

Washington's Budget: What are your priorities?

Washington State has a \$4.6 billion shortfall for the 2011-2013 budget. Below, you will make tough decisions in order to balance the budget as required by law. The services and programs you decide to cut or keep will impact the children, families and seniors of our state. Check the boxes in order to balance the budget.

Budget Shortfall	Categories/Area of Government
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Early Learning Public Schools Higher Education Social & Health Services Environment & Public Safety Other Areas of Government Revenue, Tax Preferences, Etc.

Budget Options	Budget Impact
Early Learning	
<input type="checkbox"/> Eliminate professional development program for child care teachers Details: The Career and Wage Ladder is a proven program that helps child care teachers obtain advanced educational degrees and certifications. If eliminated, more than 1,000 child care teachers will lose incentives that help them improve the quality of their care for children.	\$3 million
<input type="checkbox"/> Eliminate preschool for 3-year-olds from low-income families Details: Preschool helps prepare children for kindergarten and is a strategy for closing the academic achievement gap. If eliminated, more than 1,300 3-year olds will be dropped from the state Early Childhood Education & Assistance Program (ECEAP).	\$9 million
Preschool for 4-year-olds: Choose One or None	
<input type="checkbox"/> Cut preschool for 4-year-olds from low-income families by 25 percent Details: Preschool helps prepare children for kindergarten and is a strategy for closing the academic achievement gap. If cut, more than 1,800 4-year olds will be dropped from the state Early Childhood Education & Assistance Program (ECEAP).	\$25 million
<input type="checkbox"/> Cut preschool for 4-year-olds from low-income families by 50 percent Details: If eliminated, more than 3,600 4-year olds will be dropped from the state Early Childhood Education & Assistance Program (ECEAP).	\$50 million

Sub-Total: _____

Public Schools	Budget Impact
<input type="checkbox"/> Eliminate funding to lower K-4 class sizes Details: Research shows that lower class sizes in early grades improves student learning for young children. If state funding to lower K-4 class sizes is eliminated, class sizes could increase from an average of 23 students to 26.	\$216 Million
<input type="checkbox"/> Eliminate or cut programs to improve student learning and educator quality Details: Programs designed to improve teacher and principal quality, close the achievement gap and provide hands-on learning would be reduced or eliminated such as the Beginning Educator Support Team, Focused Assistance, career and technical education program start-up grants, Readiness to Learn Program and Washington Reading Corps.	\$37 million
<input type="checkbox"/> Suspend the Student Achievement Program (Initiative 728) Details: Funding to provide smaller class sizes, extended learning time for students and professional development for teachers would be suspended.	\$860 Million
<input type="checkbox"/> Suspend cost of living increases for educators (Initiative 732) Details: Salary increases under Initiative 732 for teachers and other K-12 employees would be suspended.	\$253 Million
<input type="checkbox"/> Suspend salary increases for teachers based on experience and degree Details: Suspend the salary increases teachers receive based on years of teaching and educational degree earned.	\$56 million
<input type="checkbox"/> Change school bus replacement accounting formula Details: State funding for school bus replacement would be changed from a depreciation schedule funded over the life of a school bus to a single state allocation, paid for at the end of the bus life cycle.	\$96 million
All-Day Kindergarten: Choose One or None	
<input type="checkbox"/> Suspend funding to expand all-day kindergarten programs Details: Research shows that all-day kindergarten is a proven strategy for improving student achievement in reading and math. If suspended, all-day kindergarten would not be expanded to include additional schools in low-income neighborhoods, which would have served thousands more students. Schools could provide full-day kindergarten on a parent-pay basis (about \$3,000 a year).	\$57 million
<input type="checkbox"/> Eliminate all-day kindergarten programs Details: If eliminated, schools would lose state funding to provide all-day kindergarten to 16,000 students. Schools could provide full-day kindergarten on a parent-pay basis (about \$3,000 a year).	\$146 Million

Sub-Total: _____

Levy equalization: Choose One or None	
<input type="checkbox"/> Reduce levy equalization by 6% Details: Poorer school districts such as Snohomish, Enumclaw, and Ferndale will receive less funding, decreasing educational opportunities for students in poor and rural districts. This would force districts to rely more on local levies dollars and emergency reserve funds.	\$40 Million
<input type="checkbox"/> Reduce levy equalization by 12% Details: This would force districts to rely even more on local levies dollars and emergency reserve funds.	\$80 Million
National Board bonuses: Choose One or None	
<input type="checkbox"/> Cut National Board bonuses for teachers by 50 percent Details: National Board Certification is a voluntary assessment program designed to identify, recognize and reward accomplished teachers who meet high and rigorous standards based on what teachers should know and be able to do. If cut, the bonus for advanced certification for teachers and for working in a low-income school would be cut from \$5,000 to \$2,500.	\$49 Million
<input type="checkbox"/> Eliminate National Board bonuses for teachers Details: The bonus for advanced certification for teachers and for working in a low-income school would be eliminated.	\$99 Million
Highly Capable Education: Choose One or None	
<input type="checkbox"/> Reduce funding for Highly Capable education programs by 50 percent Details: Only half of eligible highly capable students (up to 2 percent in each school district) would have access to programs designed to challenge them to reach their full potential.	\$9 Million
<input type="checkbox"/> Eliminate Highly Capable Education Program Details: Highly capable students (up to 2 percent in each school district) would lose access to programs designed to challenge them to reach their full potential.	\$18 Million
Teacher Pensions	
<input type="checkbox"/> End automatic pension increases for retired teachers Details: Automatic pay increases to protect against inflation would be eliminated. Retired teachers would lose \$600 a year.	\$300 Million

