NO on 645

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FORMER GOVERNOR JAY INSLEE ENDORSES NO ON 645

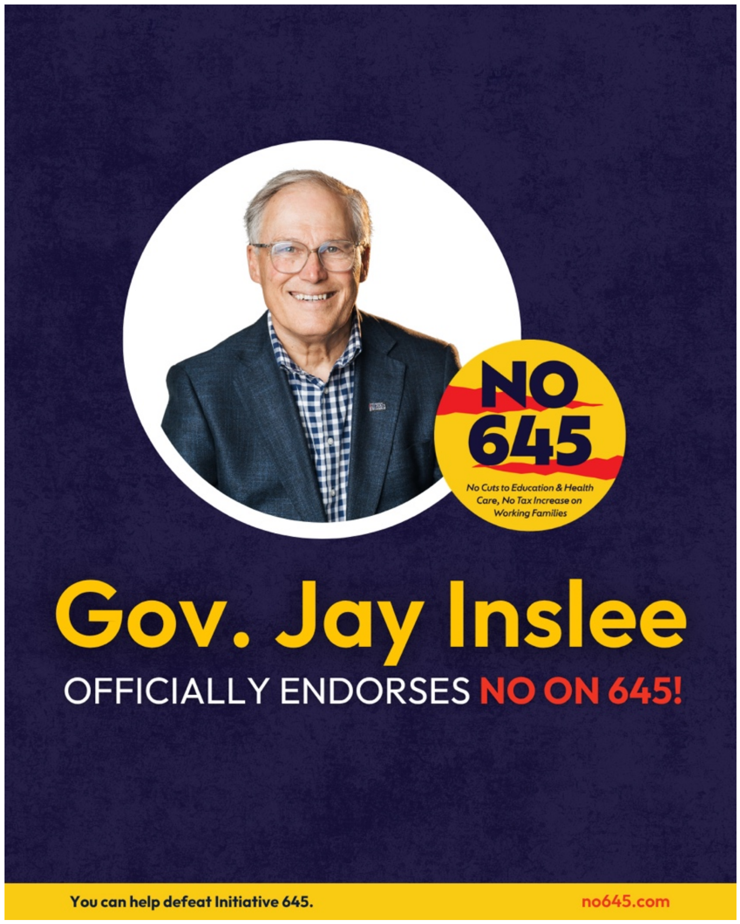
Inslee: "Let me be very clear: I emphatically oppose Brian Heywood's Initiative 645 and his attempts to cut his own taxes by destroying the state budget."

SEATTLE, WA – Today, the NO on 645 campaign announced the endorsement of former Governor Jay Inslee, the second longest serving Governor of Washington in state history.

Statement from former Governor Jay Inslee:

"Let me be very clear: I emphatically oppose Brian Heywood's Initiative 645 and his attempts to cut his own taxes by destroying the state budget. Just like in 2024, Heywood has applied his trademark lack of

intellectual rigor to the initiative process, choosing a ballot measure that would cut his own taxes while gutting funding for K-12 education, health care, and child care. The policy is bad, the politics are bad, the legal analysis is bad, and even Tim Eyman isn't a fan.



"The Millionaires Tax was an important step by our state to fix Washington's upside down tax code where middle-class families pay a far bigger share of their income in taxes compared to Brian Heywood and his friends. I would have proudly signed the Millionaires Tax if it had come to my desk as governor, and I support Governor Ferguson and the legislature continuing to reform the upside down tax code so that we can keep essential services and reduce the tax burden on low- and middle-income households.

"We all know that Washington is the best state to live in the country, and one of the very best to do business. I am thankful for the employers, entrepreneurs, and business leaders who make our state their home, and have generated such tremendous economic and job growth over the past several decades. Washington would not be the state it is without their contributions, and we are thankful that so many people choose to live here, start their businesses here, and create jobs here. It's encouraging to hear from many of the potential payers of the tax who are happy to increase their taxes so that low- and middle-income families, and small businesses, can afford to stay in Washington too."

Earlier this month, Governor Bob Ferguson and dozens of coalition members kicked off the NO on 645 campaign in Seattle. More than 100 advocacy groups and community leaders from across Washington have already joined the NO on 645 campaign coalition, and the campaign launched 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.

Coalition members joined Governor Ferguson to outline the stakes if Initiative 645 were to pass: devastating budget cuts to health care, K-12 education, and childcare, and almost certainly significant tax breaks eliminated for small businesses and working families (see more details below on the impacts of I-645). These outcomes would result from Heywood's sloppy and irresponsible drive to eliminate the Millionaires Tax package, an action he would personally benefit from.

And last week, the No campaign was endorsed by Rick Steves and Ken Jennings, prominent Washingtonians who are expected to pay the tax when it is implemented. Rick Steves stated, "Vote No on Initiative 645! Why? Well, if you're like me and you've reached a point where you have enough money and you understand that consuming more will not bring you more joy or security, you understand that this tax package will have no real negative impact on anyone. Instead, by defeating I-645, our entire community—rich, poor, and those in the middle—will enjoy the benefits of a society where childcare is affordable, there's free breakfast and lunch for students, reduced taxes on small businesses, and more tax credits for working families. That's my kind of deal."

More about Initiative 645:

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 serious jeopardy, tax breaks that were adopted by the legislature with the expectation that they would be 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

Earlier this month, 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.

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