

February 2, 2026

SUBMITTED VIA EMAIL

Dear Senators and Representatives,

Representing employers across Southwest Washington, we are writing to express a growing and urgent concern: tax fatigue has reached a breaking point for businesses that employ our residents and drive our regional economy. We urge extreme caution as new tax proposals advance this session, including wealth taxes, asset-based taxes, and new payroll tax concepts that would further aggravate employer burdens at a time when costs are already escalating. We urge similar caution over additional cost increasing measures, such as higher or new county utility taxes, increases to the real estate excise tax, and other affordability policies that directly raise the cost of doing business and affording to live in our communities.

Washington already has one of the highest overall tax burdens in the nation, ranking 45th worst, according to the nonpartisan nonprofit [Tax Foundation](#). Employers are carrying a disproportionate share of that load through the B&O tax, high taxes on business inputs, a progressive real estate excise tax, capital gains excise tax, and one of the nation's highest estate tax rates. Adding new layers of taxation now will only accelerate the pressure on Southwest Washington businesses, and discourage investment and capital retention.

We want to be clear: businesses already are paying more than their fair share, and the cumulative impact of proposed new taxes and mandates is unsustainable. Our region cannot afford policies that push employers, and the jobs they provide, past the point of viability.

Before advancing new taxes, please consider the full burden already placed on employers and workers, and the consequences for competitiveness, investment, and family wage jobs.

Sincerely,

Southwest Washington Employers and Business Leaders



Identity Clark County

Josie Hyde, *Chair*

Ron Arp, *President*



Greater Vancouver Chamber

Tony Johnson, *Chair*

John McDonagh, *President/CEO*



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Columbia River Economic

Development Council

Abbi Russell, *Chair Policy Com.*

Sarah Laughlin, *Vice Chair*



Building Industry Association of Clark County

Alexa Lee, *President*

Max Booth, *Vice President*

Noelle Lovern, *Executive Officer*



Clark County Association of REALTORS

Anthony Stroud, *President*

Justin Wood, *Gov't Affairs Dir.*



National Association of Minority Contractors – Oregon

Nate McCoy, *President/CEO*



Southwest Washington Contractors Association

Darin Kaysner, *President*

Sherrie Jones, *Executive Director*