



WWVEA

PROBE

Walla Walla Valley Education Association

5 W Alder Suite 231 * Walla Walla, WA 99362 * Phone: 509-525-7810 * Fax: 509-525-7829

<mailto:wwveamargo@gmail.com>

December 9, 2011

Legislators need to hear from you!

The special session of the legislature is now in its second week--and legislators need to hear from you. Many proposals are being considered to cut education funding and/or increase revenue, including ones that would have dramatic impacts on our schools. The state is facing an additional loss of almost \$2 billion in revenue.

The House Ways and Means Committee is holding a work session on the Governor's proposal to cut four days from the school year and reduce and restructure financial assistance for property-poor school districts. A four-day cut in the school year would not only hurt our students, it would also hurt your pocketbook--to the tune of a 2.2% salary cut.

Meanwhile, very profitable corporations and wealthy individuals continue to receive tax breaks and exemptions which add up to a significant loss of revenue for the state. Microsoft, for example, is enjoying a \$132 million sales tax exemption, despite sitting on liquid assets worth \$52.8 billion. The tax exemption was granted 17 years ago to encourage development in the fledgling tech industry. Clearly, Microsoft is no longer in need of this incentive. The banking industry, despite record profits, enjoys a \$172.6 million tax break on home-loan interest earnings, while a tax exemption on jet fuels causes the state to lose \$300 million annually.

There are 567 tax exemptions, incentives, and breaks in the state tax code that are worth a total of \$15 billion. Very few of them have been studied for their effectiveness in creating jobs and stimulating the economy. One study by the State Department of Revenue found that it took \$588,000 in high-tech tax breaks for each high-tech job created.

Contact your legislators today - explain how further cuts will affect you and your students.

Call 1-800-562-6000, or send an e-mail from your home computer by going to <http://www.ourvoicewashingtonea.org/>

**For information on VEBA
contact:**

**Tia Gilroy, Service Representative
VEBA Service Group, LLC**

1-800-888-8322

tia@veba.org

<http://www.hraconsultants.org>