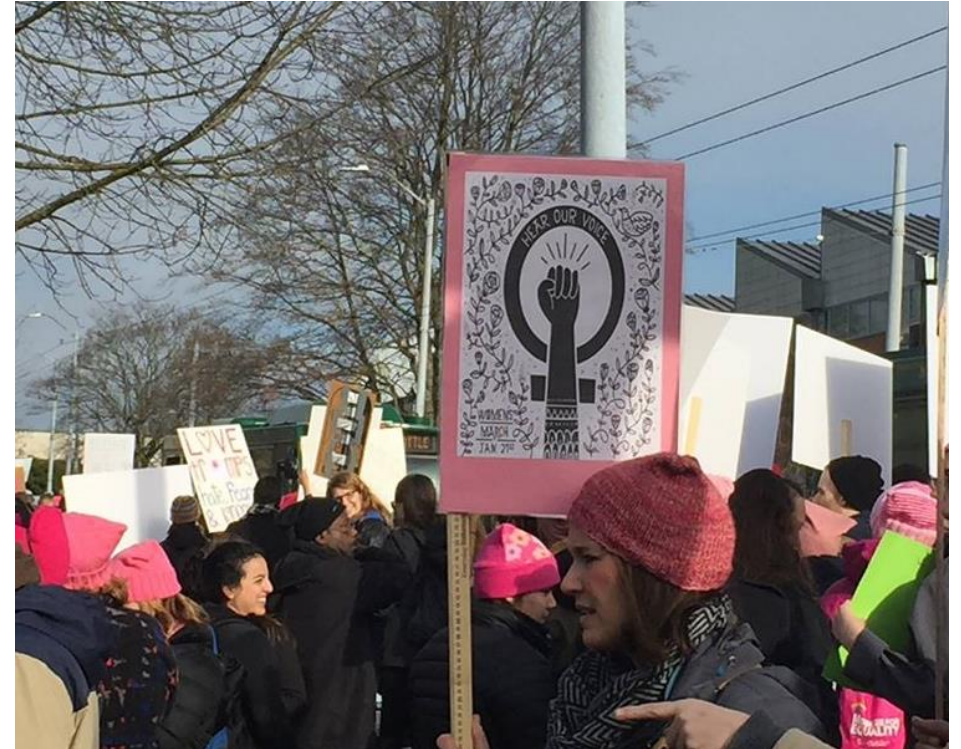


# Gender and Racial Equity in the Age of COVID

MARILYN WATKINS  
ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY INSTITUTE  
FOR AAUW SEATTLE: AUGUST 5, 2020



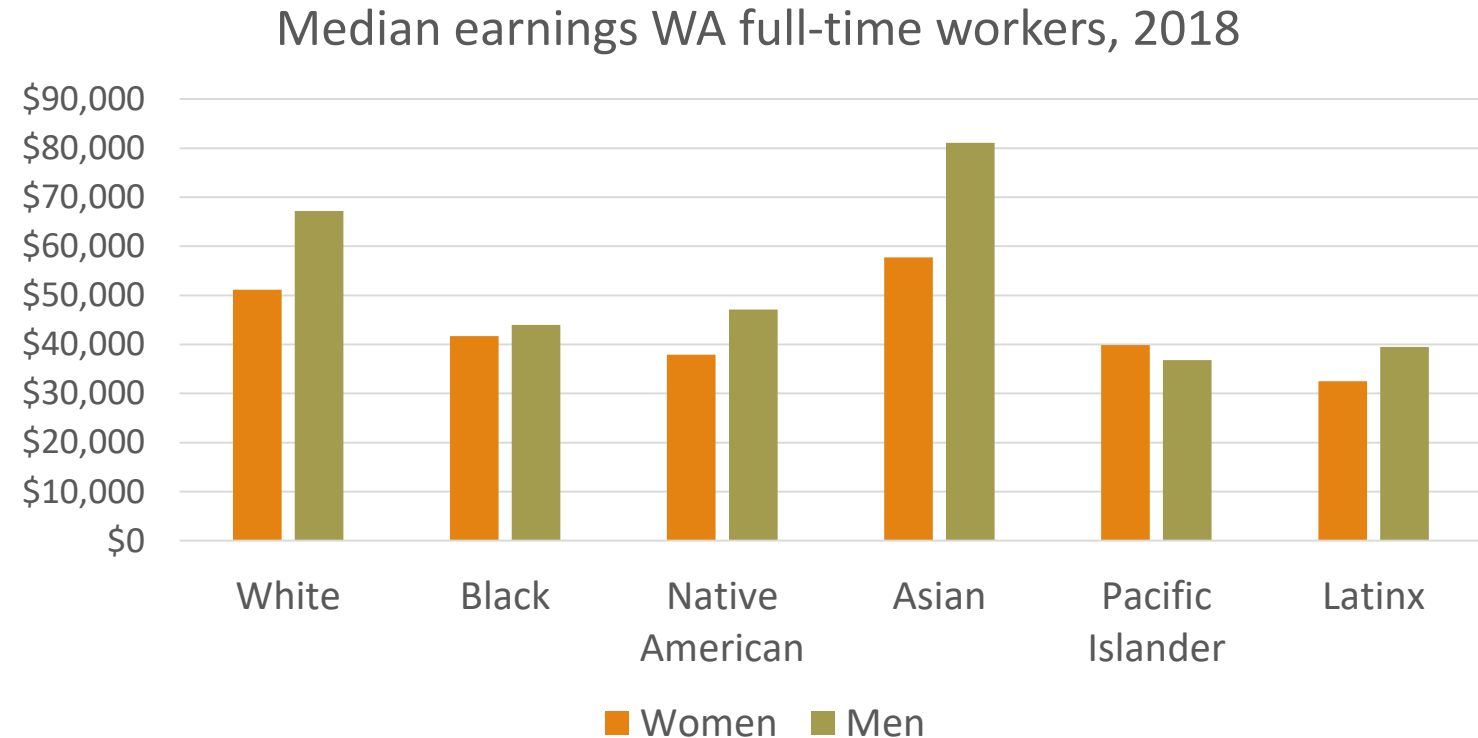
- ❖ Paid Sick & Safe Days
- ❖ Paid Family & Medical Leave
- ❖ Equal pay & opportunity
- ❖ Childcare affordability & compensation
- ❖ Higher ed access
- ❖ Health care affordability and access
- ❖ Fair and adequate state revenue



