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# OPINION: HAVE YOU HEARD ABOUT THE MOVEMENT TO CLEAN UP THE BROKEN TAX SYSTEM IN WASHINGTON STATE?

VELMA VELORIA JANUARY 9, 2018 0

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The Legislative Building in Olympia • Photo by Nimaj/Flickr

In Washington, the wealthiest households pay less than 3 percent of their income in state and local taxes. Meanwhile, middle-income families pay around 10 percent and those with the least pay up to 17 percent. This structure is shocking.

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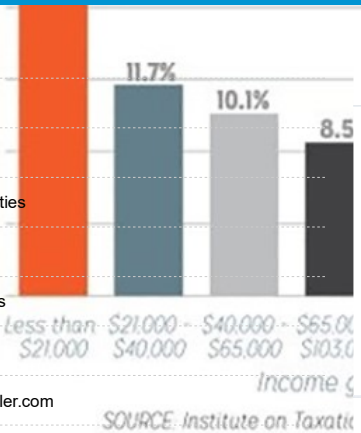
**ONLINE**

Washington State's Tax System Is Upside Down

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**The Seattle Times**  
@seattletimes

Marital arts and acting made Bruce Lee famous, but comedian @wkamaubell says Lee's philosophy will be his most enduring legacy: "Humor is about self-defense in the same way kung fu is."  
[st.news/2E7ZKb1](http://st.news/2E7ZKb1)

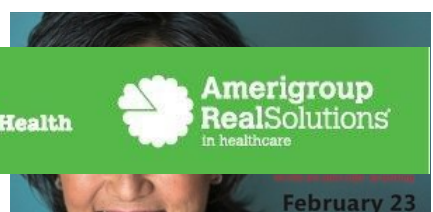
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In our state, low income families pay the greatest share of state and local taxes thanks to Washington's uneven tax system. Communities of color are more likely to be in the lowest income group than other Washingtonians. **Southeast Asian families in particular face high levels of poverty** in our communities, with over 80 percent of Cambodian students, 70 percent of Vietnamese students, and 50 percent of other Southeast Asian students receiving free and reduced lunch at school.

That means **Southeast Asian communities and other communities of color are likely to be among the highest taxed in our state.**

Have you heard of the Soda Tax? You might only be paying 10 cents more for every soda you buy, but this new sales tax burdens low income communities and communities of color the most. In fact, all sales taxes hit us the hardest. If Bill Gates and I both bought a soda, that sugary drink (plus the extra 10 cents) would cost a larger portion of my salary than his. The soda tax, and all sales taxes, unevenly impact lower income families. They are regressive taxes.

We know we can't get something for nothing, and that investing in our communities is important. To do so, we need to pay attention to funding the Seattle Asian Pacific Islander Newspace, which has been in existence for 43 years. All rights reserved.



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W. Kamau Bell, comedian and host of *United Shades of America* on CNN, visited the *Wing Luke Museum's* Bruce Lee exhibit. Bell told the *Seattle Times* he draws inspiration from Lee's philosophy. "Judge what everybody else is doing, pick out the parts you want, but then do you."



**Comedian W. Kamau Bell draw**  
Bell is such a fan of Lee that the Wing Lu...  
SEATTLETIMES.COM

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