 billion of taxpayer dollars spent on the Child Care and Development Fund and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families programs.
3. These arrangements result in the misuse by SEIU of hundreds of millions of dollars annually in public money that is meant to provide assistance to elderly, ill or disabled individuals and low-income families. This happens in 11 states, including Washington.
4. Washington automatically extracts 3.2 percent of the earnings of home health care providers and two percent from home day care providers and sends it to SEIU.
5. The SEIU dues skim of Medicaid benefits from Washington state's home health care providers alone amounts to a staggering \$27 million for SEIU 775 each year. The dues taken from the state's day care providers generated several more million each year for SEIU 925.
6. The U.S. Supreme Court ruled in *Harris v. Quinn* that designating providers as public employees only for the purposes of unionization makes them "partial public employees" who cannot be forced to participate in a union or pay union dues or agency fees.
7. SEIU strongly opposed the Court's ruling, and has aggressively worked to prevent workers from exercising their right not to pay union dues or fees. SEIU "dues skims" are still active in 11 states, including Washington.
8. Given the union's determination to figure out ways around the *Harris v. Quinn* decision, the time is right for the Trump Administration to issue definitive rules that protect the rights of workers and end the SEIU dues skim.

**Read the complete Policy Brief at [www.washingtonpolicy.org/centers/detail/center-for-worker-rights](http://www.washingtonpolicy.org/centers/detail/center-for-worker-rights)**

# Overview of public school choice programs



**BY LIV FINNE, Director, Center for Education**



Here are the key findings and introduction to my new study on public school choice programs. You can read the full Policy Brief at [www.washingtonpolicy.org](http://www.washingtonpolicy.org).

## Key Findings

1. School choice programs let parents, rather than government officials, decide which learning options are best for their children.
2. School choice is much more common today than in the past; in many states it is a routine part of the public education system.
3. All states and the District of Columbia offer families some form of school choice.
4. About one-fifth of students in the United States benefit from school choice.
5. In Washington state, officials ban many popular forms of school choice, compared to other states.
6. The primary obstacles to education reform are public-sector unions that profit from a closed, monopoly-type system.
7. School choice is not a threat to families that are happy with their local public school.
8. However, for families trapped in failing public schools, educational choice offers a way out.

## Introduction

This paper provides an overview of how elementary, middle and high school students benefit from school choice in the United States and in Washington state.

School choice programs are much more common today than in the past, and in many states these programs are seen as a routine part of the public education system. A school choice program is one in which parents and families, rather than government officials, decide which educational options are best for their children.

Allowing parents to choose a school that meets their child's educational needs is a powerful and popular idea, and state officials have created a robust variety of school choice programs across the country. Many families find choice to be a better way to access publicly-funded education than being arbitrarily assigned to a school based on their zip code.

**Read the complete Policy Brief at [www.washingtonpolicy.org/centers/detail/center-for-education](http://www.washingtonpolicy.org/centers/detail/center-for-education)**

# Unconstitutional environmental measure rejected in Spokane, Ag Farm Halls and informing tax reform



**BY CHRIS CARGILL, Director, Eastern Washington Office**



Voters in the state's second largest city have overwhelmingly turned down a first-of-its-kind resolution that would have effectively blocked the rail shipment of oil and coal through Spokane. Proposition 2 failed by a 42-58% vote in this year's general election.

The measure would almost certainly have faced a constitutional challenge, and would likely have had a devastating economic effect on the Spokane community and the state. Washington Policy Center's in-depth analysis, which was featured in newspaper and radio coverage on the ballot measure, found a potentially harmful impact on the environment and local roadways.

Proponents, however, said Proposition 2 was needed because of oil train accidents in other parts of the country and in Canada. They also sought to reduce the availability of fossil-burning fuels throughout the world.

The measure was sponsored by the group known as "Safer Spokane." Some in the group and some who supported it were involved in previous attempts to impose extreme environmental restrictions in Spokane's city charter, including three previous failed efforts to adopt a "Community Bill of Rights."

The Community Bill of Rights proposals were pushed by "Envision Spokane," a group created by the Community Environmental Legal Defense Fund (CELDF). The measures sought to create legal rights on behalf of the Spokane River and impose restrictions on Spokane's business landscape. Like Proposition 2, they would have had an equally devastating effect on the economy and on the Spokane community.

The coal and oil train ballot measure, if successful, would have increased conflict and would have put city taxpayers on the hook for hundreds of thousands of dollars in legal fees.

Promoting community conflict and legal disputes appears to be the clear goal of supporters of these continued attempts to force unpopular, unconstitutional and unnecessary environmental restrictions on the people of Spokane.

Thomas Linzey, the founder of the CELDF, said "if a town goes bankrupt trying to defend one of our ordinances, well, perhaps that's exactly what is needed to trigger a national movement."

