



# Washington Coalition *for* Open Government

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## ***News Release***

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Washington Coalition for Open Government

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**Seattle**----The Washington Coalition for Open Government will honor former San Juan County Building Official John Geniuch with a Key Award at the WCOG regular board meeting next month. The Key Award is given on an ongoing basis to any person or organization that has done something notable for the cause of open government within the past 12 months.

As the chief building official in San Juan County, Mr. Geniuch discovered the county was using building permit fees for services other than those required to process the permit, an apparent violation of state law. He brought the violation to the attention of County officials but his protestations were ignored. In February, Mr. Geniuch discovered that over the past three years, the county had misallocated close to 1.2 million dollars.

After complaining about the misallocation of funds, he was placed on administrative leave and filed public information requests for information on the disciplinary action taken against him. He has since brought suit against San Juan County for unlawful termination and violations of the state's Public Records Act. The PRA portion of the

case has settled and the wrongful termination case is pending.

Mr. Geniuch took a principled stand against government corruption and lost his career with the county as a result. We would like to honor his sacrifice and his dedication to transparency and open government. He will be presented a WCOG Key Award at our regularly scheduled board meeting June 10<sup>th</sup>.