

# NORTHWEST

## ‘Millionaires tax’ advances with some changes

**SENATE HEARING** | The measure incorporates tweaks sought by Gov. Ferguson.

By **JIM BRUNNER**  
*Seattle Times political reporter*

A proposed Washington income tax on people earning more than \$1 million has cleared its first legislative hurdle, with the Senate Ways and Means Committee passing the plan Monday — with some tweaks. Majority Democrats pushed through what they’ve dubbed the “millionaires tax” on a largely par-

ty-line vote, after agreeing to some changes aimed at appeasing Gov. Bob Ferguson and other critics. The new version of Senate Bill 6346 keeps in place the main thrust of the proposal: a 9.9% tax on annual earnings above \$1 million, starting in 2028. That would bring in about \$3.5 billion a year, affecting about 30,000 taxpayers, according to legislative staff

estimates. The amended bill boosts a tax break for small businesses, exempting firms with gross revenues of \$300,000 or less from the state business and occupation tax, and giving some relief for businesses grossing up to \$600,000. Senate Majority Leader Jaime Pedersen, D-Seattle, the bill’s chief sponsor, said that would exempt more than 70% of small businesses from the state B&O tax. The revised bill also doubles the charitable deduction to \$100,000

and adds a deduction for commercial fishing firms that set aside money to repair or replace boats. Democrats voted to move the bill ahead for a possible vote next week by the full Senate, while stressing that further changes may be considered to add tax breaks for employers and families. Sen. Yasmin Trudeau, D-Tacoma, said the income tax proposal is about “making things more fair” by targeting wealthy residents whose fortunes have grown “exponentially greater than those at the bottom.”

“It is trying to level that playing field,” Trudeau said. While most Senate Democrats signed onto the bill as co-sponsors, there are a few holdouts. Sen. Drew Hansen, D-Bainbridge Island, said he’s taking a neutral stance for now, and voted “no recommendation” Monday. Hansen said he’s “open to the idea,” but agrees with Ferguson that the income tax bill should include more tax breaks “to make life in this state affordable for

See > **TAXES, A8**

*They may climb streetlamps, but they still wait for the ‘walk’ sign*



KAREN DUCEY / THE SEATTLE TIMES

Fans react at the Gantry Public House in Seattle after the Seahawks score in the fourth quarter while watching the team in Super Bowl LX on Sunday.

## Near Lumen Field, fans celebrate win in uniquely Seattle mayhem



ERIKA SCHULTZ / THE SEATTLE TIMES

Fans in Seattle’s Pioneer Square neighborhood celebrate after the Seahawks win Sunday.

By **PAIGE CORNWELL**  
*Seattle Times staff reporter*

**A**s I watched a sea of blue and green flow into the streets near Lumen Field Sunday night after the Seattle Seahawks won the Super Bowl, I thought back to a similar celebration in 2014 following the team’s first Super Bowl win. I covered that celebration less than a month after I started at The Seattle Times. That year, I watched University of Washington students only slightly younger than me burn couches on Greek Row. This year, a youth carrying a blue Seahawks flag and standing through a sunroof asked me if I was his friend’s mom. Ah, the passage of time. I watched waves and waves of fans, fueled by victory, redemption and midday-turned-celebratory drinking, pour out of restaurants, bars or any spot with a TV, where they had just watched the historic game. Where were all these fans going, exactly? No one

See > **FANS, A8**

### MENTAL HEALTH PROJECT

## MEN AREN’T EMOTIONLESS — THEY ONLY LACK THE TRAINING

**Justin Pere**  
*Mental Health Perspectives guest columnist*



When I was 10, my father and I drove from New York to Washington state in a faded yellow Honda. We didn’t talk much on that cross-country trip. Neither of us knew how to start, so we let the soundtrack to the musical “Cats” fill the space instead. I’m guessing we listened to the song “Memory” 70 times during that journey. It wasn’t uncomfortable silence. It was the kind that settles in when two people care about each other but don’t have the vocabulary to connect. Looking back, I don’t think either of us lacked emotion. We just didn’t know how to express it to each other. I sometimes think about that drive when I’m in session with the men in my Seattle therapy practice. Many of them describe themselves as “emotionless” or “shut down,” convinced something is fundamentally wrong with them.

