

May 10, 2004



FRIENDS
of
THE SEATTLE
PUBLIC LIBRARY

Dear friends of libraries,

We need your help!

Tim Eyman is seeking signatures to get his latest tax-cutting initiative, I-864, on the ballot later this year. If Washington State voters pass I-864, regular property tax levies otherwise allowed to counties, cities and other local taxing districts will be reduced by 25% beginning in 2005. Based on CY 2004 levy dollars, the Department of Revenue estimates cuts to cities at \$133,705,000 and cuts to library taxing districts of \$34,290,000. Counties, hospitals, fire districts, and other local authorities also face significant cuts. Total tax cuts will equal at least \$430,000,000 annually.

According to the Association of Washington Cities, these cuts will significantly impact many localities because of heavy reliance on property taxes to run operations. Due to the passage of other Eyman initiatives and because of the recent economic downturn, local services - including our beloved libraries - have already taken major budget hits. We can't afford for these services to be cut any more!

The Friends of The Seattle Public Library is joining with other concerned citizens to fight back. Between now and July 2, Eyman must obtain 197,734 signatures to get I-864 on the ballot. We NEED your help to prevent this from happening. Our grassroots campaign is dispatching library lovers to major outlets that signature gatherers are expected to target, such as "big box" stores. We will notify store managers if signature gatherers are operating against store policy. And we will display signs that read, "Decline to Sign I-864- It will hurt libraries and fire districts." This effort will help our neighbors think twice about putting their signatures on petitions to get I-864 on the ballot.

How can you help?

- Give a few hours of your time on one or more weekends between now and the end of June, working the locations where we expect signature gatherers to operate;
- Forward to us the names and contact information of friends and family who might join this effort AND let us know if you or others can help now or later in advocating for libraries;
- Put a sign in the window of your car that declares, "Decline to Sign I-864" (ask us – we'll get you a copy of sign you can use!);
- Talk to friends, neighbors, family and associates. Ask them to "Decline to Sign I-864"

Reach us with your contact information by leaving a phone message at 206-523-4053 or by e-mailing us at advocacy@splfriends.org. Visit our website at www.splfriends.org to find out more about Friends of The Seattle Public Library.

And, thank you for any help you can give!

Sincerely,

Betsy Graef, President

Friends of The Seattle Public Library



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Seattle, WA 98126



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Special Edition

Urgent: I-864 and Libraries

Dear Friends,

We expect very soon to be mailing the next regular edition of the newsletter, with updated information about the impending closure of Southwest Library for expansion.

This special edition presents a call to action from Betsy Graef, president of the Friends of Seattle Public Library, our parent organization.

We've worked hard to advocate and support expansions and improvements of Seattle's library buildings. We must continue to advocate for keeping our new, improved buildings open!

We hope that the Friends of Southwest Library will help inform the public how Initiative 864 would cripple our library services.

Sincerely,

Julie Enevoldsen
Co-facilitator, Friends of Southwest Library
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