

# It's time to Balance Our Tax Code!

## 2021 LEGISLATIVE PLATFORM



In Washington, we move forward by pulling together, no matter our race or income level. But for generations wealthy corporations and special interests have fought for laws aimed at lining their own pockets and keeping wealth out of the hands of Black, Indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC) communities, working people, and small businesses.

The COVID-19 health and economic crises have magnified those existing and deeply rooted inequities. More than 25% of adults in Washington are facing difficulty meeting household expenses and hundreds of thousands of people are out of work.

In the 2021 legislative session, state elected leaders must act with urgency to build a tax system that enables us to meet the needs of all Washingtonians, no exceptions.

## Policies We Support

**Balance Our Tax Code supports a broad set of policies that align with our vision of a more just and equitable state tax code, such as:**

***Closing the tax break on capital gains***, so that the wealthiest Washingtonians pay a modest excise tax on profits they gain from the sales of stocks, bonds and other valuable financial assets.

***Tax large, profitable corporations*** through new payroll or excise taxes on salaries paid to highly-compensated employees.

***Reforming Washington's estate tax*** to close loopholes and raise rates on certain high-value estates.

***Reinstating a state inheritance tax*** so that the beneficiaries of multi-million dollar inheritances contribute to public investments like the schools where our kids learn and the parks we play in.

***Enacting a state Recovery Rebate***, through a simplified and inclusive Working Families Tax Credit that would provide cash directly to Washington families most in need.

This is not intended to be a comprehensive list, and BOTC recognizes that other revenue proposals are also underway for the 2021 legislative session. We broadly stand in support of new, progressive revenue that aligns with our values and evaluation criteria.



Please contact Emily Parzybok at [emily@balanceourtaxcode.com](mailto:emily@balanceourtaxcode.com) for more information!

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## Our Guiding Policy Principles



### Racial Equity

Tax policies should proactively create equitable access to a high quality of life and resources for communities of color — especially Black, Indigenous, and Latin/x communities.



### Invest in the future

Our tax system should raise new revenue - over the long-term - to bolster and sustain public investments as well as build reserves for future economic downturns.



### Economic Justice

Tax policies should reduce the impact of our upside-down tax code on BIPOC and other low-income households most impacted by the COVID-19 public health and economic crises. Policies should create new, robust investments in the things we all rely on, like vibrant schools where our kids learn, roads we drive on, and buses we take to work.



### Progressivity

Tax policies should ensure that those who are doing well in Washington do right by Washingtonians. Those with more income and wealth should contribute a larger share of their resources to support public investments than those with less.

## Policy Evaluation Criteria

**In the 2021 state legislative session, we will evaluate tax policy proposals using the following questions:**

- 1** Does the proposal align to and advance the principles outlined above?
- 2** Was the policy proposal developed in consultation with those most impacted by Washington's upside-down tax code, including families with low-incomes, Black, Indigenous and other people of color, and immigrants and refugees?
- 3** Will the proposal have unintended consequences for BIPOC communities, low-income workers, or small businesses?
- 4** Will revenue generated by this proposal be invested in needs identified by low-income and Black, Indigenous and other communities of color?



Balance Our Tax Code is Washington's longest standing revenue coalition with more than 40 labor unions, non-profits, immigrant rights advocates, human service providers, and more. Our vision is a more just and equitable tax code for Washington state that creates a strong future where communities have the resources they need to thrive.

