



WASHINGTON LOW INCOME  
**Housing Alliance**

# **Housing Washington 2014**

## ***A New Era Of Housing Advocacy***

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# Session Overview

Today we will cover...

- The State and Federal Landscape
- What's At Stake
- New Messengers and Voices
- Innovative Advocacy Strategies

# The Housing Alliance



*Everyone should have the opportunity to live in a safe, healthy and affordable home in a community that thrives with opportunity.*



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# The Landscape

The State's next legislative session begins on  
Monday, January 12<sup>th</sup>

2015 is the beginning of new  
biennial budget cycle.

Lawmakers are tasked with creating the next  
budget, which goes into effect on July 1<sup>st</sup> 2015.



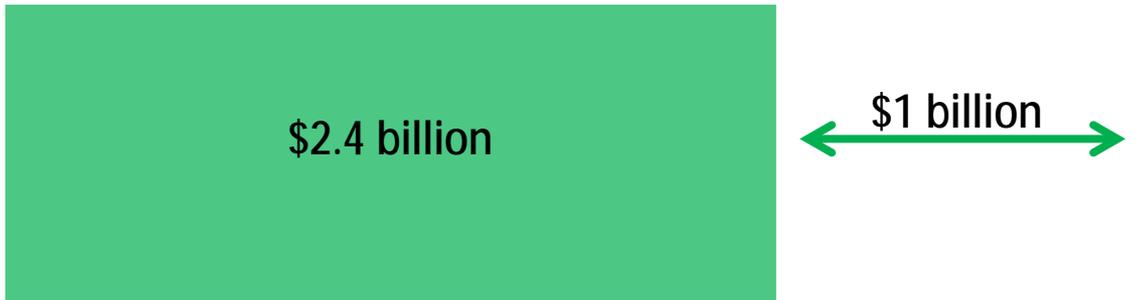
# The Landscape

**Overview of current state  
budget assumptions**

# Preliminary 2015–17 Operating Budget Outlook

Near General Fund (GF-State, Education Legacy Trust Account, Opportunity Pathways Account)

## Projected Additional Revenue



## Projected Additional Spending Needs

<p><b>Maintenance &amp; Carry Forward</b> Estimated \$1.7 billion</p> <p>Includes \$647M to continue FY 2015 appropriation level.</p> <p>Maintenance level estimate includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•\$175M low-income health care</li> <li>•\$215M K-12 education</li> <li>•\$150M mental health, DD, long-term care</li> </ul>	<p>\$339M pension costs</p>	<p>\$200M debt service</p>	<p>\$308M employee health care</p>	<p>\$216M I-732 COLA</p>	<p><b>Policy Enhancements</b> \$600M includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•early learning</li> <li>•higher education</li> <li>•state employee and higher education salaries</li> <li>•all other policy enhancements</li> </ul>	<p><b>\$1.2 billion –\$2 billion</b> McCleary</p>
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# Estimated Impact of I-1351