Sub-Total: _____

Higher Education	Budget Impact
Tuition Increase: Choose One or None	
<input type="checkbox"/> Increase tuition at higher education institutions by up to 11 percent Details: State funding for higher education institutions is reduced, but offset by tuition increases of 11 percent at UW, WSU and Western; 10 percent at Evergreen, Central and Eastern; and 9 percent at community and technical colleges.	\$345 Million
<input type="checkbox"/> Increase tuition at higher education institutions by up to 22 percent Details: State funding for higher education institutions is reduced, but offset by tuition increases of 22 percent at UW, WSU and Western; 20 percent at Evergreen, Central and Eastern; and 18 percent at community and technical colleges.	\$690 Million
<input type="checkbox"/> Further reduce state funding for higher education Details: State funding for higher education institutions is further reduced, but this time is not offset by tuition increases. Institutions will be given flexibility to find savings through fewer course offerings, larger class sizes, fewer faculty positions and fewer support services for students.	\$102 Million
<input type="checkbox"/> Suspend salary increases and reduce state pension costs for faculty and staff Details: Salary increases under Initiative 732 for faculty and staff in the community and technical colleges would be suspended. Limit state-supported employer contributions to higher education pension plans to 6 percent of salary.	\$84 Million
<input type="checkbox"/> Reduce funding for State Work Study Program Details: Work Study funding for 2,800 low-income students would be cut.	\$21 Million
<input type="checkbox"/> Suspend targeted scholarship programs Details: The Washington Scholars and the Health Professions conditional scholarship, matching grants and loan repayment programs would be suspended.	\$16 Million

Sub-Total: _____

Social & Health Services	Budget Impact
<input type="checkbox"/> Eliminate the Disability Lifeline and Medical Programs Details: Eliminate the Disability Lifeline grant for the temporarily unemployable—elderly, blind or disabled. This program serves 28,000 individuals each month. Also eliminate medical program that serves 21,000 clients each year who have a temporary disability and are unable to work.	\$327 Million
<input type="checkbox"/> Eliminate the Children’s Health Program Details: This program provides medical coverage for 27,000 children whose citizenship has not been documented.	\$59 Million
<input type="checkbox"/> Eliminate the State Food Assistance Program Details: This program provides funding for 14,000 very low-income people to buy food. Up to 17,000 more people, who are mostly children, benefit from state food assistance.	\$46 Million
<input type="checkbox"/> Eliminate child support payment for low-income working families Details: Provides up to \$200 to help low-income families support basic needs for their children.	\$19 Million
<input type="checkbox"/> Medicare Part D and Medicaid reductions Details: The state will no longer reimburse qualifying Medicaid clients for co-payments related to Medicare Part D drug purchases. In-home Medicaid personal care hours for 45,000 individuals who need assistance with bathing, medication management and dressing would be reduced. School-based medical services for low -income children and medical interpreter services for Medicaid patients would be eliminated. Optional Medicaid services such as maternity care to high-risk mothers would be reduced.	\$184 Million
<input type="checkbox"/> Community mental health services Details: Funding for 26,000 clients who depend on community mental health services for crisis response, evaluation and treatment would be reduced.	\$17 Million
<input type="checkbox"/> Other social and health services cuts Details: Funding for employment services for refugees, chemical dependency services, local public health and training for home-care workers would be reduced or eliminated. Includes other administrative and operational savings.	\$217 Million
<input type="checkbox"/> Eliminate Basic Health Plan Details: Eliminating this program will mean 66,000 individuals could lose access to affordable health care plans that enable them to pay for office visits and preventive exams. Visits to the emergency room could increase as a result. More than half of the people on the Basic Health Plan have an income below the federal poverty level, or \$10,830 a year for a single person and \$18,310 for a family of three.	\$230 Million