See > **PERE, A10**

## State law would phase out penny at checkout

By **MITCHELL ROLAND**  
*The Spokesman-Review*

OLYMPIA — While an announcement that the U.S. Mint would no longer mint new pennies prompted concerns of an impending shortage, some Washington state lawmakers now want to make the coin unnecessary at the checkout counter. The Senate Business Committee approved legislation Wednesday that would require cash transactions to be rounded up or down to the nearest five-cent denomination. The law would mirror what our neighbors to the north did after the Canadian mint stopped making pennies in 2012. Several states are considering similar legislation, while the U.S. Postal Service and many businesses already have adopted the practice. The change would only affect cash payments. Online transactions and credit and debit card payments would not be impacted by the law. As she testified in committee on Jan. 28, Sen. Noel Frame, D-Greenwood, the bill’s sponsor, said the coin has become

See > **PENNIES, A8**

## ‘Twin Peaks,’ ‘Fallout’ actor reacts to Hawks super victory

By **CHASE HUTCHINSON**  
*Special to The Seattle Times*

The Seattle Seahawks won the hearts of millions of Washington fans when they defended their way to a dominant Super Bowl victory over the New England Patriots on Sunday, but one local fan in the crowd was still reeling from the win Monday: Yakima’s own Kyle MacLachlan. In an interview with The Seattle Times, the “Twin Peaks” and “Fallout” star said he was there with his son for the “spectacular” 29-13 victory, and he, too, didn’t come away empty-handed. “I’m still recovering,” MacLachlan said, holding up some

swag he brought home. “I got a couple little memento towels for my two brothers in Seattle who are big, big Seahawks fans.” The longtime actor, most known for working with the late, great filmmaker David Lynch on “Twin Peaks,” as well as “Blue Velvet,” “Dune,” “Twin Peaks: Fire Walk with Me” and “Twin Peaks: The Return,” offered his analysis of the game and the pressure on the teams. “It was sort of a quiet start, you know, a series of field goals, but certainly a defensive game. Both defenses were really incredible. It seemed like the quarterbacks

See > **MACLACHLAN, A10**



RICHARD SHOTWELL / INVISION/AP

Kyle MacLachlan arrives at the premiere of “Fallout” Season 2 on Dec. 8 at the Academy Museum of Motion Pictures in Los Angeles.



NORTHWEST

The wedding story of Bad Bunny’s Super Bowl newlyweds began in Oregon

By LIZZY ACKER  
oregonlive.com

Anyone who watched Sunday’s Bad Bunny concert at a football game in California may have asked the question: “Did that couple that got married on the field actually for real get married?” According to the NFL, yep. That was a real wedding. Two people actually got married. Multiple reports say the couple invited Bad Bunny to their wedding. Instead of accepting, Bad Bunny invited them to get married at the Super Bowl.

The marriage and following party were main plot points in the nearly 15-minute halftime show, which also featured Lady Gaga and Ricky Martin. And that couple, the one that really got married in front of Bad Bunny and the world, has a romantic connec-

tion to Oregon.

The first clue is a post from Portland wedding photographer Nate Meeds on Instagram. It’s a reel that shows an Oregon coast proposal and reads, “How it started,” and then shows the Super Bowl wedding and says, “How it’s going.”

“Propose at the coast. Get married at the Super Bowl. Casual,” the caption says. “It has been a strange morning,” Meeds said over the phone Monday. “We were just hosting a bunch of people at our house, and then I was like, ‘Oh, I know them.’”

Meeds photographed the California couple’s engagement in Cannon Beach in 2024, he said.

“They were just on vacation,” Meeds said.

Wolter contacted him, and they did some Zoom calls to



FRANK FRANKLIN II / THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

A wedding proposal, real ceremony and celebration for this couple ran throughout Bad Bunny’s halftime show at the Super Bowl game between the Seattle Seahawks and New England Patriots on Sunday in Santa Clara, Calif.

“coordinate me hiding in a bush basically,” Meeds said. After the surprise, they took some more photos.

Both Wolter and Aparico are nurses, Meeds said. “They’re the sweetest couple ever. They’re insanely

nice,” he said, adding, “I’m sure their lives are crazy right now.”

You can watch the whole

halftime show on YouTube. They even got to slice a cake.

Lizzy Acker is a reporter at The Oregonian.

< Pere  
FROM A7

But what I see every week is something different. These men feel deeply. What they lack isn’t emotion — it’s training.