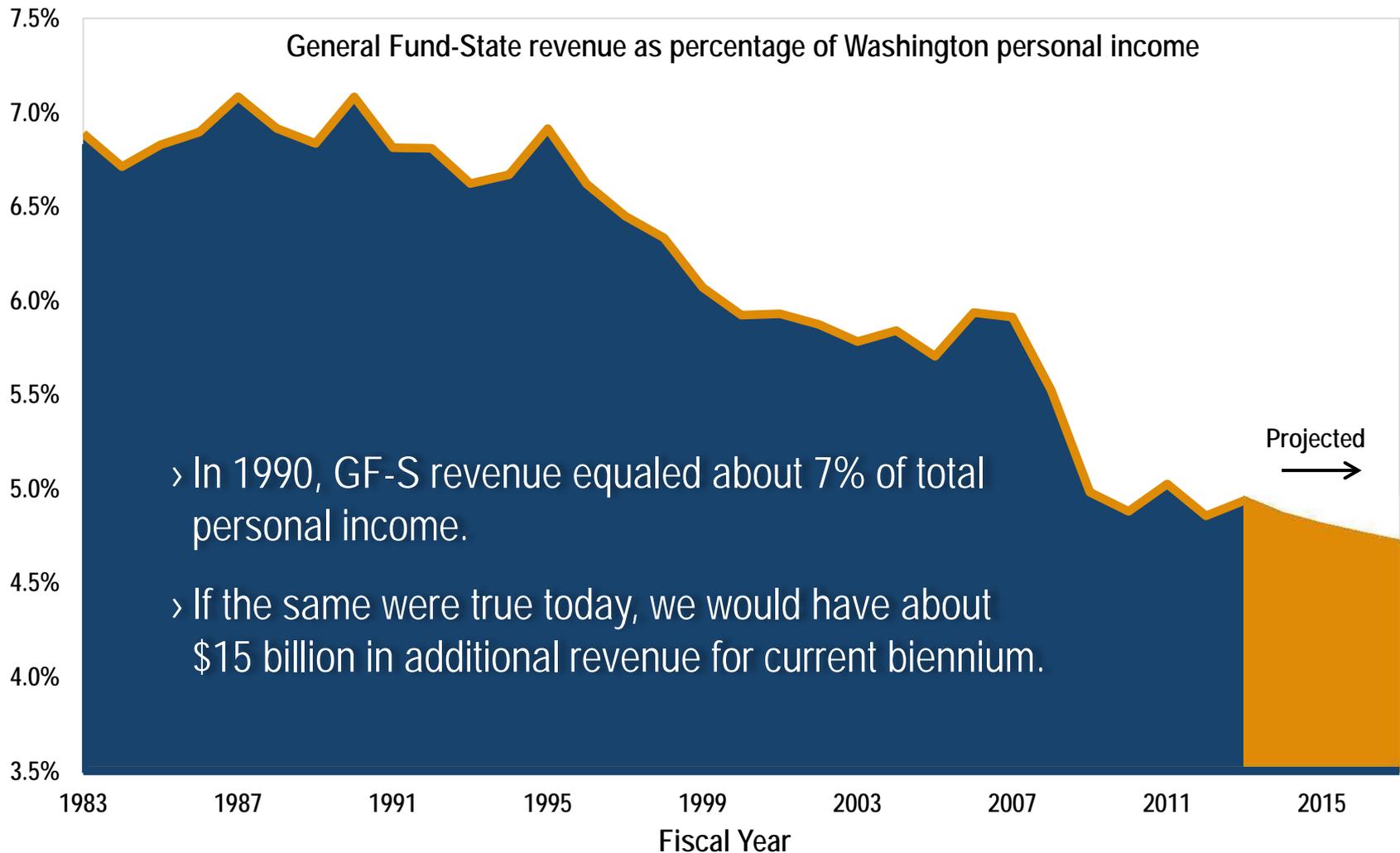
Table 1: Summary of State Expenditures Under I-1351 Dollars in Millions (rounded to 10 millions)

