



# The Right to a Defense: A State Constitutional Obligation

## Current Funding Structure



Washington's current approach to funding makes it one of the lowest contributors in the nation to public defense.

Washington counties pay over

**95%**

of the cost of public defense services (\$220M/year)

The state pays less than

**5%**

**(\$12M)**

*per year*

## A NEW PROPOSAL – SSB 6346

### Include 10% for Local Government Public Defense Funding



**End justice by geography and balance the funding approach for public defense.**

- SSB 6346** proposes dedicating 7% of the revenue generated by the tax on millionaires to public defense. While this is a significant increase, it still doesn't meet the long-term need to meet the constitutional requirement to provide adequate public defense.
- New caseload standards adopted by the Supreme Court will increase costs 2-3 times current expenditures by 2036.
- Phasing in small increases in dedicated funding between now and 2036 ensures the rights of low income individuals and the most vulnerable are protected.



# The **Public Defense Crisis** in Washington State



**Scan to read the  
full Public Defense  
white paper.**