Sub-Total: _____

Environment & Public Safety	Budget Impact
<input type="checkbox"/> Reduce funding for environmental agencies and programs Details: Reduce funding for State Parks & Recreation Commission, Department of Ecology, Department of Natural Resources and small agencies and programs.	\$58 Million
<input type="checkbox"/> Increase fees for permits and licenses Details: Initiate fees for commercial fishing licenses, water rights applications and siculture burning permits.	\$11 Million
<input type="checkbox"/> Close a corrections center and juvenile detention center Details: Close McNeil Island Corrections Center by April 2011 and transfer responsibilities to the Department of Social and Health Services — Special Commitment Center. No offenders will be set free prior to the earned release date while the prison is closed. Close Maple Lane School in Rochester by June 30, 2011, as juvenile offender caseloads are dropping.	\$21 Million
<input type="checkbox"/> Reduce funding for Department of Corrections Details: Reduce staff and programs in the Department of Corrections in headquarters and prisons, and in community supervision.	\$52 Million
<input type="checkbox"/> Other public safety cuts and reductions Details: Eliminate "tolling" for offenders, reduce parole services for juvenile offenders, eliminate Auto Theft Task Force in Washington State Patrol, reduce funding to juvenile courts, and deport all non-citizen drug and property offenders.	\$22 Million

Other Areas of Government	Budget Impact
<input type="checkbox"/> 3 percent salary cut for state employees Details: State workers would take a temporary 3 percent pay cut (\$139 per month on average), which could include temporary layoffs and shortened work hours. This would not apply to teachers, higher education employees and the Washington State Patrol.	\$176 Million
<input type="checkbox"/> End automatic pension increases for older retirees Details: Automatic pay increases to protect against inflation would be eliminated. Older retirees would lose \$600 a year.	\$68 Million
<input type="checkbox"/> Increase Washington State Ferry fares and reduce sailings Details: Reduce the number of ferry sailings from 505 to 477 and raise fares by 10 percent.	\$3 Million
<input type="checkbox"/> Suspend 2012 presidential primary Details: The next presidential primary in 2012 is suspended.	\$10 Million
<input type="checkbox"/> Close state museums and cut funding for tourism and arts offices Details: Shut down state historical museums in Tacoma and Spokane, cut funding for the State Tourism Office and eliminate the State Arts Commission.	\$12 Million

Sub-Total: _____

Revenue, Tax Preferences, Etc.	Budget Impact
<input type="checkbox"/> Use Rainy Day Fund and transfer funds from other accounts Details: Use of the Rainy Day Fund would total \$290 million and use of funds from various state accounts would total \$390 million.	\$765 Million
<input type="checkbox"/> Reduce size of ending fund balance Details: Gov. Chris Gregoire proposes to leave \$881 million in reserves for emergencies or if revenue projections worsen. Choosing this option would make \$200 million more available to spend and leave only \$681 million in reserves.	\$200 Million
<input type="checkbox"/> End the bank B&O mortgage deduction Details: Banks currently do not pay Business and Occupations (B&O) taxes on the interest or investment earnings made from the interest from residential first mortgages. This deduction, which benefits mostly large, out-of-state banks, gives an incentive to banks to provide first mortgages to buyers or residential properties. However, there is no evidence that the savings are passed on to consumers.	\$168 Million
<input type="checkbox"/> Sales tax on items used in interstate commerce Details: More than 16 states tax items and fuel used by air, rail and water transportation companies.	\$609 Million
<input type="checkbox"/> End the sales tax exclusion on consumer services Details: End the sales tax exclusion on some consumer services such as elective cosmetic surgery, hair removal, sporting events and investment advice.	\$211 Million
<input type="checkbox"/> End the sales tax exclusion on business services Details: End the sales tax exclusion on some business services such as legal, accounting and engineering services.	\$1,574 Million
<input type="checkbox"/> Increase cigarette tax \$1.25 per pack Details: Estimate based on receipts from last year's \$1 increase.	\$100 Million

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Sub-Total: _____

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Notes

Washington’s Budget: Washington State operates on a two-year budget. By law, the governor must propose a balanced budget. In December 2010, Governor Chris Gregoire released the first budget proposal. The Legislature will convene on January 10, 2011 to debate and pass one budget by April that is sent to the governor for approval. Once the governor signs the budget, it will take effect on July 1, 2011.

The Budget Shortfall: Due to the economic recession, almost every state in the nation is facing a sizable budget shortfall. The recession, rising costs and more demand for state services have contributed to the \$4.6 billion shortfall for Washington’s 2011-2013 budget. State lawmakers are facing difficult choices in what to fund or cut in the next budget, especially since 60 percent of the operating budget such as basic education and Medicaid is protected by state and federal requirements.

Revenue Options: Due to the passage of Tim Eyman’s Initiative 1053, the revenue and tax preference options in the “Revenue, Tax Preferences, Etc.” section would require a two-thirds vote of the Legislature for approval, or with a simple majority vote in the Legislature, be put to voters in a referendum.

Sources: Budget figures and descriptions were based on research from Governor Chris Gregoire’s December 2010 Proposed 2011-13 Budget, the news media and various policy and advocacy organizations. Special thanks to the Washington State Budget and Policy Center, Economic Opportunity Institute and Children’s Alliance.