State Fiscal Years

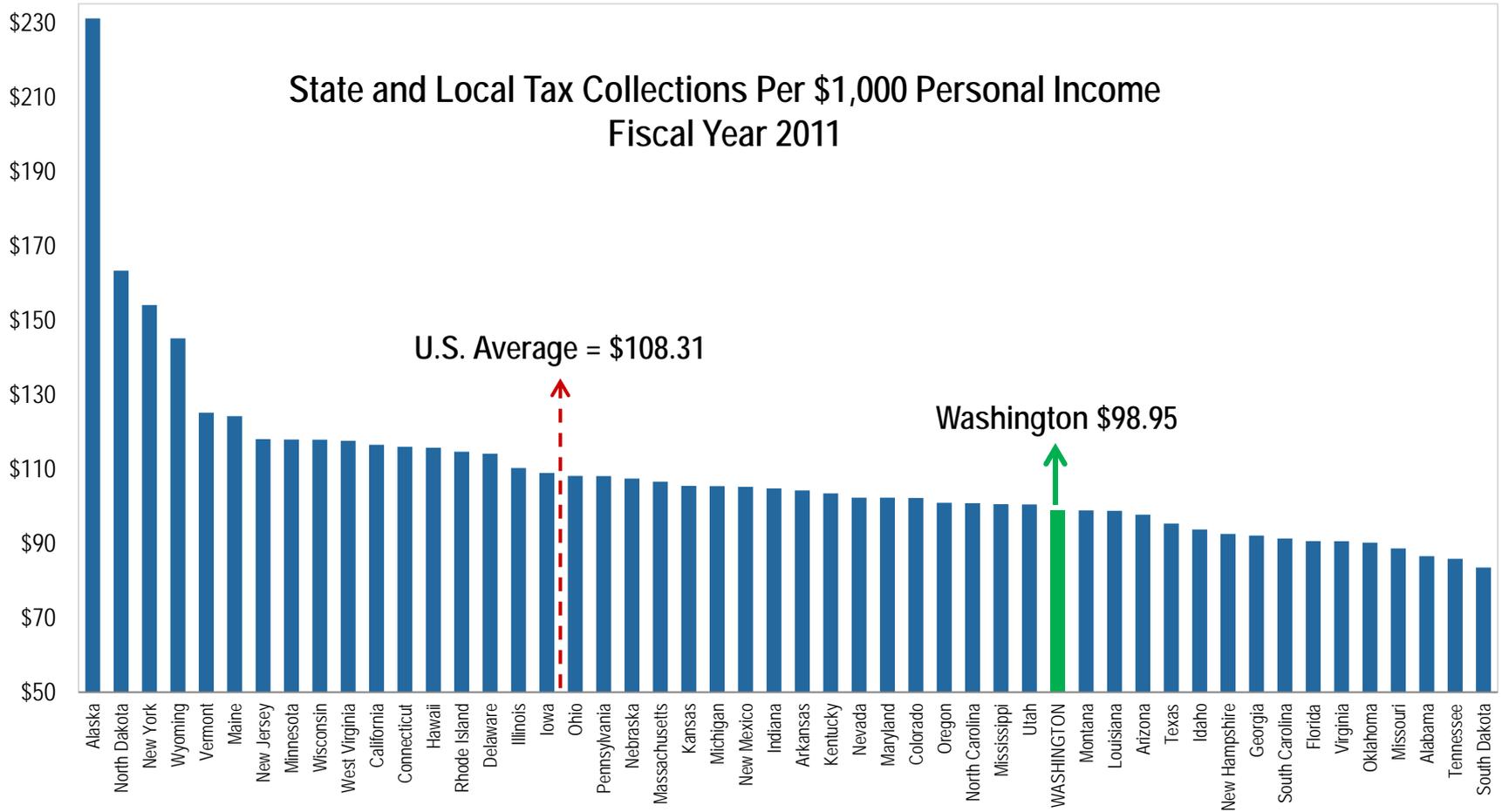
Component	2015*	2016	2017	2018	2019	TOTAL
Phase-in changes to state funding formulas	\$0	\$890	\$1,090	\$890	\$1,620	\$4,490
Higher levy equalization payments	\$0	\$0	\$60	\$80	\$70	\$210
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$890</b>	<b>\$1,150</b>	<b>\$970</b>	<b>\$1,690</b>	<b>\$4,700</b>

\*The requirements of I-1351 do not start until after fiscal year 2015 is completed.

# *Revenue collections are at historically low levels when compared to our overall economy*



# ***In 1995, Washington ranked 11<sup>th</sup> in state and local tax collections ... By 2011, we ranked 35<sup>th</sup>***



Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis and Census Bureau  
U.S. Department of Commerce



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# The Landscape

## Federal Funding

- Congress passed \$1.012 trillion Continuing Resolution to fund the government through December 11
- Congress will return on November 12 to continue work on FY 2015 budget
- The overall spending level is already set through the Murray-Ryan deal; but allocations for each appropriations subcommittee and spending on individual programs still needs to be determined.



# The Landscape

## Federal Funding

Three main options:

