

# Toolkit **ADVOCATING FOR PUBLIC HIGHER ED**

## What is happening?

The draft budget proposals from the WA state House and Senate slash funding for WWU and other 4-year colleges and universities. They could cut between \$8 and \$9 million in state support and, in combination with our local fiscal problems, **WWU could face roughly up to \$14 million in cuts.**

In the coming weeks, the legislature will work on reconciling these budgets to eventually go to Governor Ferguson's desk. We have **a small window** now to let our legislators and budget writers know that these kinds of cuts to WWU would cause irreparable, generational harm the WA community and beyond.

## What can I do?

We're so glad you asked! **Reaching out to legislators and budget writers is essential in the next few weeks.** Hearing about the direct, on-the-ground impacts of these budget decisions is the most potent way individuals can contribute the broader work of our labor organizations to push for funding for public higher ed at a time when our mission and constituents are being attacked.

## Take five minutes to write...

The Washington Education Association (WEA) has created a quick-use form that you can use to **message legislators today** about the impacts of the proposed cuts. Use this form once, use it everyday! You can access the link above or use the QR code to access the form. Consider making it a part of your daily routine for the next two weeks to tell folks in Olympia what your life at WWU would look like with these cuts!

SCAN ME



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## When you have a half hour...

We recommend focusing on your local state representatives and the legislative budget writers. You can find yours by searching your address [here](#). Common representative districts are also listed below. Hearing from constituents directly about the real-life impacts of these descisions is an essential part of moving the needle. ***Please take a few minutes to write to the folks below about how these cuts would impact your work, your students, and the future of higher education in WA state.***

### 40th District\*

Debra Lekanoff  
(360) 786-7800  
[Email Debra](#)

Alex Ramel  
(360) 786-7970  
[Email Alex](#)

Liz Lovelett  
(360) 786-7678  
[Email Liz](#)

### 42nd District

#### ***State Representatives***

Alicia Rule  
(360) 786-7980  
[Email Alicia](#)

Joe Timmons  
(360) 786-7854  
[Email Joe](#)

#### ***State Senators***

Sharon Shewmake  
(360) 786-7682  
[Email Sharon](#)

### Budget Writers

Timm Ormsby  
(360) 786-7946  
[Email Timm](#)

Nicole Macri  
(360) 786-7826  
[Email Nicole](#)

Mia Gregerson  
(360) 786-7868  
[Email Mia](#)

June Robinson  
(360) 786-7674  
[Email June](#)

Derek Stanford  
(360) 786-7600  
[Email Derek](#)

\*Western is in this district.

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# Toolkit

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### What should I say?

Share your name and what you teach.

The best thing you can do is speak directly to how such cuts would impact you and your students. Think practically about what a 3-15% cut to your daily resources might look like and talk about that impact.

This messaging is most effective when it's personal, rooted in your experience and expertise.

### What is the goal?

To put pressure on legislators from their constituents to stand up for funding public higher education in a time when it's under attack on the national stage.

To give legislators particular stories, examples, and reasons why supporting this funding and rejecting cuts is essential to the broader health and vision for the state of Washington.

### Some Suggested Talking Points

- In its constitution, WA identifies education as the “paramount duty” of the state. This should include public higher education. K-12, technical and community colleges, and public 4-year universities are part of an interrelated ecosystem, not individual parts that can be separated.
- WWU already receives the least state funding *per student* of any higher ed institution in the state, including tech and community colleges. Despite this, we have high enrollment and excellent retention and graduation rates.
- Public higher education not only provides low-barrier high-quality education to students but also contributes to communities more broadly. Many of our students stay in WA and go into the public sector.
- **At a time when higher education is under attack at the federal level, our state leaders should be supporting our work.**

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## How can I stay updated?

[The Stand](#), news outlet for the Washington State Labor Council (WSLC)

[AFT-WA](#), includes sign-up for weekly newsletter

[WEA Newsletter and Legislative Updates](#)

[AAUP News and Updates](#)

\*We used to link here to Cascade PBS but their union has just filed a [Unfair Labor Practice \(ULP\) complaint](#). You can sign [their petition here](#) to support them!

## How can I get involved?

- Keep an eye out for news on actions from WEA / AFT-WA / UFWS in the coming weeks.
- Attend UFWW trainings in the Spring Quarter on Know Your Labor Rights, Building Union Power, and more (dates to come).
- Consider serving at the local or state level in labor organizing, including with UFWW and AFT-WA.
- Stay updated on what's going on in your community as well as on the national level.