

Building on Progress:

# A snapshot of 2022



# State policy to support community well-being

At the Washington State Budget and Policy Center, we know the state budget is where the rubber meets the road – it is the legislative tool that guides investments in Washington communities.

We work with partners and grassroots coalitions to advance budget and tax policies that lift up families with low and moderate incomes, reduce barriers to opportunity for Black, Indigenous, and People of Color, and create shared prosperity for all Washingtonians.

## Together, we are making change happen!

We have been fortunate to start 2023 with some incredible successes, including the state Supreme Court decisively upholding the new capital gains excise tax and the launch of the Working Families Tax Credit, resulting in hundreds of thousands of Washingtonians getting direct cash refunds. Meaningful change requires long-term commitment. The team at the Budget and Policy Center and our many partners worked on these policies for more than a decade – always believing in the possibility of a more balanced state tax code. The work we did to defend and support implementation of these policies in 2022 was pivotal. We:

- Worked with partners to stop an initiative to repeal the capital gains tax;
- Led the effort to file two amicus briefs to the Washington State Supreme Court outlining key arguments to support the tax (one of which was directly cited in the ruling!);
- Built a coalition-driven movement that secured a \$10 million public investment in community-based outreach for the Working Families Tax Credit; and
- Advocated with the state Department of Revenue to remove unnecessary barriers that would have limited access to the Working Families Tax Credit.

And you, our donors and supporters, have been beside us every step of the way. From writing op-eds and testifying in support of legislation, to providing critical financial support year after year, you have kept us in this work. While we celebrate this progress together, we also are thinking critically about how to keep the momentum going and how to accelerate the pace of progress.

The Budget and Policy Center is finding new ways to use our platform to facilitate bigger conversations, such as through our new WA Possible podcast that we launched ahead of legislative session. Internally, we are kicking off an organizational theory of change that centers racial justice and tribal sovereignty to guide our work advancing economic justice for all Washingtonians. We are also focused on the well-being of our team and living our values through our internal practices, including exploring moving to a permanent 32-hr work week.

Thank you for being a part of this work with us through the years. The continued support of folks like you enables us to focus our energy on what we do best – research and policy development!

With gratitude,

Misha

# Building on progress with partners

**We worked with partners and legislators to introduce a statewide guaranteed basic income program designed to boost cash supports for Washingtonians with incomes below 50% of area median income.** We were excited to have multiple public hearings, articles in the media, and social media actions that built momentum around this program, and we look forward to continuing to push for it next legislative session.

**Executive Director Misha Werschkul testified in front of the U.S. House Select Committee on Economic Disparity and Fairness in Growth about policy strategies implemented in Washington state and Seattle to promote workers right.** The field hearing focused on how innovative labor market laws and ordinances in Washington state and Seattle have benefitted workers, businesses, and the local economy.

**We worked with a coalition of advocates, legal service providers and aides, and organizations representing currently and formerly incarcerated people to move us closer toward eliminating legal financial obligations (LFOs), or fines and fees, in Washington state.** The version of the fines and fees bill that passed in 2022 increased some important access to LFO relief, and we will continue to partner with community advocates as they call for additional key reforms to the system.

## 2022: By the numbers

### MEDIA

- 30+** Pieces in the media
- 20** State media markets reached
- 30** Infographics, briefs, reports & fact sheets (12+ translated into other languages)

### ONLINE BUZZ

- 4,620** Twitter followers
- 3,600** Facebook followers
- 20** Schmudget blog posts

### COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- 1,000+** Community members engaged at events
- 20+** Presentations, webinars, and events
- 20** Testimonies during legislative session

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**thank you for your support and advocacy!**



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