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Statement on estate tax decision by Supreme Court

OLYMPIA – Oct. 2, 2014 – Carol K. Nelson, director of the Department of Revenue, issued this statement in response to the Washington State Supreme Court’s decision in the consolidated case of the Estate of Hambleton and Estate of Macbride:

“The Department of Revenue is pleased the state Supreme Court unanimously affirmed the Legislature and Governor’s use of retroactive legislation to close an unintended loophole in the state’s estate tax code. In doing so, the Supreme Court assures the estate tax is applied fairly and equally in our state.

Had the Court ruled otherwise, married couples would have been able to shield their assets from the estate tax using a type of trust that is not available to single individuals. The Washington estate tax is used to fund the Education Legacy Trust Account, and the Court’s decision prevents an estimated \$159 million hit to that account.”

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About Revenue

The Department of Revenue is Washington state’s primary tax administration agency, nationally recognized for innovation and service quality. In fiscal year 2013, Revenue collected more than \$19.6 billion in tax revenues that support public schools, social services, health care, corrections, public safety and natural resources conservation.