

YOUR FIRST CALL RESOURCE

September 4, 2019

Citizen Commission for Performance Measurement of Tax Preferences  
PO Box 40910  
Olympia, WA 98504  
Sent via email to [JLARC@leg.wa.gov](mailto:JLARC@leg.wa.gov)

**Re: Performance Measurement of Tax Preferences**

Greetings

The Renton Chamber of Commerce represents 650 businesses of all sizes located in Renton, Washington, but with subsidiaries all across the U.S., including in, and employing more than 50,000+. Many of our members support the U.S. aerospace industry and depend on the aerospace industry and its workforce as being absolutely vital for the health and success of many businesses which would not normally be identified as "aerospace industry." This is especially evident in Renton.

Recognizing the importance the aerospace industry and its trickle down impact to our local economy, the Renton Chamber of Commerce is not only pleased to submit comments to the Citizen Commission for Performance Measurement of Tax Preference, but we felt it imperative that we render an opinion on the same on behalf of the membership we represent, as well as the community we are a part of.

The presence of core aerospace manufacturing, produces indirect effects that stimulate a lot of business activity for service businesses and retailers alike. Having been a life-long resident in Renton, I remember the Boeing strike in 1995, and the impact it had with even the short-term loss of the industry --- and it crippled our community. The trickle-down impact of the loss of an industry has never been as prevalent to me as to see our community shut down with the Boeing strike. The restaurants near to the plant had to close up because of the loss of daily business and support. Gas stations that were local closed for the duration of the strike. Grocery stores went without the regular patronage of the workforce which was now without income and shelves were empty. As these local businesses had to shorten their schedules, tighten their budgets and even close, other local residents were impacted as a result too. The convenience of the "local" shops, restaurants and services were now inconvenienced as they had to either go without, or find alternatives elsewhere. This strike of 1995 and the impact it had upon our community was subject of consideration recently as another local union talked of going on strike – the consideration to the negative impacts that could pose upon our community as a result (compared to the impact we felt in the 90's), was a helpful catalyst in the negotiation processes with parties more eager to seek resolution.

To the contrary, when Boeing and the aerospace industry are thriving, our community feels it and is better because of it.

Renton has grown dramatically over the last five – six years, because of the local and regional confidence in Aerospace that came from extension of the tax package in 2013. In 2015, we commenced development of new billion-dollar development at the south tip of Lake Washington, located next door to the Boeing plant, with over 712,000 sq ft of Class A commercial office space and over 30,000 sq ft of retail space. We have seen massive new investment in retail space at The Landing with over 600,000 sft ft of 100+ shops and restaurants, three new hotels (with a 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> proposed), the development of Top Golf (a global sports adult entertainment community) and 1000s of residential apartments being built in the area. This influx of development is owing in part to the confidence of continued aerospace presence.

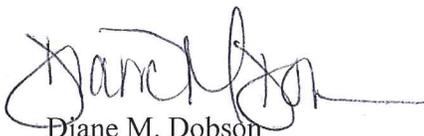
Just 3 blocks south of the Boeing facility, we have our public school districts new STEM school, which opened in September 2018, and is a “choice” urban elementary school, that Boeing is a huge support for – both with support for the classroom and supplies as well as the STEM based curriculum and in class presence. Boeing is also one of our leading supporters of our Chamber’s Business-Education Exchange with our school district as well, providing opportunities for educators and teachers alike to explore the aerospace industry from the inside. The provide flight opportunities and lessons for underserved and underprivileged youth from our local high school near to the municipal airport Boeing shares at their manufacturing plant.

Likewise, with the philanthropic and community supportive feel that Boeing leads by example of, their well-paid workforce notably takes that same approach within our community when they are presented the opportunity. You see employees contributing from their matching donation funds and there are volunteer groups which proudly sport the Boeing attire as they volunteer within the community - supporting other nonprofits and endeavors. The employees are excited to contribute to the local economy through not just essential goods and services, but in those extras as well – our car dealerships, our retail shops, beauty salons & spa services, development and construction through new house builds and remodel work, landscaping, gym memberships and entertainment options as well. Their workforce is excited to support the local community of which they are a part of and it is noticed and it is felt.

Therefore, we support the Aerospace industry position that the Citizen Commission **not endorse** the Legislative Auditor’s recommendation that the performance metrics for the incentives be clarified. In Renton, we know that the objective to maintain and grow jobs is being achieved--both in and out of aerospace.

Respectfully submitted,

RENTON CHAMBER OF COMMERCE



Diane M. Dobson  
Director  
Renton Chamber of Commerce  
625 S 4<sup>th</sup> Street  
Renton, WA 98057  
425.226.4560  
[diane@gorenton.com](mailto:diane@gorenton.com)