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Resolution in Support of Fixing Washington State's Unfair Tax System

[Original resolution on waliberals.org](http://www.waliberals.org)

WHEREAS, Washington State relies on the sales tax, the Business & Occupation Tax, and property taxes to fund state government (see [A Citizen's Guide to the Washington State Budget](#));

WHEREAS, sales taxes are **regressive** — meaning that the middle class and the poor pay a higher proportion of their income in sales tax than do the well-to-do;

WHEREAS, the Business & Occupation tax is also regressive, because it taxes revenue, not profit, and thus favors profitable corporations over struggling small businesses;

WHEREAS, the Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy says that Washington State has **the most regressive tax system in the nation**: the poorest 20% of non-elderly Washingtonians pay 17% of their income in state taxes; the richest 1% pay under 3% of their income in state taxes. ([source](#));

WHEREAS, the state desperately needs a reliable source of funds to pay for education pursuant to the State Supreme Court decision in the McCleary case, which declares that the legislature is underfunding K-12 education;

WHEREAS, in recent years the state has had to slash funding for social services and for higher education, causing real suffering among vulnerable people, threatening our prosperity and safety, and drastically raising the cost of a college education;

WHEREAS, when voters in 2010 rejected I-1098, the initiative to establish a high earners' income tax in Washington State, most voters were voting against their own self-interest, because only the richest 2% of citizens would have seen their taxes rise;

WHEREAS, our political leaders are averse to discussing the issue, and only a few advocacy groups have spoken up about it;

WHEREAS, as of November 18, 2013, over 3800 people have signed the MoveOn.org petition [Let's fix our unfair tax system in Washington State](#), and hundreds of those signers wrote passionate comments which you can read [here](#);

WHEREAS, there are proposals under discussion to institute a carbon tax, a capital gains tax, and a [tax expenditure budget](#);

WHEREAS, the last time the governor and the legislature undertook a thorough investigation of the tax system was in 2002, with the [Gates Commission](#) hearings;

WHEREAS, a tax study commission that holds hearings around the state and makes recommendations to the governor and legislature would raise awareness of these issues and increase the likelihood of action being taken to fix our unfair tax system;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the 30th District Democrats endorse the creation of a new tax study commission and ask Governor Inslee and the legislators to address the issue of fair taxation in speeches, in newsletters, and via legislation.

Approved on January 8, 2014 by the 30th District Democrats

Tim Burns

Tim Burns, Chair