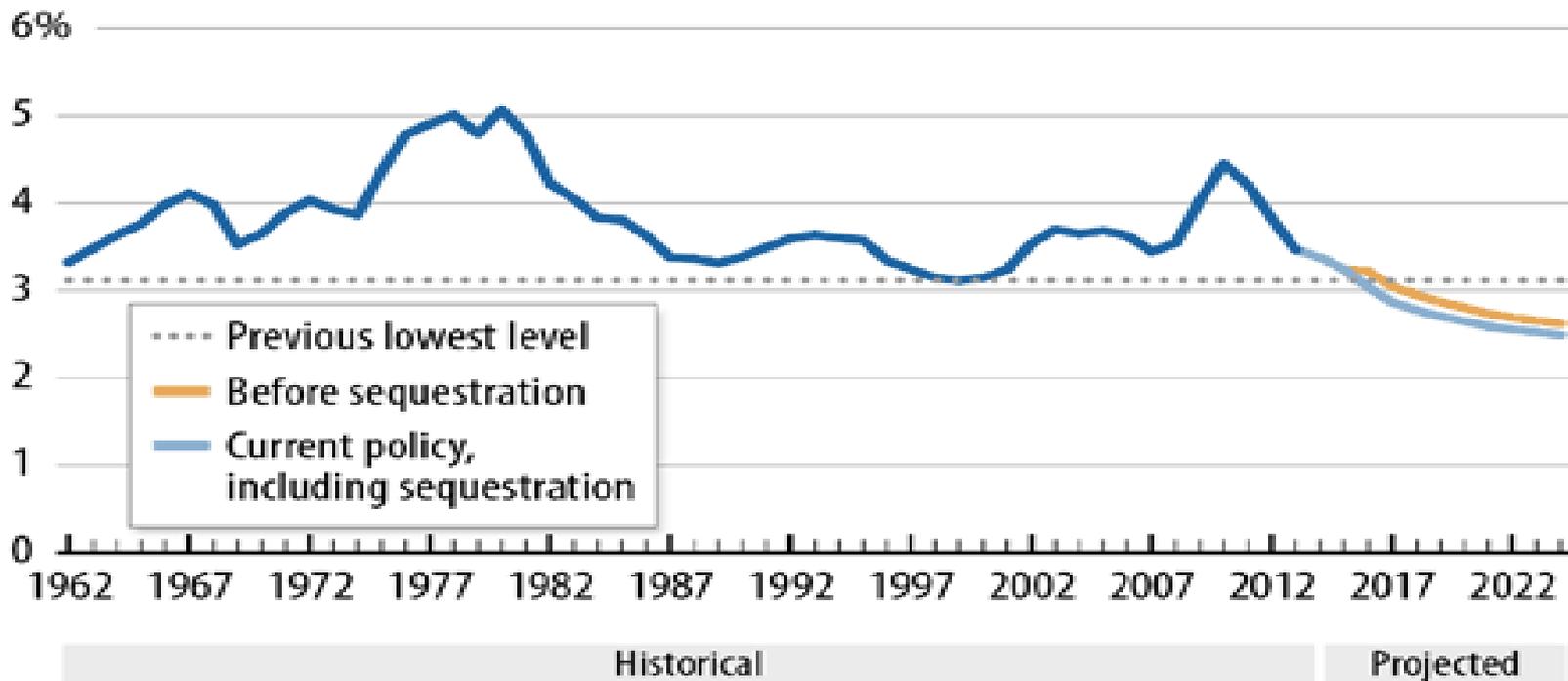
1. The lame duck Congress agrees on a budget for FY2015
2. Congress could pass a short-term continuing resolution with the goal of returning in January and resuming the debates under the new Congress
3. Congress could pass a full-year continuing resolution, with all programs funded at FY2014 levels



# The Landscape Federal Funding

## Non-Defense Discretionary Spending Set to Fall Below Historical Low

Non-defense discretionary spending as a percent of gross domestic product



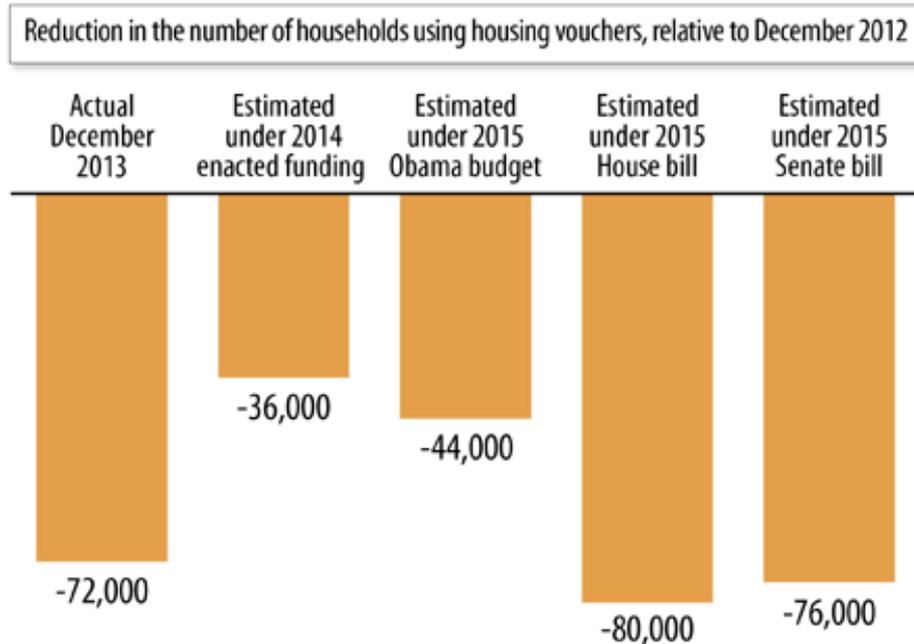
Source: CBPP estimates based on Office of Management and Budget and Congressional Budget Office data.