# Men make \$13,000 more annually than women for full-time work

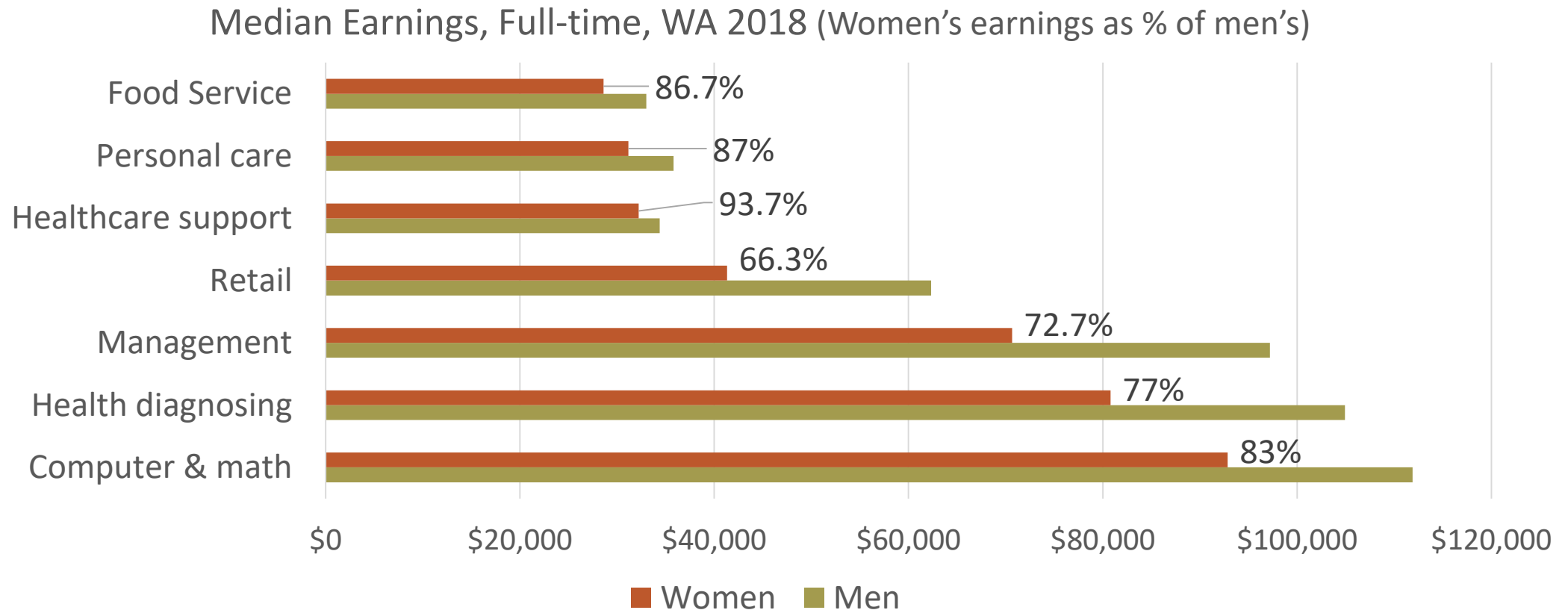
*White & Asian women make more than men of other racial groups.*

*Asian workers are especially likely to be in high or low wage jobs.*



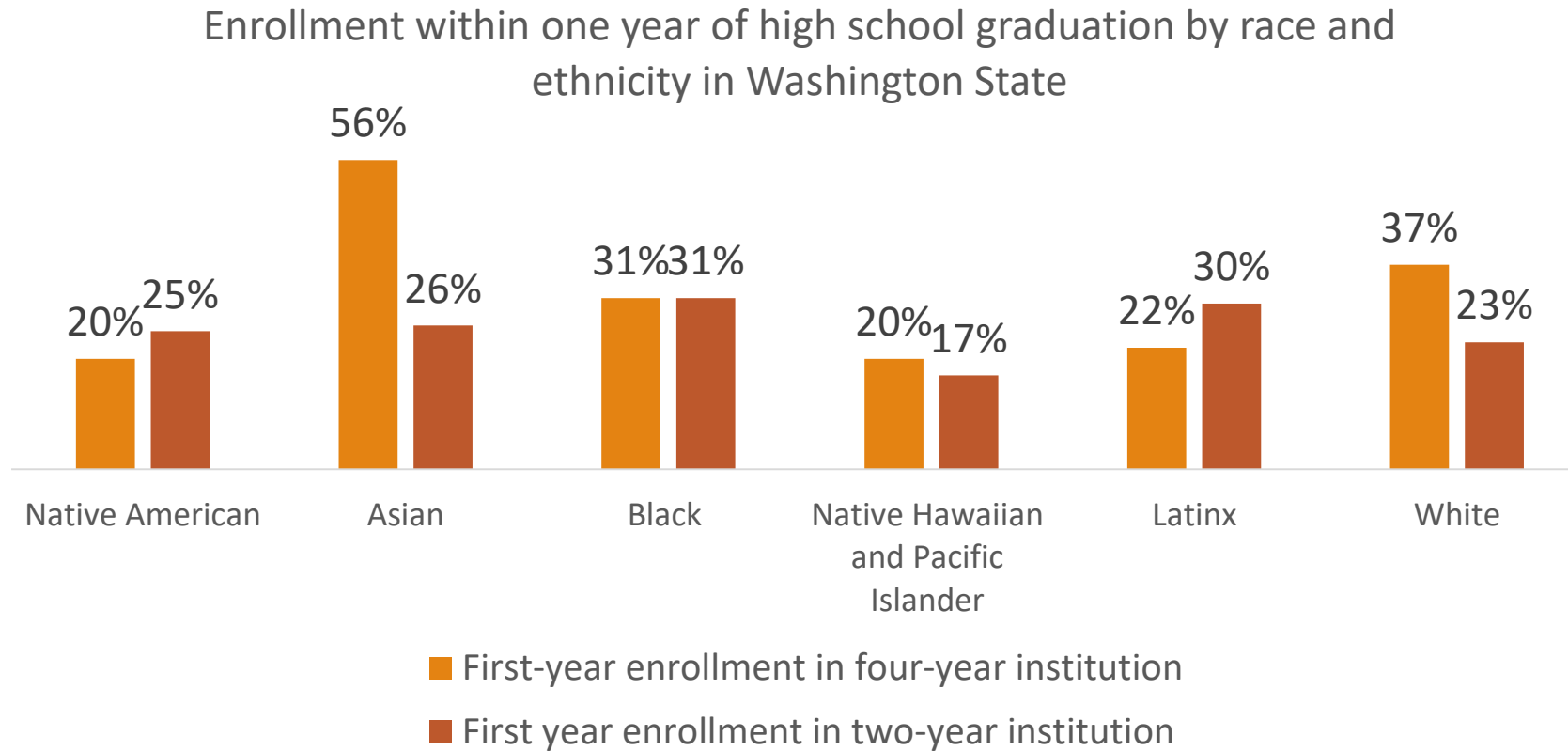
Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2018

