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Seattle, WA 98125  
October 29, 2017

Sharon Tomiko Santos  
House Representative and   
Education Committee Chair  
Washington State  
PO Box 40600  
Olympia, WA 98504

Dear Representative Santos:

This letter contains important information regarding the future allocation of fund in Washington State’s higher education systems.

Introduction  
Washington State spend is budgeted to spend over $38 million on education in the coming year (Washington). Unfortunately, the allocation of that money shows little investment into programs for the development and cultivation of tech-based-industry workforce (Washington). As the pace of innovation increases, the ability of any single institution to keep up with the demand for trained personnel and developing new programs will quickly become obsolete (Lee 6; Mattauch 40-2) If Washington State fails to capitalize on the new trend in the “citizen scientist” (Lee 6), it will risk losing the current educational edge it holds on tech focused career training. This would almost certainly lead to a stagnant state economy and open the state’s labor markets to increased risks for recession. **The best solution for negating this risk is for Washington State to direct educational spending towards crowdsourced learning tool development platforms.**

## Privately owned solution platforms cannot keep up with demand for scale.

In order for private institutions to keep up with growing educational demands, their costs must go up equally. In time, Washington state will no longer be able to afford these costs.

* The cost of technical labor in Washington state is astounding, to say the least. A software engineer can expect to earn upwards of $110k annually(Glassdoor.com, 2017). We cannot, as a state afford the costs of this skill bar. The only feasible alternative is to open the way for crowdsourced community driven innovation!
* With only a few private platforms providing these educational services, Washington State has few options for shopping competitors; however, by investing into open sourced platforms the state can draw developer talent to that market (Levine). This will eventually serve as the catalyst that sparks several new start-up projects that will then compete with the currently established market.
* By providing open sourced tools, Washington State will have a tool for motivating the students of today, and the workers of tomorrow, towards Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (Stem) skill sets. This will help ensure a steady supply of a highly skilled and highly productive work force for years to come.

## Crowdsourced learning platforms help keep contributing developers aware of emergent technologies.

A major cost-factors in current tech industries is keeping the work force up to date on new production systems.

* Educational and expositional conferences are excellent ways to keep a work force on top of their skill set (Dubey 77). Businesses of tomorrow will also need to have a more cost-effective means to gauge public aptitude for newer more complex products. An open sourced platform could draw significant funding opportunities for Washington State to offload the costs of developing a more robust educational system.
* Open and crowd sourced education tools allow returning students to more easily come to terms with the application of the skills that are in demand. I don’t believe that the need for developers and engineers will ever go away, only the specific subsets of skills within those disciplines will be outdated. This presents a very potent opportunity for our state to demonstrate that it doesn’t take an advanced understanding of math or physics to be able to understand problem oriented programing and software development.

## Crowdsourced development ensures rapid market response.

As the rate at which new technologies emerge is increasing, the complexity of next-generation problems grows.

* Tech-based industries have become very reliant upon highly trained and educated individuals innovating creative solutions to unforeseen problems (Tran-Thanh 90-1). Modern technology allows for ever increasing levels of remote design, consultation, and development of abstract solutions (Tran-Thanh 90-1). Therefore, Washington state should invest heavily into the resources that will entice those innovators to live here while the collect salaries for providing remote services; doing so not only increases domestic production, but increase imports as well.
* Investing in educational tool development will draw awareness to the issue; this can lead to industry support as has happened in other government funded projects (Balamurugan 266). Industry funding contributions on top of government spending has historically led to great innovation such as the Very Large Array in New Mexico, and the advent of the internet.

**Conclusion**

By investing government funding into a technology sector that puts profits directly into the labor forces hands, state GDP will reflect on much higher levels of return than if those funds are spent on private platforms.  
Washington state needs to take the initiative to more thoroughly investigate crowdsourced learning management systems. If we do not seize the opportunities this low cost alternative offers, we stand to lead our future labor force down a path that will ensure they can never keep up with the ever increasing technical bar required by the future of our state’s industries.  
  
Thank you for your time, if you have any questions, please contact me at your earliest convenience. You can reach me at the.monopsony.fights.back@gmail.com, as well as by phone at 555.123.7272

Sincerely,

Ryan Peters

# References

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