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# The Landscape Sequestration's Toll

## Senate Housing Funding Bill Improves on House But Still Risks Locking in Large Voucher Losses



Note: Figures for 2014 and 2015 are CBPP estimates for the calendar year from Department of Housing and Urban Development data and exclude households using new homeless veterans' and tenant protection vouchers that Congress funded separately for 2013 and 2014 and will fund for 2015. Figures for 2015 assume that housing agencies address funding shortfalls solely by reducing the number of families served.

Source: CBPP analysis of HUD data.

- **Nationwide: 90,000 Fewer Vouchers as of March, 2013**
- **1,312 fewer in Washington State as of December, 2013 (- 2.61%)**
- **Vouchers are just part of the story**

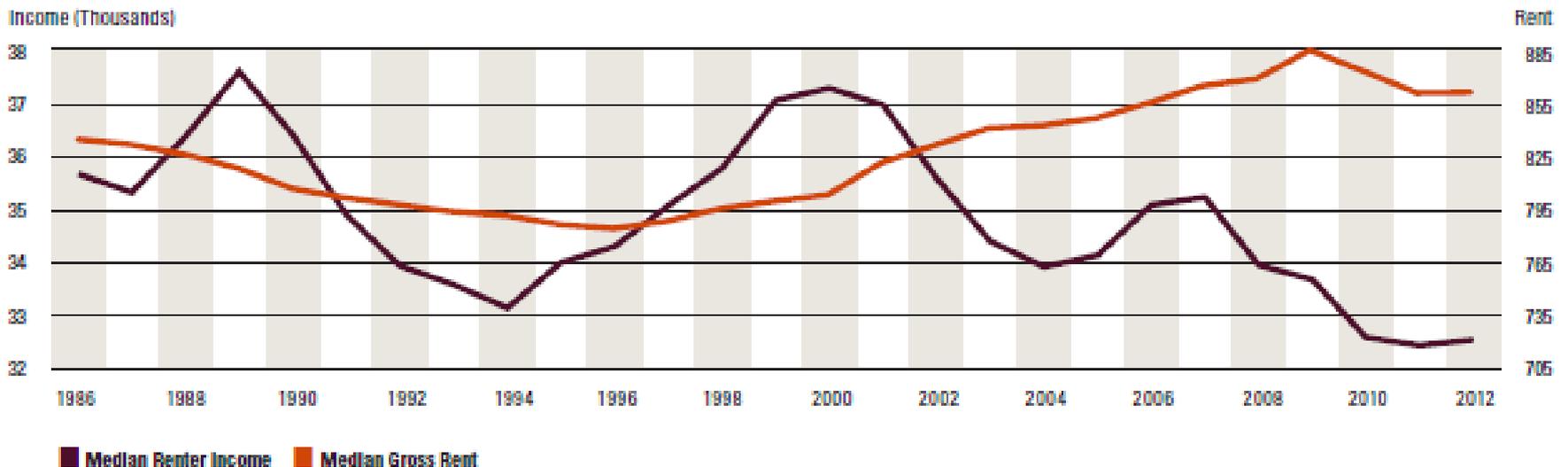


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# The Landscape

## Growing Need

- 1/3 of all American households are cost-burdened
- Close to 50% of renter households are cost-burdened
- More than one in four renter households are *severely cost-burdened*





# The Landscape November Elections

In November, voters will decide who controls the State Senate.

Will Champions for Affordable Housing lead the Senate?



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# Questions on the landscape?



# What's at Stake?

## The 2015 Housing Agenda

- Major capital investment in the Housing Trust Fund
- Medicaid benefit for tenancy support services in permanent supportive housing
- Fair Tenant Screening Act
- Housing & Essential Needs and Aged, Blind & Disabled Programs, as well as SSI Facilitation
- Source of Income Discrimination
- And more

# Advocacy Works

## Case Study from 2014



### Editorial: The homeless are victims of legislative malpractice

The homeless need a voice to speak up for them in the Washington state Legislature, not to make their plight worse.

*Seattle Times Editorial*

STATE Sen. Jan Angel's willingness to kill a bill that would help the homeless is wrong. Senate leaders have less than a week in the legislative session to fix the Port Orchard Republican's blunder.

A Feb. 27 audio recording of the Senate Financial Institutions, Housing and Insurance Committee captured an awkward exchange during which co-chair Angel abruptly cut off the meeting before the panel could vote on ESHB 2368. The proposal, which is opposed by the real-estate industry, keeps in place a modest \$40 document-recording fee for homebuyers.

Angel, a former real-estate agent herself, adjourned over the objections of a fellow Republican and Democrats, who announced they had reached a compromise to renew the surcharge with a sunset clause. Angel's spokeswoman said the senator feels the bill "still needed more work."

