



# NEWS

## AMERICANS FOR TAX REFORM

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## Washington State Taxpayers Teach Educators and Legislators a Lesson

*-Failing student performance does not warrant more tax dollars-*

**Washington D.C.** – Washington State’s Initiative 884 was firmly repudiated by a plurality of voters on Tuesday. Over sixty percent of voters rejected an increase in the state sales tax for a broken education system.

For the last decade, the state’s per-pupil education spending has increased at almost twice the rate of inflation, increasing from \$3.96 billion in 1980 to \$7.67 billion in 2000. Despite this consistent increase in funding, student performance has plummeted.

**“After watching years of wasteful spending being thrown into a broken system, taxpayers ordered that it end here and now,”** said taxpayer advocate Grover Norquist, president of Americans for Tax Reform. **“After all, more money for ineffective programs simply translates into well funded, yet still ineffective programs, adding to the growth of government.”**

By rejecting Initiative 884, citizens in Washington refused to raise the sales tax by 15.4 percent, forcing the special interests out of education and calling for real reform. If passed, the measure would have given the state the dubious distinction of having the highest sales tax in the nation.

**“Students and taxpayers in Washington have declared that education will not be in the hands of special interests clamoring for more of their hard earned money,”** continued Norquist. **“The question now is when will the legislature receive that same message? Now is the time for policymakers in Olympia to stand up to special interests and bring accountability back to the education system of Washington.”**

Americans for Tax Reform (ATR) is a non-partisan coalition of taxpayers and taxpayer groups who oppose all federal, state and local tax increases. For more information or to arrange an interview, please contact Chris Butler at (202) 785-0266 or at [cbutler@atr.org](mailto:cbutler@atr.org).