# Men make more in almost every occupation



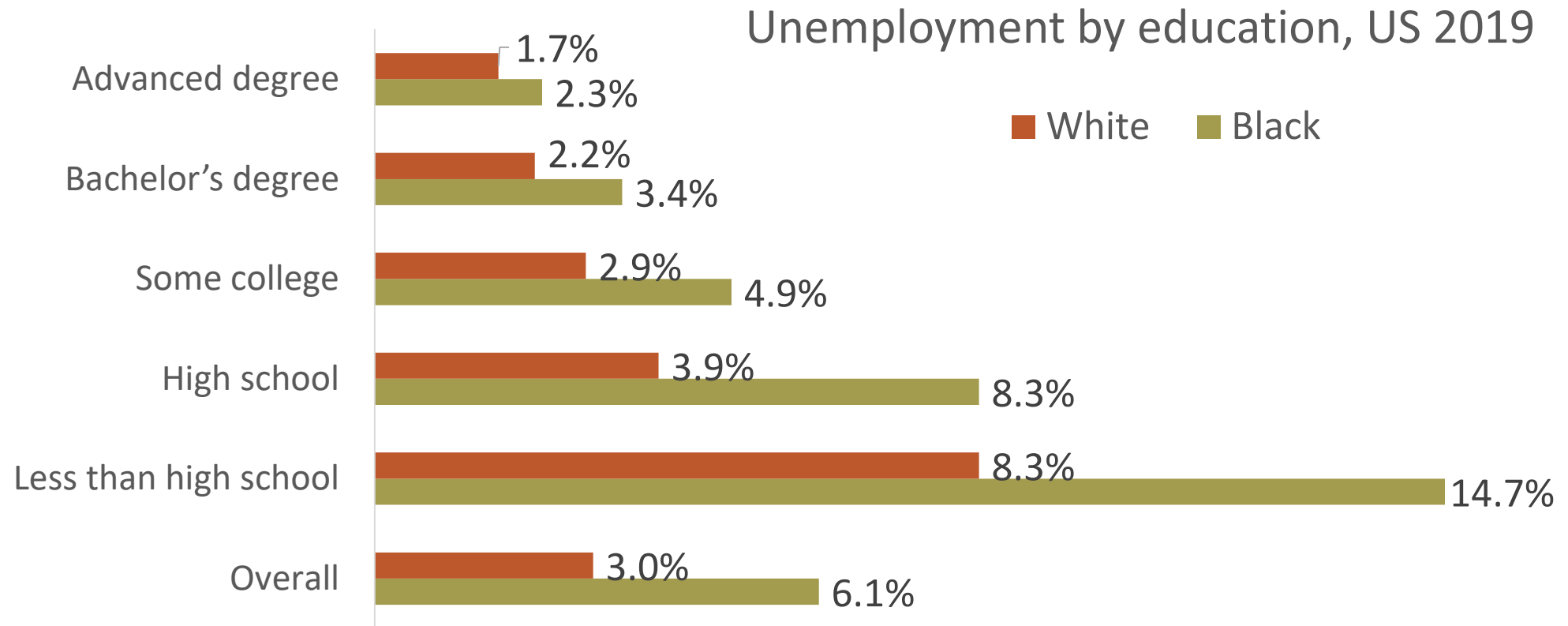
Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2018