Most men grow up without any real emotional education. They’re told to stay tough, to push through, to “figure it out on your own.” They learn to speak the language of competence and problem-solving, not the language of sadness, fear or vulnerability. And when those feelings do show up, they can come out sideways: withdrawal, irritability, anger, overworking, or simply going quiet at the exact moment they most need connection.

I meet men every week who say no one ever asked them what they were feeling while growing up: not at home, not at school, not even in their friendships. By the time they reach adulthood, the emotional muscles they needed simply never had a chance to develop. What looks like indifference from the outside is often just a lifetime of emotional undertraining.

More than one client has told me he spends evenings in the garage because he’s terrified of saying the wrong thing to his partner. Another said he can manage a high-pressure job but can’t figure out how to tell a friend he’s lonely. These are not men without feelings. They’re men who were never taught how to bring their inner world into the room.

This lack of training shows up in relationships in predictable ways. Many men de-



COURTESY OF JUSTIN PERE

Justin Pere, right, and his father Peter Pere pose for a photo in Washington in 2025. In his Mental Health Perspectives column, Justin Pere writes about his relationship with his father and the quiet ways their emotional connection developed over time.

scribe wanting to be closer to the people they love but not knowing how to cross the bridge. The idea of “opening up” sounds simple in theory, but in practice it can feel like stepping onto unfamiliar ground without a map. Even a small misstep, like a partner misunderstanding them or a conversation going poorly, can feel like proof that they’re not “built” for emotional expression.

In reality, connection is a skill. And like any skill, it takes practice. But men often grow up believing they should already know how to navigate emotional terrain instinctively. When they don’t, they assume the problem is them instead of the lack of guidance they received.

**About Mental Health Perspectives**

The Seattle Times Mental Health Project features contributed essays from members of our community as part of our Mental Health Perspectives guest column. We invite individuals with personal stories related to mental health to share their experiences that reflect broader issues and concerns in the field. If you would like to inquire about submitting a column, please email [mentalhealth@seattletimes.com](mailto:mentalhealth@seattletimes.com).

For many men, the first step isn’t some deep emotional disclosure. It’s smaller than that. It might be noticing when something feels off and naming it out loud, even imperfectly. It might be saying, “I don’t quite know how to put this into words,” and letting that be enough for now.

For partners, support often looks less like pushing for answers and more like mak-

ing room for uncertainty. That might look like responding with, “I don’t need you to have this figured out — I just want to understand what it’s like for you,” rather than pressing for clarity or solutions right away.

This can also mean listening without interrupting, resisting the urge to fix the problem and letting pauses exist without rushing to fill them. When curiosity replac-

es correction, men are more likely to stay in the conversation instead of retreating from it.

I see this most clearly with depression. Men often don’t recognize the signs in themselves because their symptoms rarely look like the ones we name publicly. Instead of sadness, it might show up as numbness. Instead of tears, irritability. Instead of reaching out, disappearing into work or hobbies.

Sometimes the people around them miss what’s happening until it becomes more serious. This matters, especially since men, particularly as they age, are more likely to die by suicide even though they are often less likely to be diagnosed or treated for depression along the way.

Many men have told me they assumed depression meant crying all the time, so they dismissed their own exhaustion, irritability or sense of disconnection for years. Without an understanding of how depression can actually present in men, the signs go unnoticed — by the men themselves and by the people who care about them.

If we want better outcomes — fewer crises, healthier relationships, a stronger sense of belonging — we need to normalize emotional education for men at every age. Not just in moments of crisis, but long before that.

Normalize parents teaching boys how to name their feelings. Normalize partners approaching tough conversations with curiosity instead of criticism. Normalize the idea that emotional skill doesn’t

appear magically with adulthood; it’s taught.

Support matters more than people realize. When someone responds to a man with openness and patience, he often softens. When he’s told, “You’re not failing — you’re learning,” something usually shifts. Men don’t need perfection. They need permission.

I think about this whenever “Memory” comes on unexpectedly — in a store, in a waiting room, anywhere. Without fail, my throat tightens and my eyes sting. Not because of the song itself, but because it brings me right back to that Honda, the tape clicking over, the miles rolling beneath us.

It brings me back to two people who cared for each other but didn’t yet have words for it. Over time, those words came in small, uneven ways — not through long conversations, but through gestures, shared moments, and a growing comfort in emotional presence with each other.

