

Strengthening Washington's technology sector and the communities it serves

The Washington Technology Industry Association (WTIA) is a non-profit dedicated to building a strong and sustainable technology sector in a thriving community. We work to share technology expertise and represent the voice of the technology industry – from cutting-edge start-ups to Fortune 500 companies – in policy conversations. WTIA welcomes opportunities to partner with policymakers and our members to identify actionable solutions to pressing policy challenges.

Investment in education and workforce development

The technology sector is a leading employer and driver of growth throughout the state of Washington. The sector requires skilled workers and a robust talent pipeline to continue expanding its workforce. Building off of recent public funding for higher education, WTIA will continue to advocate for increased funding for a range of education programs that underpin this talent pipeline and enable new entrants into the tech workforce. This includes continued investment in higher education, expanded enrollment in computer science, and expansion of STEM programs for underrepresented and underserved populations. Additionally, WTIA will continue to seek state and federal funding for technology apprenticeships to help grow the tech talent pipeline, with a focus on women and underrepresented minorities.

Sound tax policy that promotes economic growth and job creation

In Washington, policymakers at the state and local levels are considering a range of potential revenue streams to offset budget shortfalls resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic. In this environment, it is important that lawmakers consult with industry associations while navigating this complex fiscal situation to ensure economic growth and job creation remain a key outcome of the pandemic recovery plan, and that tax policies are situated within a broader framework. WTIA will remain consistent in regard to its priorities on tax policy – clear metrics, accountability, parity across sectors, and investment into workforce development. More than ever, proposed new revenue streams must not hamper job creation or economic growth, both of which are critical for our economy to recover. WTIA also maintains that most tax policy is best addressed at the state-level for ease of compliance.

Sensible online privacy regulations

Policymakers and consumers alike are increasingly focused on privacy regulations at both the federal and state levels. Recognizing the diverse views of our broad membership, WTIA supports privacy legislation at the federal level in order to avoid a burdensome and contradictory patchwork of state regulations. However, California's evolution from the California Consumer Privacy Act (CCPA) to the California Privacy Rights Act (CPRA) would be problematic for both the tech industry and customers more broadly should it become the national de facto standard. Amid the absence of leadership at the federal level, the state of Washington has the opportunity to play a significant role in strengthening consumer trust in technology, while also ensuring the sector continues to innovate and grow. Against this dynamic backdrop, WTIA will work with members to present a unified position in response to draft legislation.

Diversity, equity, inclusion, and access in the technology sector

Building on the creation and ratification of the WTIA-led *Anti-Racism in Tech Pact*, WTIA will serve as a leader in the effort to promote diversity, access, and inclusion across the technology sector. This includes concrete efforts to overhaul current hiring practices; eliminate implicit bias and microaggressions that disproportionately impact Black, Indigenous, and People of Color in the workplace; and ensure organizational structures accurately reflect the populations in which they operate. Complementing the work of the *Anti-Racism in Tech Pact*, WTIA will enhance its policy leadership on these issues at the local and state levels.

About the Washington Technology Industry Association

WTIA is the unifying voice for the technology community in Washington. We consolidate the power of member companies to solve business problems they are unable to solve on their own. WTIA's transformative programs leverage the collective power of the technology industry for more than 1000 member companies and their employees. WTIA includes the 501c6 WTIA Member Trade Association, the 501c3 WTIA Workforce Institute doing business as Apprenti, and the for-profit company HR Benefits, Inc.

Strengthening our cities and communities

The rapid growth and development across Washington have placed unprecedented strain on cities and communities across the state, and it has been further compounded by the economic, health, and social impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. Improving livability is not just a moral imperative, but it is also critical to the tech sector's ability to attract and retain talent. WTIA welcomes opportunities to partner with policymakers and our members to identify actionable solutions to strengthen our cities and communities. Key areas of focus include education and STEM, civil liberties and social justice, equality and access, the crisis of homelessness, and sustainability.

Regulatory landscape that enables growth and innovation across the technology sector

Lawmakers are increasingly advancing legislation to regulate specific technologies, industry clusters, and the sector as a whole. As conversations at the federal, state, and local levels continue, WTIA will serve as a unifying voice for industry and play a supportive role in key areas. In Washington, WTIA supports a regulatory landscape that fosters innovation and promotes growth.