Fortunately, the voters of Spokane disagree.





WPC's Farm Hall event in the Tri-Cities tackled top issues, from the Hirst decision to the possibility of a carbon tax.

## Farm Halls bring agriculture community together

Agriculture is on the agenda in Eastern Washington throughout the fall and winter months. Not only is WPC traveling around to all of the commodity trade shows to talk with members of the Ag community about our ideas and recommendations, we are proud to be hosting a series of Farm Halls throughout the state.

Started in 2015 by Senators Sharon Brown (Kennewick) and Judy Warnick (Moses Lake), Washington State Farm Hall events have gained a reputation as the place to discuss and learn about major issues facing Washington's agricultural community.

The Pasco, Spokane, and Olympia Farm Halls were attended by more than 150 people in November. Attendees heard from more than a dozen speakers on topics ranging from the Hirst decision to increasing the available pool of Ag workers in Washington state. Learn more about WPC's Initiative on Agriculture at [www.washingtonpolicy.org/centers/detail/the-wpc-initiative-on-agriculture](http://www.washingtonpolicy.org/centers/detail/the-wpc-initiative-on-agriculture).

## Offering advice on much-needed tax reform

Congress is currently debating the first major tax reform since the landmark 1986 tax changes under President Ronald Reagan. This is a historic opportunity for real and meaningful tax relief to help working families and business owners in our state and across the country.

WPC has been pleased to offer our research and ideas to members of our congressional delegation, including Congressman Dan Newhouse who invited us to participate in a roundtable discussion in Prosser.

With many intertwining parts of the tax proposals, it will be important for Congress to get the details right so that taxes are not inadvertently increased. Successful federal tax reform will be permanent, meaningful, and provide tax relief across all income brackets.

In addition, state officials including Governor Jay Inslee, who recently expressed his concern about the tax burden increasing for some Washingtonians, could assist the effort by announcing a reduction in state taxes to complement the federal tax relief effort.



Central Washington Congressman Dan Newhouse hosts a roundtable discussion on federal tax reform in Prosser on October 18th.

“From Mukilteo to Spokane, your advocacy, your analysis, what keeps you going day-in and day-out helps to improve opportunities for families across your state. State-based centers like [WPC] are important in shaping policy because you have great ideas and you fight for them.”

-Secretary of Education **Betsy DeVos**

October 13, 2017 Bellevue, WA



“What I’ve learned is the amazing reputation your organization has across the whole of the United States of America. This is the number one state-based policy research organization in the USA and I congratulate you.”

-European Parliament Member **Nigel Farage**

September 27, 2017, Spokane, WA



**Thank you to all of our supporters who made WPC's 2017 Annual Dinners a success!**

# WASHINGTON POLICY CENTER

## 2017-2018

Mark your calendars for these WPC events!

2017 DECEMBER						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
31					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

- 12/04** - Special Reception:  
A Conversation with  
**Steve Moore** on Tax Reform
- 12/05** - Holiday Donor Appreciation  
Luncheon in Spokane
- 12/14** - Holiday Donor Appreciation  
Luncheon in Seattle

2018 JANUARY						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

- 1/17** - Legislative Lunchbox - Spokane
- 1/18** - January Eastside Breakfast
- 1/22** - Legislative Reception in  
Olympia
- 1/24** - Legislative Lunchbox  
- Wenatchee
- 1/31** - Legislative Lunchbox  
- Tri-Cities

2018 FEBRUARY						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28			

- 2/08** - Annual **Farm to Free Market**  
Dinner - Tri-Cities
- 2/14** - Special Breakfast Event with  
**Michelle Rhee** - Bellevue
- 2/15** - February Eastside Breakfast
- 2/21** - Legislative Lunchbox - Spokane
- 2/28** - Legislative Lunchbox - Tri-Cities

For more details and to register, go to [washingtonpolicy.org/events](http://washingtonpolicy.org/events)





WASHINGTON POLICY CENTER  
[@WAPOLICYCENTER](#)

DANN MEAD SMITH, PRESIDENT  
[@DANNWPC](#)

MADI CLARK, AGRICULTURE  
[@WAPOLICYAG](#)

LIV FINNE, EDUCATION  
[@LIVFINNE](#)

MARIYA FROST, TRANSPORTATION  
[@MARIYAFROST](#)

JASON MERCIER, GOVERNMENT REFORM  
[@OLYMPIAWATCH](#)

TODD MYERS, ENVIRONMENT  
[@WAPOLICYGREEN](#)

ERIN SHANNON, WORKER RIGHTS  
[@WPCSMALLBIZ](#)

[FACEBOOK.COM/WASHINGTON.POLICY.CENTER](#)

[FACEBOOK.COM/WPCYOUNGPROFESSIONALS](#)

[LINKEDIN.COM/COMPANY/WASHINGTON-POLICY-CENTER](#)

