



King County

Dow Constantine

King County Executive

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August 26, 2024

The Honorable Dave Upthegrove
Chair, King County Council
Room 1200
C O U R T H O U S E

Dear Councilmember Upthegrove:

This letter transmits a proposed Motion that would if approved, adopt the King County Youth Bill of Rights and Report, pursuant to Ordinance 17738, which called for the development of a Youth Action Plan, including recommendations for a Bill of Rights for King County's youth.

The King County Youth Bill of Rights (YBOR) is the first of its kind in this region. The YBOR defines a shared vision for the future, making place for youth voice in policy decisions. As such, the YBOR furthers the County's commitment to equity by elevating the influence of underrepresented populations. YBOR highlights the priority issues of young people, including basic needs, equity, youth voice, the environment, safety, and belonging. Mental health issues, along with concerns related to safety, emerged as the top priorities amongst King County youth.

From its inception, youth collaboration and leadership in decision-making was a cornerstone to the King County Youth Bill of Rights project. Youth oversaw every phase of the three-year project, beginning with the Young Leaders Subcommittee of the King County Children and Youth Advisory Board, and later the Youth Bill of Rights Task Force.

As called for in the Youth Action Plan Recommendation Area 8, the YBOR project team also partnered with youth serving organizations to engage youth in the process. DCHS and the YBOR Task Force developed surveys in digital and paper formats, asking youth to identify the issues having the greatest impact on their lives. In total, around 2,200 youth submitted more than 4,100 comments during the initial input phase of the project. The responses came from a range of youth aged seven to 24 years, with the highest percentages coming from high school-aged youth. Participating youth represented all nine council districts, community service areas, public school

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districts, and 37 of 39 municipalities. Young adult social research interns at Public Health – Seattle & King County coded and analyzed the survey data.

Nearly ten years after the adoption of the King County Youth Action Plan, the fulfillment of Recommendation Area 8 on a Youth Bill of Rights marks an important achievement. Youth in the region have affirmed their most pressing wants and needs to King County leaders. Now it is time for County decision-makers to respond. I fully support the recommendations outlined in the Youth Bill of Rights project to:

1. Set forth plans to create a King County Youth Commission.
2. Update the Youth Bill of Rights every five years.

The King County Youth Bill of Rights would keep the needs of children and youth at the forefront when the County is making policy and budgetary decisions. In striving to fulfill these rights for every young person in this region, King County will make steady progress toward becoming a welcoming community where every person can thrive.

Thank you for your consideration of the proposed motion and for your continued devotion to the health and wellbeing of children and youth. If your staff have any questions, please contact Kelly Rider, Director, Department of Community and Human Services, at 206-263-5780.

Sincerely,



for

Dow Constantine
King County Executive

Enclosure

cc: King County Councilmembers

ATTN: Stephanie Cirkovich, Chief of Staff

Melani Pedroza, Clerk of the Council

Shannon Braddock, Deputy County Executive, Office of the Executive

Karan Gill, Chief of Staff, Office of the Executive

Penny Lipsou, Council Relations Director, Office of the Executive

Kelly Rider, Director, Department of Community and Human Services