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E-mail article

Print





# New Messengers More Voices

Lawmakers care what voters think.

Advocates can change  
the way a lawmaker votes.

But lawmakers only hear from a limited number,  
and a limited set, of people.



# New Messengers More Voices

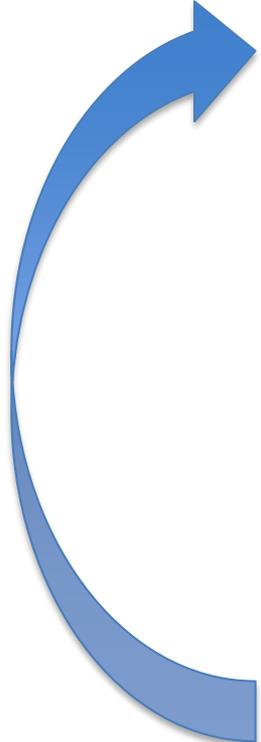
*You can help change this.*

What role do your board members play?

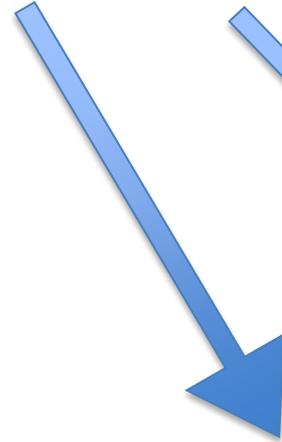
What role do your clients play?

What role does your staff play?

Do you engage?



**Housing  
Organization**



**Your Mission**



**Your Community**

**Think about all the ways public policy impacts your organization – is the opposite true as well?**

Residents  
and  
Clients

Executive  
Director



**Housing  
Organization**

Staff

Board of  
Directors



# New Messengers More Voices

Board of  
Directors

## The Power of Board Advocacy

- There are 10,000+ board members volunteering with affordable housing and homelessness nonprofits in Washington State
- As community leaders and volunteers, board members can be very powerful advocates
- Board members are front and center in working to institutionalize advocacy in your organization



# New Messengers More Voices

Board of  
Directors



**Why not hold a board meeting in Olympia?**



# **New Messengers More Voices**

## **The power of storytelling**

People with direct experiences of homelessness and housing insecurity have powerful stories to tell.