# Pathway to higher ed harder for many Students of Color



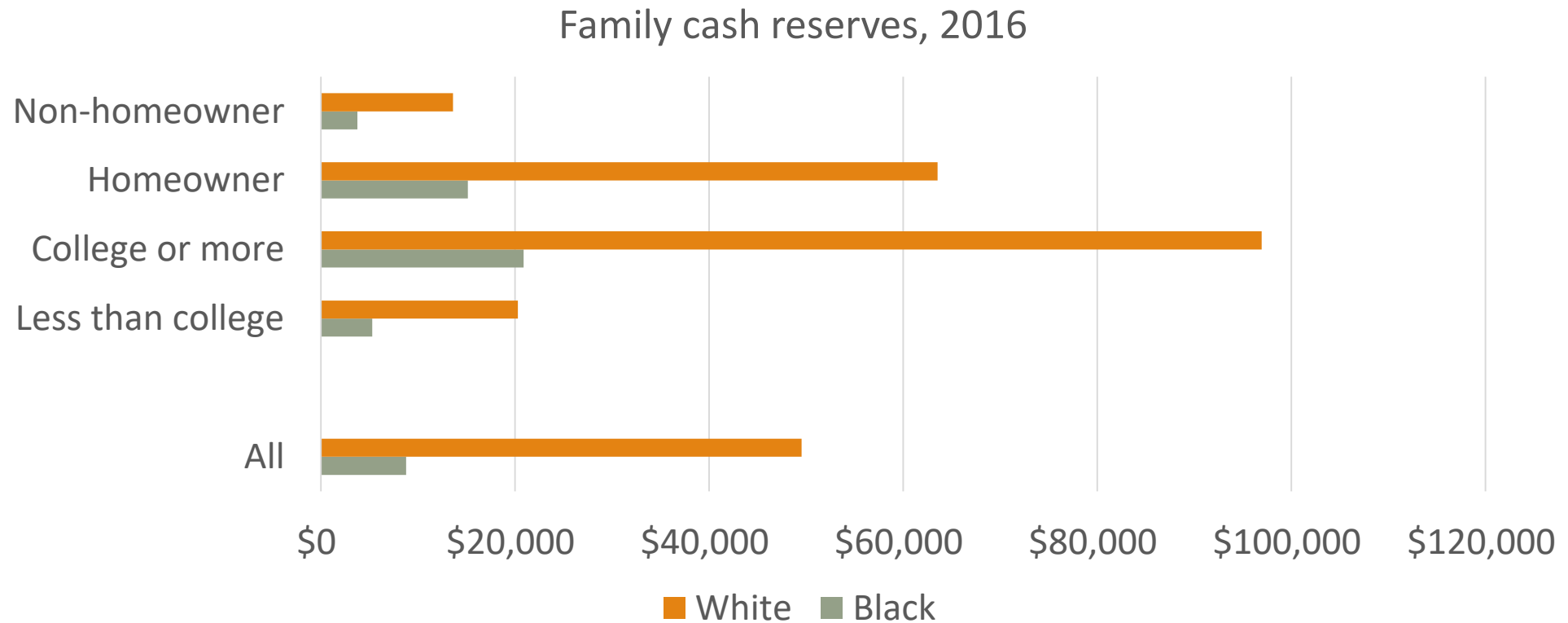
Source: Office of Financial Management; Education Research and Data Center High School Graduation Outcomes

# Black workers face higher unemployment at every education level, pre-COVID and now



Source: EPI, [Black workers face two of the most lethal preexisting conditions for coronavirus—racism and economic inequality](#), 2020

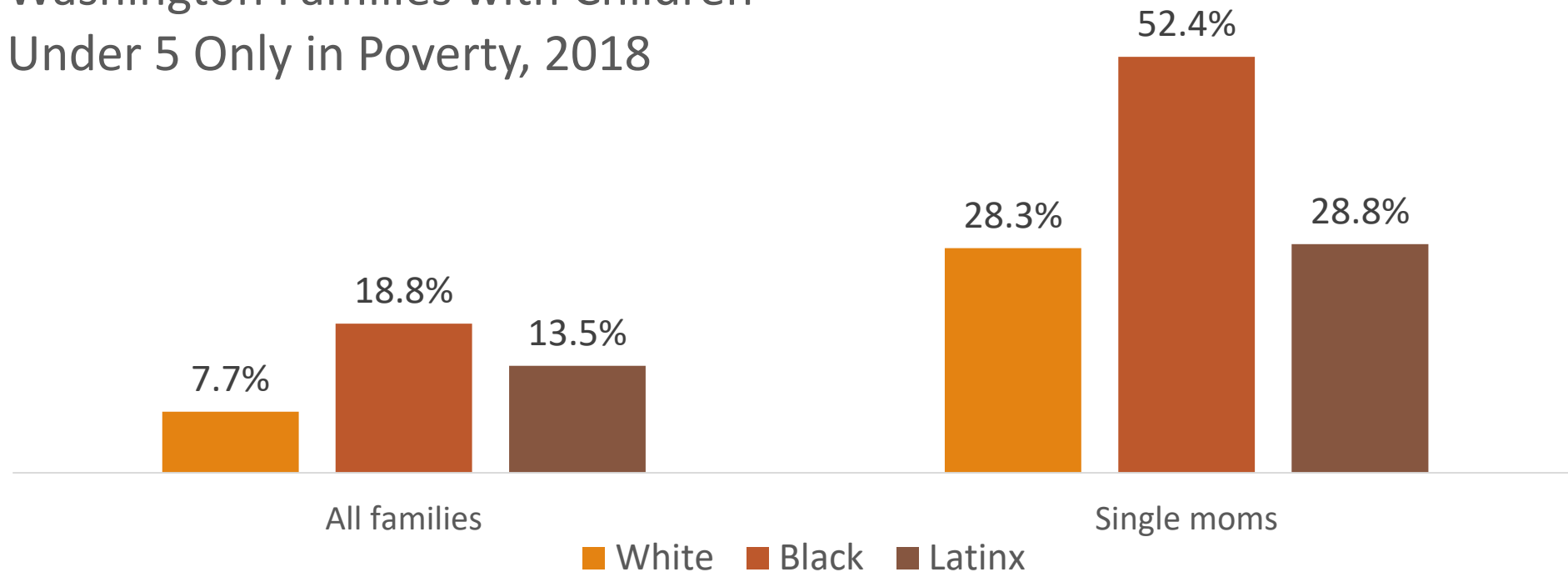
# Black families start with less wealth, accumulate less through careers



Source: Economic Policy Inst. analysis of Federal Reserve 2016 Survey of Consumer Finances

# Single moms and kids at high risk of poverty

Washington Families with Children  
Under 5 Only in Poverty, 2018



Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2018



# Maternal mortality disparities

|                                             | US rate        | Washington rate |
|---------------------------------------------|----------------|-----------------|
| Pregnancy-related deaths per 100,000 births | 17, increasing | 11.2, steady    |
| Black women's rate                          | 40.8           | 9               |
| Native American women                       | 29.7           | 53              |
| Latina women                                | 11.5           | 17              |
| White                                       | 12.7           | 8               |

➤ *Nationally, Black women with college degrees have maternal death rate 5.2 times higher than white women.*

Sources: <https://www.cdc.gov/media/releases/2019/p0905-racial-ethnic-disparities-pregnancy-deaths.html> ;  
<https://www.doh.wa.gov/ForPublicHealthandHealthcareProviders/PublicHealthSystemResourcesandServices/MaternalMortalityReviewPanel>



