

May 5, 2025

The Honorable Bob Ferguson
Governor, State of Washington
PO Box 40002
Olympia, Washington 98504-0002

Transmitted electronically to Bob.Ferguson@GOV.wa.gov

Dear Governor Ferguson,

On behalf of the organizations listed below, we are respectfully **requesting a veto of Section 2 of ESHB 2049**. The bill treats school districts differently by retaining the inflationary growth factor for school levies at Seattle CPI but changing the per student state-funded Local Effort Assistance (LEA) rate to the US Implicit Price Deflator (IPD).

As originally introduced, ESHB 2049 included a state and local property tax growth limit increase; a \$500 per student enrichment levy “lift”; per student levy equalization/LEA increases over several years; removal of the special education cap in the 2028-29 school year; and a K-12 Equity in Funding work group.

The bill was modified by the House Finance Committee, and then further changed on the House floor so that only two elements remained: the \$500 per student enrichment levy increase and the funding work group. Neither of those was sufficient to make the bill NTIB, so the House floor striker changed the inflation rate for LEA from Seattle CPI to IPD to create a “savings” and keep the bill alive.

Instead of changing the inflationary factor for **both** enrichment levies and LEA, the Legislature chose to widen the inequities between property rich and property poor school districts by requiring their per student inflation to grow at different rates. LEA is provided to promote equity among school districts regardless of their zip code; ESHB 2049’s Section 2 undermines that goal. Without a veto of this section, this policy change will further widen funding disparities and limit opportunities for thousands of students who rely on LEA to access the same enrichment opportunities as non-LEA districts.

Please veto Section 2 of ESHB 2049.

Respectfully,



Eastern Washington
Quality Schools
Coalition

A coalition of 50 school
districts from North Central
and Northeastern
Washington



cc: Shane Esquibel, Interim Chief of Staff
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