



## Cultural Access Washington

*For Arts, Science,  
and Heritage*

### **Cultural Access Washington Program 2015 Legislation Summary as of January 12, 2015**

#### **Purpose**

- To allow creation of a program that will have public and educational benefits and provide economic support for cultural organizations throughout the state
- Create the potential to address our community's diminished access to cultural experiences and/or education programs for K-12 students in public schools
- Cultural organizations could include: heritage facilities, children's museums, science centers, fine arts, zoos, aquariums, theaters, art museums, performing arts
- Examples of what the funding could be used for:
  - reduced or free admission
  - providing education experiences at an organization's facilities or in the schools
  - opportunities to diverse and underserved populations and communities
  - creating experiences outside an organization's own facilities
  - increased public access through technology
  - building capacity of community based organizations

#### **Vote of the people**

- Initial imposition of funding mechanism requires approval by a majority of voters in the jurisdiction
- Tax expires after 7 years unless reauthorized by a vote of the people
- Modeled after a successful program in Colorado, which first passed in 1989 and has overwhelmingly been reauthorized by voters since

#### **Funding Sources**

- Enables a county to propose to voters a slight increase in the sales tax or property tax which is dedicated to support a cultural access program
- This legislation does not impose a new tax, it simply enables a county to create the program and ***the people decide if they choose to fund it or not***
  - County may decide which form of funding mechanism to impose
  - Counties may form a program under an interlocal agreement
  - Funds may not replace or materially diminish any funding usually or customarily provided by the state for state-related cultural organizations



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### Limitations on funding mechanism

- Sales tax increase is capped to 0.1%
- Property tax is limited to an amount that equals the same amount that an incremental 0.1% sales tax would collect
- Property tax increase is subject to reduction if total of property taxes would otherwise exceed statutory limits

### City Cultural Access Program

- A city can create a cultural access program subject to same limitations as a county, if:
  - the relevant county declines its authority to create a program by resolution or
  - the county does not place a proposition before the people by June 30, 2017

### Use of funds

- Counties are given broad discretion to define programs, but they must include a Public School Access Program (e.g. access, transportation, coordination with curricula)
- **Funding allocation rules for large counties for counties with 1.5 million population or greater**
  - Pay start-up fees and admin costs (up to 1.25% per year for admin costs) of “designated entity” responsible for grants & compliance
  - 10% of remaining funds for **public school access program**
  - 75% of *remainder* to **regional cultural organizations** located in the county (“substantial” with broad-based membership and minimum annual revenues )
    - Ranking formula (attendance and revenue components)
    - Support capped at 15% of annual revenues
    - Restriction against capital expenditures
    - Must participate in public school access program
  - Remaining funds to “designated public agency,” responsible for grants to “community-based cultural organizations” (funds can be used for capital expenditures, including real property acquisition)
- **Funding allocation rules for counties with less than 1.5 million population**
  - Pay start-up fees and admin costs (to be disclosed in ballot measure)
  - County sets percentage for Public School Access Program
  - Remainder to “designated entity” for distribution to cultural organizations per county-established guidelines (funds can be used for capital expenditures, including real property acquisition)

***For any additional information or questions please contact:***

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