# We have made progress in Washington

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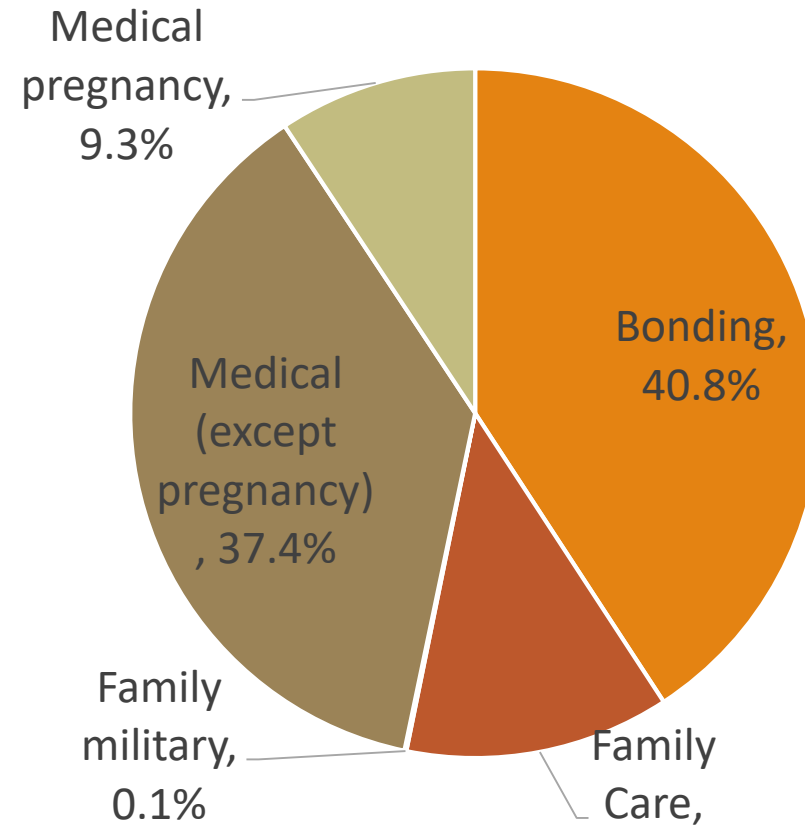
- ❖ Paid Family & Medical Leave
- ❖ Equal Pay & Opportunity Act
- ❖ Pregnancy Accommodation
- ❖ Paid Sick & Safe Days
- ❖ Minimum wage & overtime



# WA Paid Family & Medical Leave

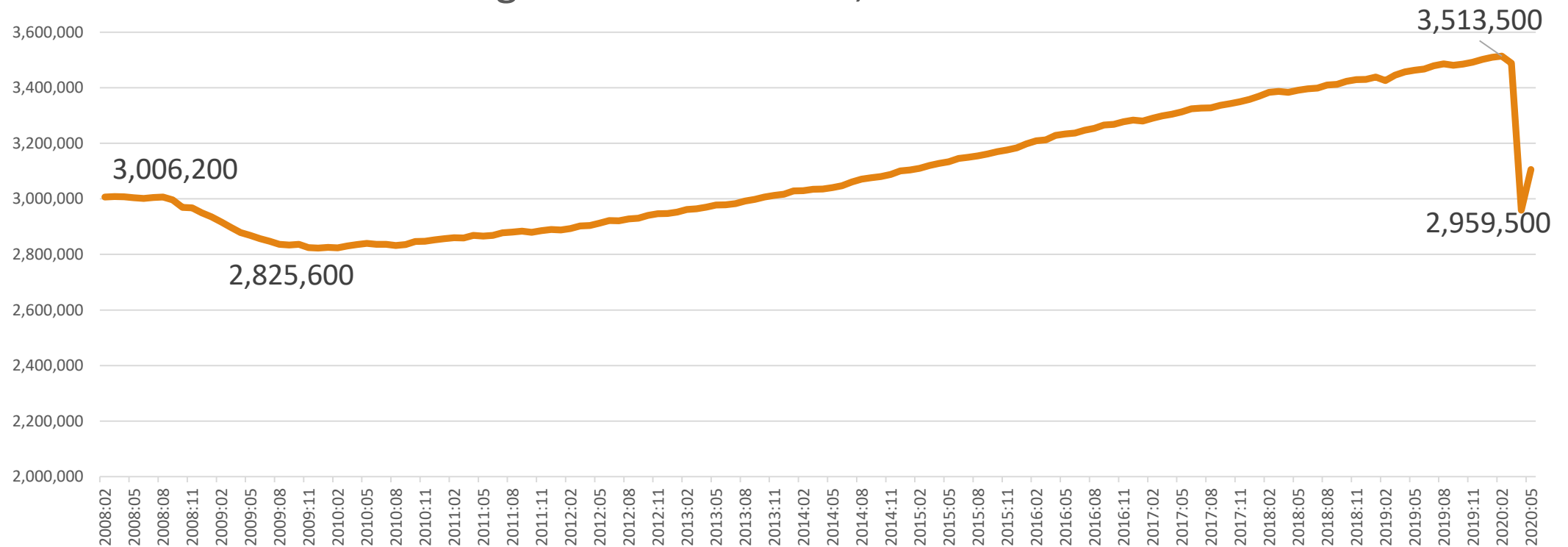
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- ❖ 85,000 applicants in first 6 months
- ❖ 65% women
- ❖ 40% of bonding leaves taken by fathers
- ❖ Approval time down from 10 to 2 weeks
- ❖ [Paidleave.wa.gov](https://paidleave.wa.gov)



