



“Title of Proposal”

Proposed Motion: *Motion to become official members of Washington United for Fair Revenue or the Revenue Coalition (Re VCo) to help overturn our archaic tax system and help in the pursuit of a more just, equitable, and fair revenue system for Washington State.*

Sponsor: *AS Legislative Liaison/Heather N. Heffelmire*

Persons of Contact: *Heather Heffelmire*

Date: 3/2/2015

Attached Document

[http:// fairwarevenue.org/ about/](http://fairwarevenue.org/about/)

Background & Context

Through my time in Olympia serving as our AS Legislative Liaison, I have been meeting with RevCo along with other members of the Washington Student Association (WSA) to help forward our legislative agenda item of new and dedicated revenue for higher education. While the WSA are official members of this organization, our campus is not and I think we should officially join this organization in order to pursue not only new and dedicated revenue for higher education, but for the other critical social programs in our state.

Western along with the WSA have made new and dedicated revenue for higher education a legislative priority for several years in a row as the state has, for the most part, continuously divested from higher education and tuition costs have increased. RevCo serves as a coalition of organizations which works to overturn our archaic tax system which is rated number 50 out of 50 states in terms of regressiveness of our tax system and provide this new and dedicated revenue not only to higher education, but the other social programs in our state. Ideologically, I think the coalition lines up with Western’s values that we shouldn’t prioritize higher education over other critical social programs like K-12 education, but that all these programs should be fully funded to ensure Washingtonians have the programs and support they need to lead healthy, happy, and productive lives.

Summary of Proposal

As I mentioned above, both the WSA and our campus have made new and dedicated revenue for higher education a legislative priority. Officially being a part of the Revenue Coalition would give Western more of a role and a voice in seeking out this new and dedicated revenue. This helps fulfil our goal of providing affordable tuition for Western students and making higher education more accessible for students in state.

I don’t think there are a lot of possible downsides in seeking to officially be a part of the coalition. We are already unofficially working with the coalition as we are active members in the WSA, so this would only make Western’s voice stronger and increase our role in the coalition. It would also enable future liaisons from Western to attend RevCo meetings and further engage with the organization.

Fiscal Impacts

There are no fiscal impacts towards Western if this proposal is passed, but there could be great positive fiscal impacts to higher education and our state as a whole if this proposal is passed. Officially endorsing and becoming members of the RevCo will increase their membership and make the organization stronger. This will only increase their ability to lobby and change our outdated tax system which funds our state on the backs of the poor and doesn't provide our residents with the fully funded social programs that are needed to lead healthy, effective, and productive lives.

Rationale

Passing this proposal will have really positive long and short term benefits for the students at our school. This could lead to potential new and dedicated revenue to higher education which will only lower tuition and make higher education more accessible to Washington students, a main goal of our campus and the WSA. Additionally, our students don't function only as students, but lead holistic lives and use other social programs in our state. RevCo seeks to find all these programs which are essential to students and the many identities we hold. Becoming a part of RevCo gives our school the ability to really educate ourselves on and engage in the debate for a new tax system and have a part in changing the regressiveness of our tax system.