**NO on 645**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**
Wednesday, July 8, 2026
**No645.com**

# BROAD COALITION ANNOUNCES FORMATION OF I-645 OPPOSITION CAMPAIGN WITH $3 MILLION IN INITIAL PLEDGES

*Teachers, Labor Unions, Nurses, Early Learning Providers, and Small Business Owners Are Joining Forces to Oppose Hedge Fund Mogul Brian Heywood's Self-Serving Ballot Measure:*

*Vote NO on Cuts to Health Care and Education*
*Vote NO on Tax Increases on Working Families*
*Vote NO on Initiative 645*

**SEATTLE, WA** – Today, a broad coalition of more than 100 advocacy groups and community leaders from across Washington announced the formation of the NO on 645 campaign committee. The campaign will work to defeat hedge fund multi-millionaire Brian Heywood's Initiative 645, which is expected to qualify for the November ballot.

With Heywood's ability to spend millions of dollars of his own money to pass I-645, the battle is expected to be costly. **The NO campaign launches with $3 million in early pledges from coalition members, money that will go directly into educating voters about the harms that Heywood's measure would cause.**

SEIU local unions, Washington Education Association, and Washington Federation of State Employees have each made early pledges of $1 million to the campaign, countering the $2.88 million that Heywood's committee, Let's Go Washington, has raised so far.

Initial backers of the campaign include a broad range of labor unions, advocacy organizations, and community members who are worried about the impacts of I-645, including small business leaders, working families, nurses, early learning providers, and prominent civic leaders and individuals across the state. More than 100 organizations and leaders have already joined the coalition to defeat I-645. ***See below for statements from coalition members and the full list of endorsers on our new website.***

Initiative 645 is hedge fund manager Brian Heywood's latest attempt to lower his own taxes, this time by repealing the Millionaires Tax. Passage of his measure would cut $13 billion in funding for core services like health care, K-12 education, and childcare, blowing a huge hole in state budget projections. This would lead to:

- Larger class sizes and fewer one-on-one supports for K-12 students
- Increased health care costs for Washington families
- More cuts to child care, making it more expensive for working families
- Elimination of free school meals for many K-12 students

I-645 also puts numerous critical tax breaks for Washingtonians in jeopardy, tax breaks that are only paid for by the Millionaires Tax. Specifically, I-645 would:

- Increase the B&O tax on most Washington small businesses
- Increase taxes for 500,000 working families by limiting who's eligible for the Working Families Tax Credit
- Increase taxes on over-the counter medicine, diapers, and other essential household items

Last week, members of the coalition released results of a poll showing that **only 38 percent of Washington voters support passing Initiative 645, with 57 percent saying they would vote 'No'** – a 19 point margin against the measure**.** Conventional wisdom is that initiatives need to start above 60% in polling, and Initiative 645 starts 22 points under that benchmark.

**Statement from Erik Houser on behalf of the NO on 645 coalition:**

> *"Republican hedge fund mogul Brian Heywood is at it again, seeking to slash his own taxes while cutting essential funding for health care, child care, and K-12 education, and putting in jeopardy tax cuts for working and middle class families and small businesses. Initiative 645 is deeply fiscally irresponsible, and is written so sloppily that legal experts say it puts a wide range of other revenue and programs at serious legal risk.*

*“The consequences for the state would be serious, and opponents of I-645 are taking nothing for granted. With more than 100 coalition partners joining the campaign already and $3 million in early pledges, our campaign will be working hard between now and Election Day to educate voters across our state.”*

**###**

**<u>What Coalition Members Are Saying:</u>**

***Statement from April Sims, President, Washington State Labor Council AFL-CIO:***

"The Washington State Labor Council strongly opposes I-645, a tax cut for millionaires that would leave working families footing the bill for K-12 education, health care, and child care. People earning over $1 million a year can afford to pay their fair share so 600,000 working families get a tax break. We urge the public to join us in opposing this measure put forward by a California millionaire who doesn’t want to pay his taxes.”

