

### **New and Dedicated Revenue**

ASWWU recognizes that low tuition, fully funded state financial aid, and providing funding to state institutions of higher education is a priority to students. We set out to recommend politically feasible sources of revenue generated from closing existing tax loopholes, creating new sources of tax revenue, or increasing existing taxes dedicating that revenue to funding higher education.

- Close the extracted fuel exemption in the state tax code that would generate between \$41 million and \$63 million per biennium.
- Double the estate tax, which would only affect approximately 300 people a year and could generate an estimated \$160.3 million for the 2013-2015 biennium.
- Allocate revenue from the possible expiration of the B&O tax incentive for R&D firms, which is estimated to generate \$114 million in the 2013-15 biennium.
- Additional tax exemptions we recommend closing include agricultural procedures, international banking facilities, investment income of nonfinancial firms, B&O tax for insurance agents, and fertilizer and chemical spray.
- Sources of new revenue could potentially come from the new cannabis tax.

### **Support Survivors of Sexual Violence**

The ASWWU is concerned about the vastly under-reported instances of sexual violence on our campus. We strongly believe that with increased support at the state level, more students will be able to access support and legal services with the confidence that their needs will be met. Increased support for survivors will create a healthier campus and community environment, and will help students who experience violence complete their education with fewer roadblocks. ASWWU advocates for:

- Dedicated funding specifically for the increase of counseling services and specialized personnel, resources, and staff training to better equip the university to respond to sexual violence and involved parties.
- New and supported legislation that closes the gaps between current protection and support services and the actual needs of survivors of sexual violence.
- Development and implementation of a training program for all faculty and staff who interact with students in a supervisory, administrative, or academic capacity. This training program must include education on how to: use inclusive language that doesn't place blame or make assumptions, refer students to the available services on and off campus, encourage students and explain how to report encounters of sexual violence at the university level and beyond, create a safe space in the environment for students who have survived sexual violence.
- Give direction to the Student Achievement Council with assessing the effectiveness of current codes of conduct at universities in WA state in regards to sexual harassment and sexual assault in concordance with RCW 28. B1.10.030

## **Voter Access**

ASWWU believes that everyone should have access to voting. The current laws make it difficult for students to register to vote or update their mailing address. Making registering to vote more accessible will increase the amount of students and young people participating in elections. Recently these policies have gained widespread support by county auditors and election officials.

- Extend the voter registration deadline until 11 days prior to the election and in-person on the day of the election.
- Allow 16-17 year olds to pre-register to vote as part of the Motor Voter system currently in place. This would allow them to register to vote when they are at the Department of Licensing getting their license or renewing it.

## **Funding for Carver Academic Facility**

ASWWU and WWU Administration stand together to recognize that funding the renovation project for Carver Academic Facility is imperative for student safety and provides an opportunity to make WWU's campus more sustainable. Students value Carver as both an academic and an athletic complex that is an integral part of the student experience at WWU. The state has already invested 7.3 million dollars in design and 73 million more is required for the project.

- Keeping this project on the requested timeline is essential. Action has been delayed for several years already and further inaction on this life and safety issue is unacceptable.
- Models show that in the event of seismic activity significant portions of the Carver Academic Facility are subject to catastrophic failure, which would almost certainly result in fatalities and other injuries if the building was occupied at the time.
- The building has additional health and safety issues, including inadequate ventilation, broken heating pipes, and raw sewage seepage.
- Carver is currently not compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).
- Carver is home to Physical Education, Health, and Recreation (PEHR), which is the largest department at Western. The needs of PEHR are not currently being met by the facility.
- The Carver Gym portion of the facility is the largest enclosed space in Whatcom County and is one of the most visited facilities on campus. It hosts WWU athletic events, graduation ceremonies, and many other WWU functions. In addition, Carver is an important facility to the Whatcom County community, hosting events such as local high school graduation ceremonies and youth athletic programs.

## **Student Success**

ASWWU believes that student success is dependent not only on the support students receive while in the classroom, but is largely dependent on the resources made available to students outside of the classroom as well. ASWWU and WWU Administration stand together in supporting an increase in funding for services that are vital to student success in Washington's public universities and colleges. We acknowledge that:

- Additional academic advising and tutoring services are necessary to ensure success for students of color and first-generation students.
- Regardless of a student's gender identity, there is a need for increased financial support for survivors of sexual assault and trauma.
- Mental health and counseling services are currently being utilized at a higher rate than in the past and need to grow in order to provide sufficient services for students.
- Many other services on campuses, such as disability accommodations and specific support services for other marginalized groups are essential to properly supporting students as they move through their college education.

## **From the Associated Students Board of Directors**

Dear Legislator,

It is with great pride that we present our 2015 Legislative Agenda on behalf on the Associated Students of Western Washington University (ASWWU). This document has been crafted with great care to inclusively and accurately represent the opinions and wishes of all 14,950 Western Washington University students.

This year, we have focused on building the future and ensure the success of WWU students. Our five priorities reflect this goal. First, we are requesting revenue to be dedicated to higher education and that if new sources of revenue created, that they go to higher education. Investment in higher education is necessary for a sustainable model in which current and future generations have the opportunity to acquire the tools needed to build a strong future for Washington. Second, we support increased funding and support services for survivors of sexual violence. It is important that survivors of sexual violence have a safe and healthy campus space to ensure that survivors are getting the support they need to do what they came to school to do; learn. Third, we request funding to renovate Carver Academic Facility. Students should be learning in classrooms that are safe, accessible, and have the resources they need to be successful. Next, we acknowledge the importance of the retention of marginalized students at WWU. We are asking the Washington state legislation to invest in services that will make these students successful. Last, every student that has the ability to should have the opportunity to engage in the political process. By making registering to vote more accessible to students it will give them the chance to voice their opinion in decisions that are affecting them.

Thank you for taking the time to review our ASWWU Legislative Agenda. We appreciate all the hard work you do for students and hope you will join us in building the future for Washington State. Thank you for your support.

Sincerely,

The ASWWU Board of Directors