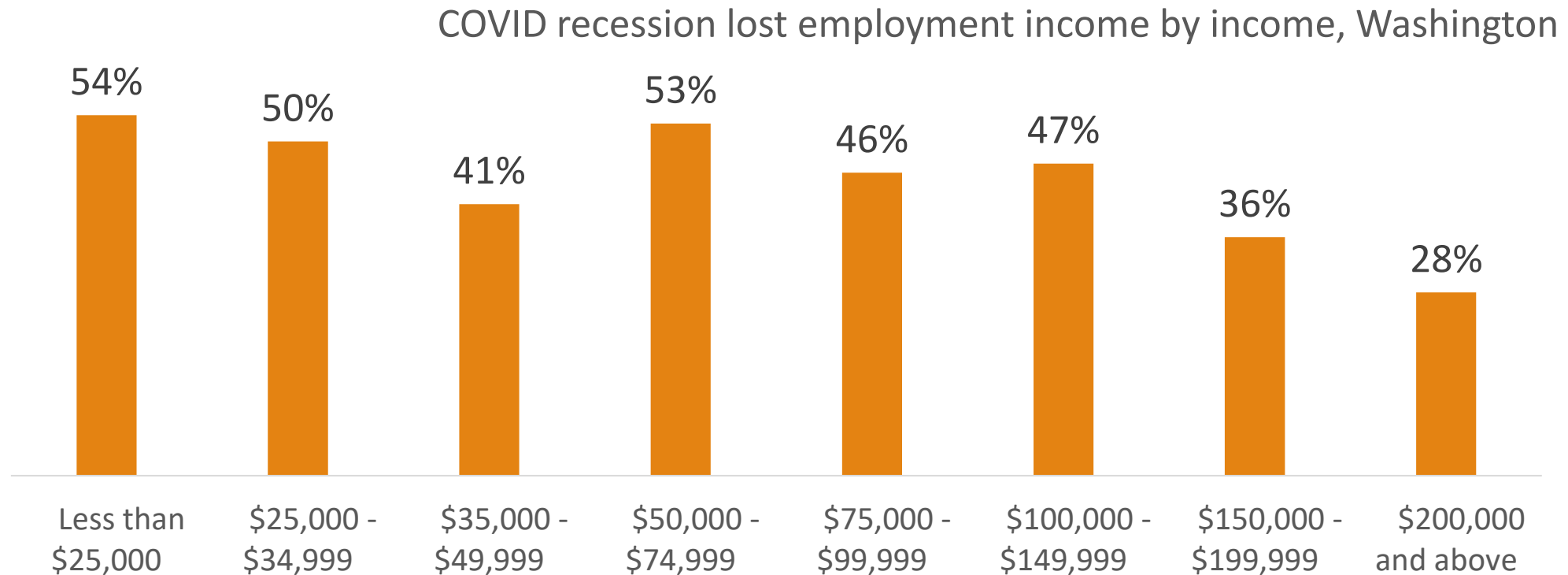
# COVID has devastated economy – hit low-wage sectors hardest

Washington Nonfarm Jobs, 2008 - June 2020



Source: Washington Employment Security Dept

# Households under \$75,000 most likely to lose income during COVID recession



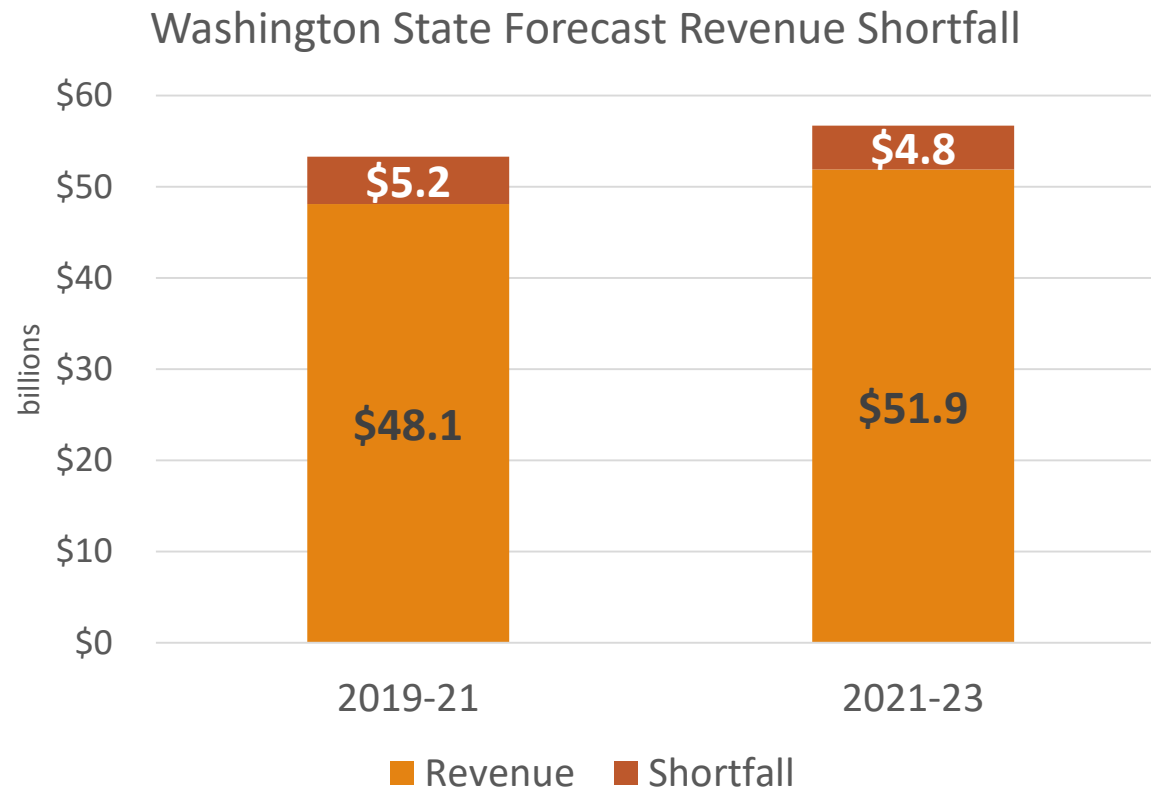
Source: U.S. Census Bureau Household Pulse Survey, week 8-11 average

# Impact of recession long-lasting without strong rescue and relief

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- Many small businesses permanently closing
- Child care industry on brink before, now near collapse
- Unemployment boost of \$600/week kept millions afloat, now expired
- People lose health insurance with jobs
- Many still employed on reduced pay
- Education & career paths disrupted


# Expected state revenues falling sharply



+ \$2 billion in reserves

+ \$1.9 billion in Rainy Day Fund

+ cuts already made

 We can make it to January without further cuts

Source: Economic & Revenue Forecast Council, June 17, 2020

# We've been here before – 2009-2012:

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- **64,000** people lost health coverage through the Basic Health Plan
- **120,000** faced drastically reduced preventive mental health services
- **46,000** women lost family planning services
- **23,000** families lost TANF in 2011
- UW tuition increase 75% 2007-2012
- K-12 class sizes increased



