
SENATE JOINT MEMORIAL 8002

State of Washington 59th Legislature 2005 Regular Session

By Senators Roach, Benson, Delvin, Stevens, Mulliken, Pflug and Benton

Read first time 01/24/2005. Referred to Committee on Ways & Means.

1 TO THE HONORABLE GEORGE W. BUSH, PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES,
2 AND TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE AND THE SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF
3 REPRESENTATIVES, AND TO THE SENATE AND HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE
4 UNITED STATES, IN CONGRESS ASSEMBLED:

5 We, your Memorialists, the Senate and House of Representatives of
6 the State of Washington, in legislative session assembled, respectfully
7 represent and petition as follows:

8 WHEREAS, The federal excise tax on communications was enacted in
9 1898 for the purpose of funding the Spanish-American War; and

10 WHEREAS, The tax was introduced as a "temporary" luxury tax; and

11 WHEREAS, Telephone service is no longer a luxury, but rather a
12 necessity for consumers of all income levels; and

13 WHEREAS, The federal excise tax is regressive, as low-income
14 Americans pay a higher percentage of their income for telephone
15 services than high-income Americans; and

16 WHEREAS, Telecommunications services are the infrastructure upon
17 which new technologies, including the Internet, depend, and therefore
18 the telecommunications excise tax discourages expansion of both the
19 telephone infrastructure and new technologies; and

1 WHEREAS, The federal excise tax on telecommunications flows into
2 the general fund, rather than being earmarked for a specific purpose;
3 and

4 WHEREAS, Both Houses of Congress passed a repeal of the federal
5 excise tax on telecommunications in 2000, which was vetoed by President
6 William Jefferson Clinton;

7 NOW, THEREFORE, Your Memorialists respectfully request that
8 Congress repeal the federal excise tax on telecommunications.

9 BE IT RESOLVED, That copies of this Memorial be immediately
10 transmitted to the Honorable George W. Bush, President of the United
11 States, the President of the United States Senate, the Speaker of the
12 House of Representatives, and each member of Congress from the State of
13 Washington.

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