I sometimes wish I could go back to that drive and tell my younger self that silence doesn’t mean something is wrong. It often just means no one ever showed you how to begin.

The emotion was there. It always was. It was just waiting for a language.

*Justin Pere is a licensed mental health counselor in Seattle and the founder of Clarity Counseling Seattle. He has more than 20 years of experience working with individuals and couples around relationships, intimacy, and men’s emotional health.*

< MacLachlan  
FROM A7

were having a difficult time finding their rhythm,” MacLachlan said. “That’s such a big stage. I know I have nerves when I do big

things like that, so I can only imagine having to have the nerves and being able to physically go through what you have to go through as a quarterback. It’s phenomenal to me.”

MacLachlan is now two-

for-two attending Super Bowls where the Seahawks win it all. He was at the 2014 game when the team beat the Denver Broncos 43-8.

“I was not at the infamous New England Patriots game after that,”

MacLachlan said.

“I really wanted to beat them, but I also wanted to sort of trounce them, which we did. At the end, we dug in. That felt good, I must say. It was really fun.”

In addition to celebrating the team’s strengths, Mac-

Lachlan praised Seahawks coach Mike Macdonald for helping lead the way to the dominant victory.

“It was definitely one-sided, I felt,” MacLachlan said. “Seattle, it’s incredible. I just think the new coach is amazing, and the

team, it’s really a team. You feel it, which is a beautiful thing to watch.”

*Chase Hutchinson: chase.hutchinson.writer@gmail.com. Chase Hutchinson is a freelance writer based in Western Washington.*

Several arrests follow Seattle Super Bowl win

By KAI UYEHARA  
Seattle Times breaking news reporter

About Sunday night ... some Seattle Seahawks’ fans were less than well behaved.

More than just the predictable rambunctiousness of climbing up lamp posts, the Pioneer Square pergola and other acts people aren’t supposed to, celebrations over the Seahawks’ Super Bowl win Sunday night ended in several arrests for assaults, DUIs and weapons violations, Seattle police said.

No major problems were

reported, said Seattle police spokesperson Eric Muñoz. But there was still a lowlight reel for the night.

An intoxicated man was leaning on a police vehicle and refused to get away from the car after being asked multiple times by an officer going on an “emphasis patrol” in Capitol Hill, Muñoz said. When the officers tried to move him physically, he threatened to kill the police before being arrested.

About 10 minutes later around 8:40 p.m. and a block over, police arrested a man who allegedly punched

and tried to choke a security guard at Neumos music venue. Workers grabbed the man to remove him from the venue and dogpiled on him before police arrived. Neumos closed about 10 minutes later.

Outside, fans were getting rowdy. As the crowd chanted “Sea,” “Hawks!” and an expletive about Immigration and Customs Enforcement, fans tore signs out of the ground and used them as limbo sticks and recreated “Raising the Flag on Iwo Jima.” No related arrests were made, police said.

Police arrested three peo-

ple outside of the Cowgirls bar in Pioneer Square after they allegedly got in a fight with security and staff, one of whom suffered a broken hand, police said.

After midnight, a man and a woman who were at a Super Bowl party allegedly fought in the middle of the street on Capitol Hill, police said.

The woman said she had found her boyfriend with another girl. When she accused him of cheating, he allegedly punched and struck her with his knee. He was arrested on suspicion of assault.

Two people were arrested on suspicion of unlawful possession, Muñoz said.

An officer responded to a report of a man in the crowd outside Lumen Field who had a Glock with a “switch” that made it capable of firing like an automatic weapon. He was allegedly carrying the gun in a “furtive” manner, police said.

He was allegedly carrying the gun in a “furtive” manner, police said.

Another man was arrested after allegedly waving a knife at a security guard on Capitol Hill.

Seattle police made six arrests on suspicion of DUI after the game ended, responding to some drivers

who allegedly crashed into other vehicles or a cement divider and others who were driving in the wrong direction.

Washington State Patrol “removed” 20 people from the road who were allegedly driving intoxicated, said spokesperson Rick Johnson. No major injuries were reported.

Seahawks fans are sure to get rowdy when the team parades down Fourth Avenue on Wednesday morning. Police asked fans to “please stay off the pergola.”

*Kai Uyehara: 206-652-6419 or kuyehara@seattletimes.com; on Twitter: @uyehara\_kai. Kai Uyehara is a breaking news reporter at The Seattle Times.*