

State Legislature's Role in Washington's International Competitiveness



Overview

The Trade Development Alliance of Greater Seattle and the Washington Council on International Trade partnered to create the *International Competitiveness Strategy for Washington State*. One of the key findings is that the state government has a key role to play in ensuring our state's international competitiveness, particularly in terms of policy and investment decisions that allow Washington employers to maximize their success in the global marketplace.

Key Findings

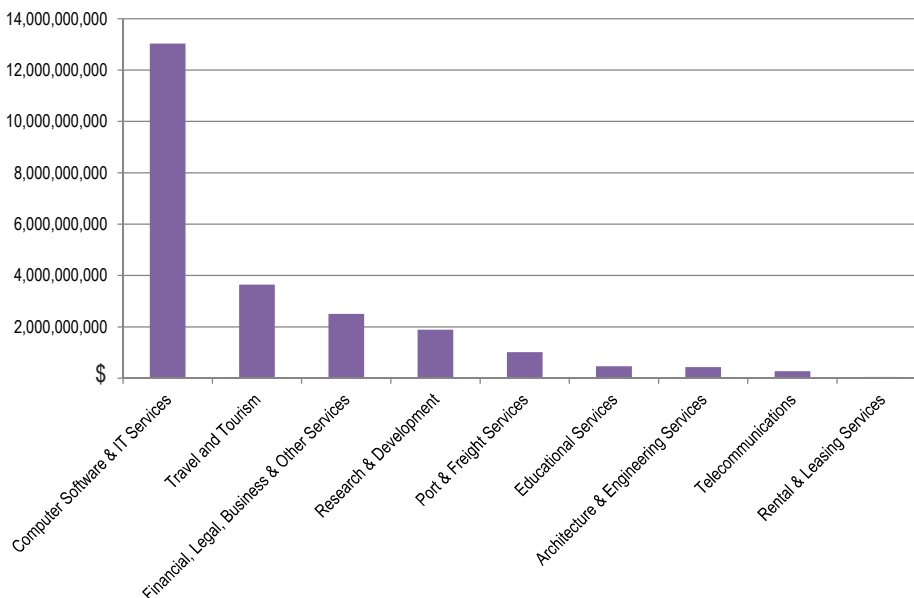
International trade is a key driver of our state's economy. It spans across nearly every industry sector - from agriculture to aerospace to IT to tourism. Based on new research, nearly 40% of all jobs in Washington can be tied to trade-related activity, making our state one of the most trade-engaged economies in the country.

Washington is a national leader in goods exports. In 2011, Washington exported more than \$64 billion in merchandise and commodities, with state exports per capita more than double the U.S. average. Over the last 15 years, Washington goods exports have essentially doubled, in large part due to the rise of our state's Asian trade partners like China.

Services are an increasingly important part of our trade economy. Washington is also a growing leader in the export of services, from IT and tourism to professional services like legal, financial and architecture. In fact, our state ranks 5th in total services exports.

40% of all jobs in Washington state are tied to trade

Washington Service Exports by Sector - 2010



“Our elected officials, business leaders and others will benefit greatly from a better understanding of how they can maximize job creation through steps like increased freight mobility, enforcement of intellectual property rights, investment in a skilled workforce and a business climate that maintains Washington's status as a strong base for global operation.”

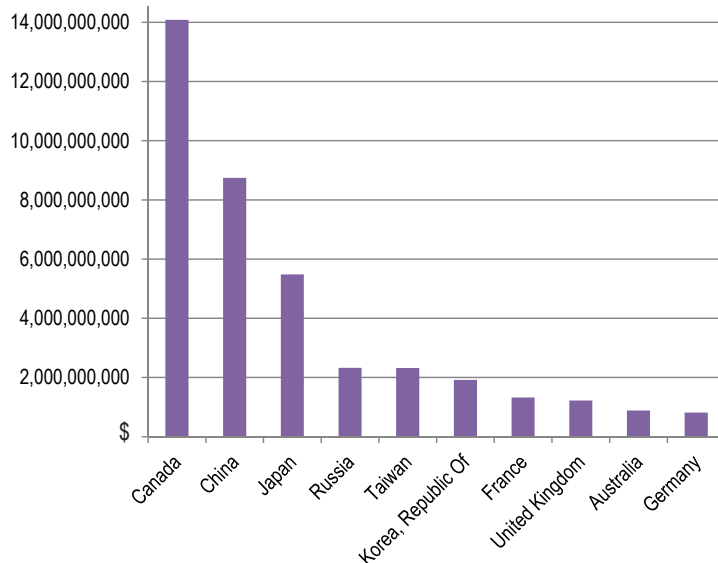
Eric Schinfeld, President WCIT &
Sam Kaplan, President TDA

Washington ranks 5th in the U.S. for export of services like software and tourism.

International Competitiveness Strategy for Washington State Key Findings

Imports have a significant benefit to Washington state employment. For Washington - as an Asian gateway and as the home to a wide diversity of retail and manufacturing headquarters that leverage global supply chains - imports also mean jobs.

Top Countries for Washington Goods Imports - 2011



25% of jobs related to trade in Washington are linked to imports

Washington's international engagement goes beyond imports and exports. Foreign direct investment provides capital for our state's businesses and infrastructure, as well as direct employment of Washington residents. Immigrants and foreign-born residents strengthen our workforce, drive innovation and bring with them connections to our trading partners.



About the Washington Council on International Trade

For 38 years, the Washington Council on International Trade (WCIT) has been the leading policy resource for Washington state companies engaged in international trade. Broadly respected for its credible and independent voice, WCIT is the primary information resource on international trade issues for elected representatives, business leaders, the media, educators and community groups in Washington state. Please visit us at www.wcit.org.



About the Trade Development Alliance of Greater Seattle

The Trade Development Alliance of Greater Seattle is a collaboration of the City of Bellevue, City of Everett, City of Seattle, Seattle Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce, Pierce County Government, Port of Everett, Port of Seattle, Port of Tacoma, Snohomish County Government, and union leadership to promote, connect and educate the Greater Seattle region internationally for trade and business. Please visit us at <http://www.seattletradealliance.com/>

Recommendations

State government is crucial to Washington's international competitiveness. The International Competitiveness Strategy outlines a number of ways that the Washington State Legislature can help employers succeed in the global marketplace, including:

1. Increased State Promotion – Washington relies on continued international interest in doing business with Washington companies, in investing capital in Washington businesses, in locating facilities in Washington or in visiting Washington as a student or tourist. Washington is an excellent platform from which to operate globally, and Washington businesses produce excellent products and services; we must market that excellence.

2. Investment in Freight Mobility – Many companies are based here primarily because this is a great place from which to access the global marketplace; similarly, the only way that our state's ports will continue to attract cargo in increasing volumes is if they can efficiently and expeditiously move this freight to and from the rest of the country. We must ensure excellent seaports, airports, highways and railways to be competitive.

3. Support for a Globally-Competitive Workforce – Washington has one of the most highly-skilled workforces in the country, and none of our state's globally competitive products and services could exist without a sufficiently large and appropriately skilled workforce. We risk losing that advantage due to underfunding of our colleges and universities.

4. Focus on Port Competitiveness – The competitiveness of Washington's ports is one of the most essential ingredients for our state's international success, not only because of the jobs tied directly and indirectly to port activities but also because of their roles as a gateway for our import and export. There are a number of state infrastructure, funding and policy issues that Washington's ports can all benefit from.