

## WSPTA Opposes I-645 and encourages a No vote

Washington State PTA · November 2026 General Election

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### The Bottom Line for Kids

Initiative 645 repeals the state's 9.9% tax on household income over \$1,000,000.

Passing I-645 would remove an estimated \$11.4 billion from state revenue over fiscal years 2027–2031. That is money that directly supports childcare, early learning, food assistance, health coverage, and family stability programs, the supports that help kids arrive at school ready to learn.

### The Reality Behind the Ballot Title

The ballot measure may sound simple, but its public investment disclosure specifically notes that it reduces funding available for K-12 public education, higher education, and vital community services like healthcare.

Slashing billions from the state general fund puts public school districts—many of which are already grappling with budget deficits—at immediate risk of further program cuts and overcrowded classrooms.

### A Broad and Restrictive Prohibition

I-645 does not just repeal the 2026 high-earner tax; it permanently bans state, county, and municipal governments from ever using income-based revenue tools.

Tying the hands of future lawmakers and local communities prevents Washington from developing stable, equitable funding structures that support children and schools in the future.

Legal experts' opinions differ around how I-645 would impact current revenue streams creating troubling uncertainty.

### Why PTA Took a Stance

WSPTA's advocacy mandate is straightforward: advocate for the health, safety, and education of every child in Washington.

While the WSPTA often evaluates individual budget bills cautiously, we determined that actively stripping billions from a budget already headed for cuts through an initiative repeal puts kids and families at risk.

## Clarifying the Vote

Because I-645 is a repeal measure, the wording can be counterintuitive:

- **A "NO" vote** protects existing funding mechanisms for vital programs for Washington's kids by keeping current tax law in place.
- **A "YES" vote** Cuts state revenue for services kids and families rely on by repealing the tax law.

## Short Elevator Pitch (30 Seconds)

*"Washington public schools are already facing critical funding challenges, and Initiative 645 would make it worse by taking an estimated \$11.4 billion out of state revenues over four years. That revenue could support our classrooms, educators, and early learning programs. The Washington State PTA Board of Directors voted to oppose I-645 because our kids cannot afford another massive cut to vital programs like healthcare, food assistance, and childcare."*

Here are plain-talk talking points drawn directly from the Washington State PTA position statement to share with neighbors, parents, and community members:

- **What Initiative 645 does:** It repeals the "Millionaire's Tax" passed earlier in 2026 and permanently bans any individual income tax at the state, county, and city levels.
- **It wipes out over \$11 billion in future state revenue:** The state estimates repeal will eliminate \$11.4 billion between 2027 and 2031—specifically about \$3.1 billion from the upcoming 2027–29 budget and \$8.3 billion from the 2029–31 budget.
- **It ties communities' hands forever:** I-645 doesn't just cancel one tax; it establishes an extraordinarily broad definition of income and bans every local city, county, and school community from ever using income-based revenue tools in the future. Because the initiative demands courts interpret its restrictions as broadly as possible, it invites years of costly litigation and uncertainty over existing local revenue.
- **First on the chopping block-Vital programs for kids and families:** Washington's constitution only legally protects narrowly defined "basic education." Non-basic services sit directly in

the general fund where cuts happen when budgets are short, putting childcare, early learning, school meals, youth mental health, and family support programs at immediate risk.

- **Childcare takes an immediate, guaranteed hit:** Five percent of the Millionaire's Tax is dedicated to the Fair Start for Kids account. Passing I-645 immediately terminates \$377 million designated for early learning and childcare in 2029–31 alone.
- **Public schools are already running on empty:** Adjusted for inflation, state per-student funding is down roughly \$582 since its 2019 peak, while essential costs like insurance have surged by nearly \$50 million a year. Essential school needs—such as building maintenance and school meals—fall outside the protected "basic education" budget.

**WSPTA's bottom line:** Cutting \$11.4 billion forces public schools and children's programs to fight over a drastically smaller pie while facing existing severe deficits. That is why the WSPTA urges a NO on Initiative 645.