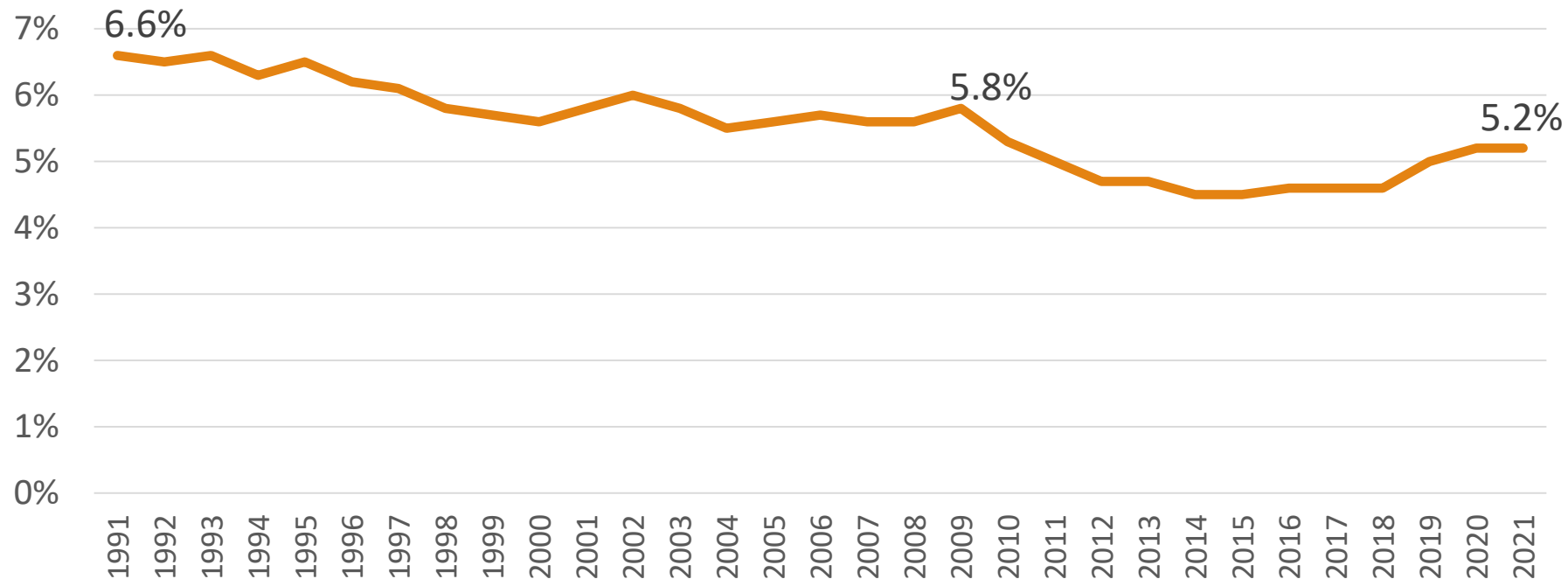
# Budget cuts of last recession:

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- caused significant, long-lasting harm to individuals and communities
- reduced jobs and incomes, slowing economic recovery
- kept childcare and early learning chronically underfunded
- exacerbated racial, gender, and regional inequality
- deprived working families, small businesses, and public agencies of the resiliency that would have put us in a much stronger position to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic

# Our state revenue system is inadequate – even in good times

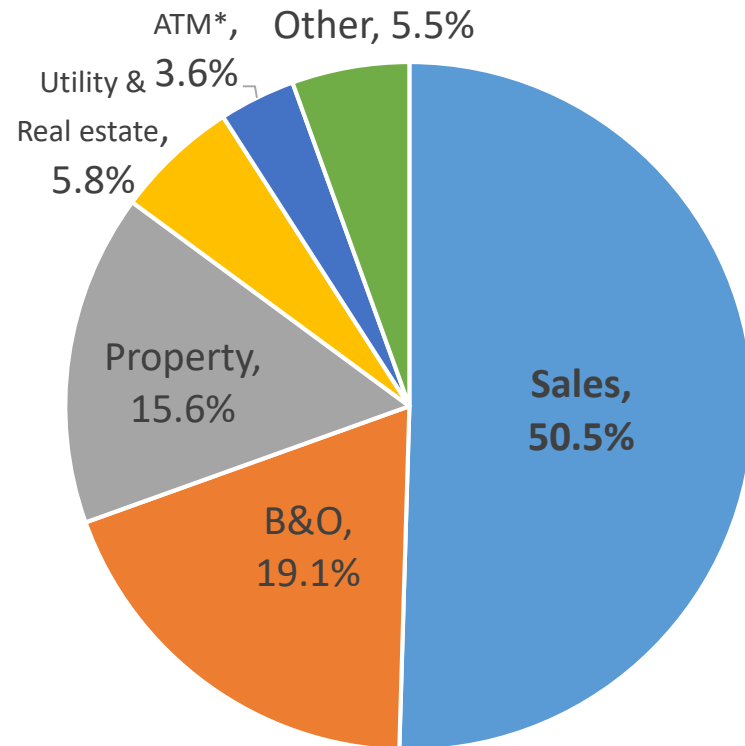
**WA General Fund as Share of State Personal Income, 1991-2021**