Residents  
and Clients

# New Messengers More Voices

Residents  
and Clients



**Housing Alliance's Emerging Advocates in Olympia**

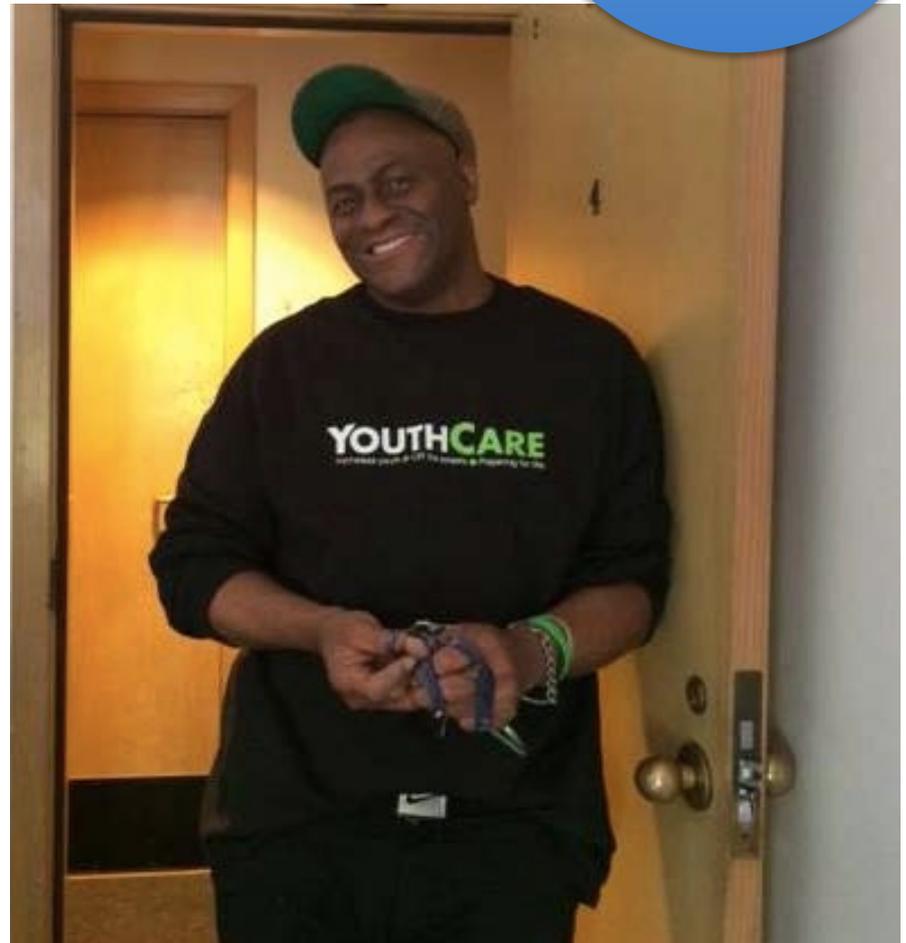


# New Messengers More Voices



## The power of storytelling

Direct services providers, as witnesses to the deep need and to the impact of affordable housing, have powerful stories to tell.





# New Messengers

## More Voices

### What is your story?

- A “story of self” tells why you have been called to serve
- It expresses the values or experiences that call each person to take leadership on everyone having a safe, healthy, affordable home
- The key focus is on the moments in our lives when we were forced to make a choice, and in doing so formed our values



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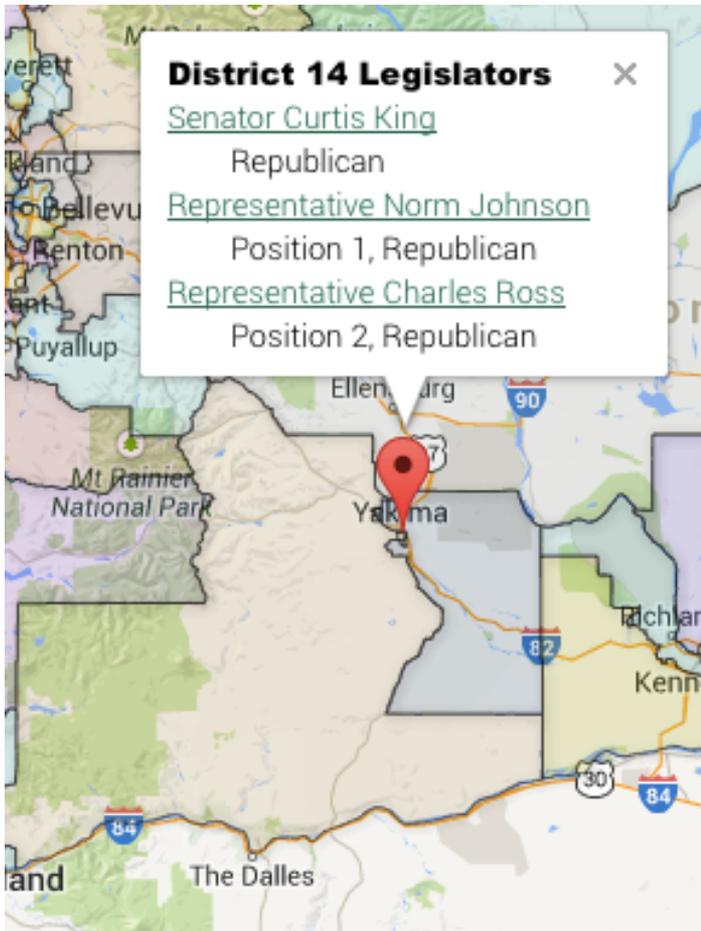
# **Questions on new messaging?**



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# Innovative Advocacy

## Meet with Lawmakers



Meeting directly with lawmakers is one of the **most effective** strategies to advocate for policy change and for investments in affordable housing.

You have **a unique and powerful perspective** about homelessness and affordable housing issues and solutions in your community.

Lawmakers **rely on hearing from** constituents to learn about and understand important issues facing our state.

Find your district at: <http://app.leg.wa.gov/DistrictFinder/>

# Innovative Advocacy

## Meet with Lawmakers



Senator David Frockt, 46<sup>th</sup> LD, and Representative June Robinson, 38<sup>th</sup> LD, each shared stories from constituents to help move policy.

1. **Strengthen** your relationship with elected officials.
2. **Elevate** visibility of homelessness and affordable housing in your community.
3. Helps elected officials deepen their **understanding** of complex issues.
4. Provide a **hands-on** learning opportunity.

# Innovative Advocacy

## Nonprofits *can* Lobby



“The fact is that 501c(3) nonprofits CAN engage in most forms of advocacy, including lobbying for legislation.”

