



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: September 24, 2024

Broad Coalition of Community Organizations and Labor Unions Responds to Mayor’s Proposed Budget with Call for New Progressive Revenue to Address Structural Shortfall

Over two dozen community and labor groups joined in issuing the following statement upon the release of Mayor Harrell’s proposed budget:

In this biennial budget process, Seattle’s elected leaders will be grappling with a massive shortfall in the City’s general fund. This structural shortfall requires a structural solution, not stopgap measures that will simply kick the problem another year down the road. Responsible leadership means working to secure and deploy the revenue necessary to make our city healthy, safe, housed, working, thriving, and green. Seattle needs and deserves new progressive revenue to help meet our city’s commitments as soon as possible.

Balancing the budget through cuts to vital city programs and services is not acceptable. Additionally, the Jumpstart Payroll Expense Tax provides crucial revenue for affordable housing, Green New Deal programs, Small Business Assistance, and the Equitable Development Initiative. The need for all these investments has grown significantly since the tax was first implemented, and the need for strong city infrastructure and resources is needed now more than ever. For these reasons, the City must create additional streams of revenue.

Under Mayor Harrell’s leadership, the City has already begun the work of assessing new revenue options that improve upon Washington state’s typically inequitable patterns of taxation. The Revenue Stabilization Workgroup [final report](#) lists some solutions that are feasible in the short-term and others that require more analysis and development. We urge our elected leaders to begin the work necessary to approve new progressive revenue that will address the structural general fund shortfall and put our City on the path to financial health and the ability to serve Seattle’s residents in a responsible and sustainable way.

The Mayor’s proposed budget is expected to rely heavily on transfers of revenue from the city’s Jumpstart Payroll Expense Tax to balance the structural shortfall in the general fund. Throughout this year, many of the organizations in this coalition have urged the Mayor’s office to convene the Payroll Expense Tax Oversight Committee as established by [Ordinance 126393](#). Five members were appointed by the Council in 2023, but the committee is still awaiting the Mayor’s appointments. This

committee should be playing a crucial role in providing transparency, accountability, and community input in the allocation revenues from the Jumpstart Payroll Expense Tax.

The following community and labor organizations join in issuing the above statement:

350 Seattle
Beacon Development Group
Bellwether Housing
Be:Seattle
Disability Mobility Initiative
Economic Opportunity Institute
Friends of Little Saigon
Habitat for Humanity Seattle-King County
Housing Development Consortium
IBEW 46
InterIm CDA
Lake City Taskforce on Homelessness
LISC Puget Sound
MLK Labor
Mount Baker Housing Association
Multicultural Community Coalition
OneAmerica
Peoples Economy Lab
PROTEC17
Puget Sound Sage
Queer Power Alliance
Real Change
Seattle Chinatown International District Preservation & Development Authority
Seattle Human Services Coalition
Seattle/King County Coalition on Homelessness
Seattle Neighborhood Greenways
Seattle Solidarity Budget
Solid Ground
SouthEast Effective Development
Tech 4 Housing
The Urbanist
Transit Riders Union
WA Build Back Black Alliance
WHEEL
Working Washington

PRESS CONTACTS:

Katie Wilson, General Secretary, Transit Riders Union: 206-781-7204, katie@transitriders.org

Alison Eisinger, Executive Director, Seattle/King County Coalition on Homelessness, (206) 349-0350, alison@homelessinfo.org