*Source: EOI analysis of OFM and BEA data. 2020-21 based on House budget*

# Washington 2019-21 General Fund

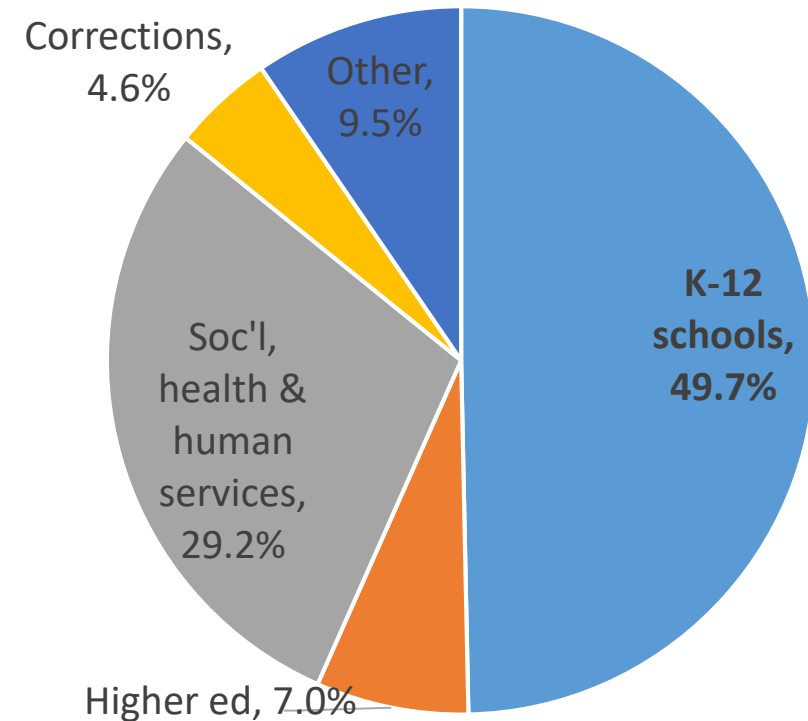
Revenue



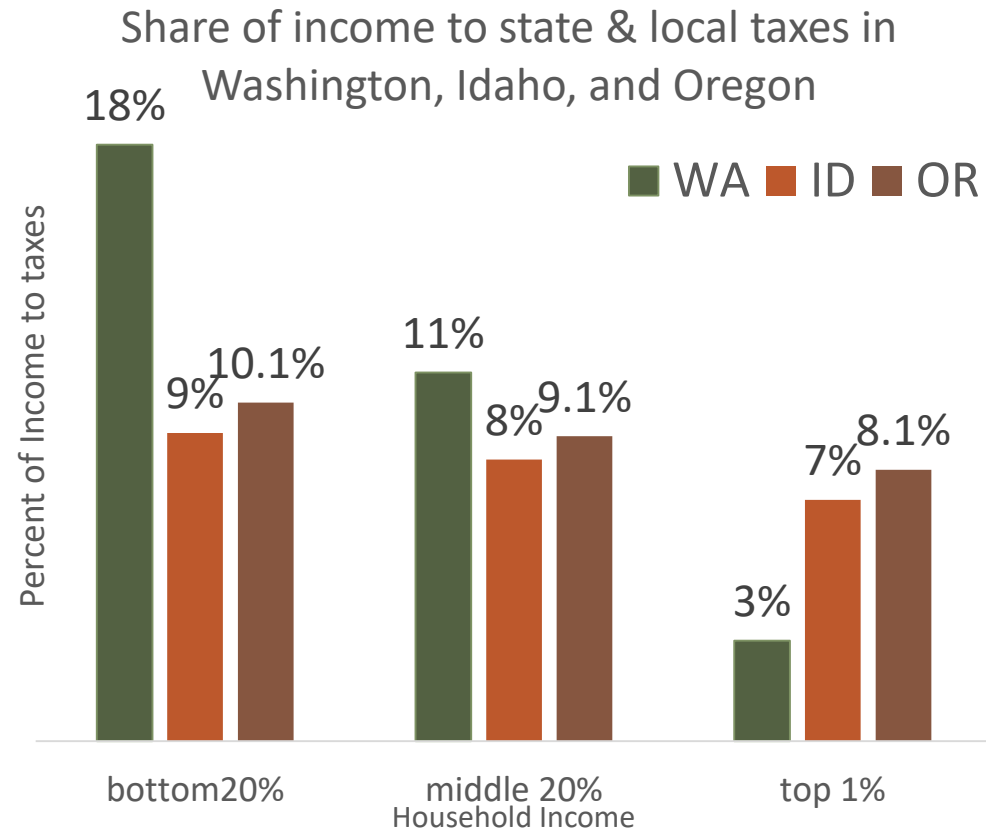
\*ATM = Alcohol, Tobacco, Marijuana

Sources: WA Economic and Revenue Forecast Council, Feb. 2020 and [fiscal.wa.gov](http://fiscal.wa.gov)

Budget



# Our tax system is unfair – and makes inequity worse



- The wealthy pay less taxes in WA than in other states
- But middle- and low-income people pay more

Source: Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy, "Who Pays," 2018

# Building an equitable economy

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- Dismantle racist institutions and systems; end mass incarceration & militarized policing
- Honor caregiving and caregivers with living wages and time to care
- Build worker and community power with strong workplace standards, transparency, support for unions & small businesses
- Invest in educational opportunity, healthy communities, strong anti-racist public institutions



# Congress must continue rescue and stimulus

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- Direct aid to state and local governments
- Rescue of small business sector with grants tied to employment
- Extend pandemic UI enhancements
- Extend emergency paid leave to all workers through 2021
- HEROES Act contains most of this

# Priorities for 2021 legislature

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- Strengthen and close gaps in Sick Leave & PFML laws
  - Extra health emergency/pandemic sick leave & childcare leave for all
  - PFML job protection and health insurance continuation in small firms
- Strengthen Unemployment (part-time coverage, language access, adequate staffing)
- End mass incarceration, invest in restorative justice
- Invest in living wages for childcare, stable funding for centers, affordability
- Invest in college access and affordability, with staffing to assure student success
- Invest in health care affordability, mental health, public health

# Progressive new revenue a MUST

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- Capital gains
- Corporate tax on excess compensation
- Estate tax increase
- Inheritance tax
- Billionaire wealth tax



# Take action

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1. Tell Congress we need rescue & investments
2. Tell legislators NO to austerity, YES to investments for equity
3. Share PFML experiences/contacts:  
[Marilyn@opportunityinstitute.org](mailto:Marilyn@opportunityinstitute.org)  
[Gabriela@opportunityinstitute.org](mailto:Gabriela@opportunityinstitute.org)
4. Sign up for EOI newsletter  
[opportunityinstitute.org](http://opportunityinstitute.org)