—Nayantara Mehta, Senior Counsel, Alliance for Justice

- Advocacy: Educating on an issue.  
*No limits.*
- Lobbying: Advocating for a specific piece of legislation or budget.  
*Some (generous) limits.*
- Two IRS options: “Substantial Part” test and 501(h) election.
- Free lawyers: Alliance For Justice - Bolder Advocacy at [www.bolderadvocacy.org](http://www.bolderadvocacy.org)
- Campaigning: Helping get someone elected.  
*Never allowed!*

# Innovative Advocacy

## Be Prepared

### Helpful Information to Know Before Meeting With a Lawmaker:

- What's the lawmaker's position on homelessness and affordable housing issues?
- Does the lawmaker serve on any key policy committees? Does the lawmaker hold a leadership position?
- What's the lawmaker's voting record on the legislation you care about?
- What policy issues does the lawmaker have a history of supporting and opposing?



**Rep. Marcus Riccelli**

Assistant Majority Whip  
(D) [3rd LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT](#)

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[Rep. Riccelli's  
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[2013 3rd Special Session](#)  
[2013 Regular, 1st and 2nd Special Session](#)

▶ [Bill Sponsorship](#)

# Innovative Advocacy

## Choose What Works for You



- **Individual meetings**, including one-on-one meetings and small group meetings.
- **Site visits** to physical spaces where services are delivered, or to sites that are not yet developed. Includes tours and meeting with direct service providers and clients.
- **Organizational events**, such as annual member meetings, fundraisers, open houses, and ground breaking ceremonies.

# Innovative Advocacy

## Choose What Works for You



- **Community events** that connect legislators to their constituents and create a forum for constituents to share their priorities with legislators. Events can include candidate forums, town hall meetings, and listening sessions.



- **Need help?** The Housing Alliance is here to help you plan a successful lawmaker meeting that meets your organization's affordable housing and homelessness policy goals.

# Innovative Advocacy

## What to Expect



- Expect a 30 to 60 minute meeting during legislative interim, or about 15 minutes during the legislative session
- Don't assume lawmaker has background information on issue; ask lawmaker if she is familiar with topic and start with the basics.
- Messages that resonate with lawmakers:
  - Values based messages grounded in examples from real people.
  - Messages that resonate with lawmakers' personal values & priorities.
  - Policy demonstrates cost savings or ROI.
  - Policy or program is effective; it works!
  - Issue has support among constituents.

# Innovative Advocacy

## Educate Lawmakers



- Provide relevant background information; what is the policy or program?
- Describe why the issue is important. This is a great place to use values-based messaging.
- Use examples from real people who are directly impacted by the issue.
- Keep your comments focused; only share what lawmakers need to know to understand the policy or program.

# Innovative Advocacy

## Always Make an Ask!



- Differences between advocating for a budget item vs. bill.
- Leave advocacy materials and your contact information behind.
- Ask lawmaker if she would like any additional information.
- Describe how you can be a resource to the lawmaker in the future.



# Innovative Advocacy Tough Questions

You are asked a technical question  
and *don't know* the answer.

You are asked a question that  
you *don't want* to answer.

You are asked a question about a real problem  
with a policy or program you care about.

A lawmaker disagrees with you.

# Innovative Advocacy Follow up



- Send a **thank you** note and reiterate your message.
- Is any **follow-up** required? Did you commit to sending additional information after the meeting?
- Is **another meeting** needed?
- Are there other opportunities during the interim **to continue to engage** the lawmaker?
- **Keep in touch!** Send your lawmakers regular updates and visit them in Olympia during the legislative session!



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# Your Role

*What can you do help ensure our state lawmakers invest in affordable housing, protect safety-net programs and pass policies that protect tenants and help eliminate barriers to housing?*



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# Sign up!

*Advocacy can be as simple as responding to an action alert or forwarding an email to people in your network.*

*The most important thing is to take action.*

**Sign up for Housing Alliance Action Alerts on the clipboard being passed around!**



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# Resources

The Housing Alliance website: [www.wliha.org](http://www.wliha.org)

- The Housing Alliance Blog
- Legislative Agenda & Fact Sheets
- Bill Tracker
- Archive of Learn at Lunch Webinars
- Annual Conference on Ending Homelessness – May 13 and 14  
\*Note: workshop proposals due October 31\*

Alliance For Justice - Bolder Advocacy Initiative:  
[www.bolderadvocacy.org](http://www.bolderadvocacy.org)

Find your district: <http://app.leg.wa.gov/DistrictFinder/>

Center on Budget and Policy Priorities Introduction to the Federal Budget Process: <http://www.cbpp.org/cms/?fa=view&id=155>



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# Questions & Discussion