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WASHINGTON COALITION FOR OPEN GOVERNMENT PRESENTS KEY AWARDS TO PAIR OF  
LAWMAKERS

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The Washington Coalition for Open Government will present Key Awards to two elected officials in recognition of their work to make government entities in Washington open and accountable to the public.

The lawmakers being honored are State Representative Brendan Williams, an Olympia Democrat; and Pierce County Council Member Shawn Bunney, a Republican from Lake Tapps.

Bunney is being honored for his effort to create Pierce County's first-ever "open government ombudsman" position to promote government transparency and help the county's citizens access public records.

"Some jurisdictions simply dump public records responsibilities on an existing employee without allotting extra time or funding," Bunney said. "I believe true public access requires more than that."

Williams is being recognized for his strong leadership on open government initiatives during the current session of the Washington Legislature. Williams was the prime sponsor of bills to limit the information government agencies can shield under a claim of attorney-client privilege; a second measure to prohibit a self-insurance program from cancelling or threatening to cancel insurance coverage based upon a local government entity's decision to release public records; and a third bill to limit public agencies from seeking a court injunction to block release of a record.

"Governments should not be able to hide behind excuses to don a cloak of secrecy," Williams said.

In addition to his duties as a legislator, Williams is Attorney and business consultant in private practice. He is a former executive director of the Washington Health Care Association.

Bunney is currently in his first term representing Pierce County's 1st Council District, which includes the cities of Buckley, Wilkeson, Carbonado, Bonney Lake, Sumner, Edgewood, Milton, South Prairie, Orting, and Graham, and the Lake Tapps/Dieringer area. Prior to running for office, Shawn Bunney worked for over ten years as legal and policy counsel to the Pierce County Council. He also served as a coordinator of the Lake Tapps Task Force.

The Washington Coalition for Open Government (WCOG) is an independent non-partisan non-profit organization founded in 2002 by a group of individuals representing organizations with a broad spectrum of opinions and backgrounds, all dedicated to the principles of strengthening the state's open government laws and protecting the public's access to government at all levels.

For more information, contact Washington Coalition for Open Government, 6351 Seaview Avenue NW, Seattle, WA 98107-2664 or on the web at [www.washingtoncog.org](http://www.washingtoncog.org) or call (206) 782-0393.

*WCOG is building a network of citizens who support open government laws and practices. Please send to [info@washingtoncog.org](mailto:info@washingtoncog.org) your name, address, phone, and e-mail address. We will notify you, as they arrive, of threats to open government and opportunities to strengthen it.*