***Statement from Jennifer M. Allen, CEO, Planned Parenthood Alliance Advocates:***

“Planned Parenthood Alliance Advocates – Washington is proud to endorse the No on I-645 campaign because health care for Washingtonians is on the line. For years, Washington has had one of the most upside-down tax codes in the nation, with low- and middle-income families paying the highest share in taxes while the wealthiest pay little. Protecting the state’s Millionaires Tax is critical to protecting access to health care from some mega millionaires who don’t want to pay their fair share. With the Trump administration and a hostile federal government constantly threatening health care coverage and access, Washington must do everything in its power to protect affordable health care, and rejecting I-645 is a critical step in doing that.”

***Statement from Bryan Kirschner, local AI tech entrepreneur:***

“As someone who made more than $1 million last year, I oppose I-645 because it will give a handful of mega-millionaires an unneeded tax cut at the expense of 99.5% of Washingtonians. I don't support cutting education and healthcare, and I certainly don't want a tax cut that will eventually be paid for by small businesses and working families in my community - that's not fair for anyone.***”***

***Statement from Henry Tan, research intern at Seattle Children's and recent graduate of University of Washington:***

"I worked five separate jobs as a student across college to help finance my tuition and living expenses. Now I-645 is going to cut billions from education and effectively take money out of my pocket, the pockets of other hard-working students, and hundreds of thousands of

Washington families by defunding the Working Families Tax Credit. I don't make enough to pay for basics now while paying for the medical school application process, and I-645 is going to make things even less affordable by driving up my taxes and future education costs." - Henry Tan, research intern at Seattle Children's and recent UW graduate.

***Statement from Dan Olmstead, small business owner in Auburn:***

“Small business owners like me can't afford I-645. It's already almost too expensive to start or maintain a small business, and this initiative will makes things worse by effectively raising B&O taxes on small businesses to fund I-645's tax cut for mega-millionaires. I don't see how this improves life for anyone other than the I-645's hedge-fund backer.”

***Statement from Justin Gill, DNP, APRN, RN, FNP-C, President, Washington State Nurses Association:***

"As a health care provider, I see firsthand the harm that occurs when patients delay essential care or leave chronic conditions untreated because they simply cannot afford it. The Millionaires Tax provides critical resources to protect Medicaid and strengthen healthcare programs and services across Washington state. Eliminating this tax would pull the rug out from under families who are already forced to choose between paying for basic necessities and getting the healthcare they need. At a time when federal policies are threatening healthcare coverage and access, we must defeat I-645 to support working families and protect access to care."

***Statement from Pierce County Executive Ryan Mello:***

“I proudly support the Millionaires Tax because it represents an important step toward creating a fairer, more equitable tax system in Washington, one where the wealthiest among us pay their fair share. For far too long, our upside-down tax code has placed a disproportionate burden on working families while those with the greatest means contribute the least. Here in Pierce County, we see the consequences of this every day. That is why I stand with Washington's working families, and I will continue to fiercely advocate for a tax system that invests in our communities and creates greater economic opportunity for everyone.”

***Statement from Janie White, President, Washington Education Association:***

“Don’t take away the support our kids need to give tax breaks to people who already make more than $1 million a year. Initiative 645 would take away funding for less-crowded classrooms and better school resources. Our students’ families and our own families are being threatened with $13 billion in cuts to the education, healthcare and human services we all depend on. Washington is not the kind of place where we vote to eliminate universal school lunches and let more kids go hungry to give a tax break to billionaires and multimillionaires. Say no to I-645.”

***Statement from Sterling Harders, President, SEIU 775:***

"SEIU 775 staunchly opposes Initiative 645, Brian Heywood's latest scheme to lower his taxes while making everyone else in Washington suffer. With President Trump's HR 1 kicking thousands more off from their healthcare in October, it is more important than ever that the state avoid cuts to essential programs in health care, home care, childcare, and K-12 education. Initiative 645 would upend Washington's budget and put important tax breaks for everyday people at risk; all so Heywood can avoid paying the Millionaires Tax. We strongly oppose Initiative 645 and are committed to making sure the NO campaign has the resources it needs to win in November."

***Statement from Valarie Howard, NAC and Connie Ordonia, RN, SEIU Healthcare 1199NW Executive Board Members:***

“Our healthcare system is barreling towards an emergency, and if our State has any hope of preventing the disastrous impacts to patient care, access and affordability, and staffing of our hospitals and clinics, it starts with keeping the tax on millionaires. By asking the wealthiest among us to pay their fair share, we have a chance to keep tens of thousands of patients insured, prevent or minimize the layoffs healthcare workers are already facing, and keep the doors open at the hospitals and clinics serving our communities. What’s on our ballot in November is not just about tax fairness or economic justice – it’s about the health and safety of our communities. That’s why healthcare workers are voting No on I-645.”

***Statement from Rian Watt, Executive Director, Economic Opportunity Institute:***

“People across Washington are already struggling amid an increasing affordability crisis. Initiative 645 will make that problem worse by taking $13 billion away from investments in housing, health care, child care, and more. Washington state already has one of the most regressive tax codes in the country — we can't afford another tax break for Brian Heywood and his millionaire friends.”

***Statement from Kristin Rowe-Finkbeiner, Executive Director, MomsRising:***

“The ballot measure Brian Heywood and his cronies are pushing would cause enormous, lasting harm to Washington’s moms, families, working people, small businesses, and our economy. It would give the ultra-wealthy a tax break and leave Washington families footing a higher bill for child care, health care, education, school meals, and more. It would reinstate the sales tax on diapers and over-the-counter medications in the midst of today’s care and affordability crises. Moms will work hard to defeat this measure and defend the Millionaires Tax, which will make our state stronger and more successful.”

***Statement from Tricia Schroeder, President, SEIU 925:***

“I-645 would rip millions from early learning and public schools, with devastating results. Quality early learning prepares kids for kindergarten and beyond, while education support professionals make sure they get the attention to succeed while in public schools. Brian Heywood would rather give himself a tax break than invest in our kids. Our union wholeheartedly endorses the Millionaires Tax and opposes Initiative 645 this November.”

***Statement from Dr. Charles Mayer, practicing family physician and Co-Chair of the WPSR Economic Inequity & Health Task Force:***

“In my 35 years practicing medicine in Washington, I have seen first hand how important a robust social safety net is to protecting the health of my patients. By funding key public priorities and making our tax code more fair for Washington families, the Millionaires Tax is a really positive and impactful health intervention. So I ask the public to join me in voting no on I-645.”

***Statement from Reiny Cohen, Co-Interim Executive Director, Fuse Washington:***

“Brian Heywood is at it again — using his fortune to run another ballot initiative so he can get out of paying what he truly owes in taxes. This initiative robs funding for the schools where our kids learn, makes health care more expensive, and raises taxes on everyday Washingtonians just so Brian and his rich friends can stay rich. But we see right through him. When he tried this two years ago he lost spectacularly, and he will lose again.”

***Statement from Roxana Norouzi, Executive Director, OneAmerica:***

"We are Washingtonians. We are workers, parents, neighbors, entrepreneurs, and community leaders. Like families across our state, immigrant families want good schools, affordable childcare, safe communities, and the opportunity to afford a better future. That's why we're supporting No on 645 to protect investments that strengthen all of our communities. Our future can't be decided by a Wall Street mega millionaire looking to divide us to give himself and his super-rich friends a giant tax break. It must be decided by us, working people who build this prosperous state."

***Statement from Eli Taylor Goss, Executive Director, Washington State Budget and Policy Center:***

"I-645 would strike a huge blow to funding for important priorities like schools and childcare as well as to funding for much-needed tax cuts for small businesses. It would also put a halt to plans for an important expansion to Washington’s Working Families Tax Credit, an annual tax refund that we know helps many families keep up with the skyrocketing cost of living. In short, Initiative 645 would be a big step back for communities, families, and individuals in our state and voters should reject it."

***Statement from Danielle Alvarado, Executive Director of Working Washington and the Fair Work Center:***

"Initiative 645 would gut the Working Families Tax Credit to give a tax break to the wealthiest among us. As working people, we’ve seen this before, and we know how to fight back.

Together, we’re standing up against I-645 to protect the Millionaires Tax and make life more affordable in Washington."