

April 15, 2015

The Honorable Larry Phillips  
Chair, King County Council  
516 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue, Room 1200  
Seattle, WA 98104

King County Executive Dow Constantine  
401 5th Avenue, Room 800  
Seattle, WA 98104

Dear Councilmember Phillips and Executive Constantine:

The Youth Action Plan Task Force is pleased to submit its report and recommendations in response to its charge in Ordinance 17738 to develop a Youth Action Plan that includes a comprehensive set of recommendations to ensure that King County's children—from infants to young adults—have equitable opportunities to progress through childhood safe and healthy, building the academic and life skills to be thriving members of their communities.

As directed, the Youth Action Plan was developed by an appointed 25-member Task Force. We worked together over the last year to accomplish our charge of developing the Youth Action Plan in a transparent, collaborative, and strategic manner, with input from youth and families. In October 2014, we held five community conversations in locations across the county to hear from community members about issues and barriers, opportunities and solutions. Because King County is a widely diverse county and all citizen voices needed to be welcomed and heard, we made interpretation services available at each of the community conversations, with the goal of providing all community members who attended the ability to participate in the process. While youth attended and participated in the community conversations, we also conducted a youth survey, specifically seeking youth input on the issues that concern them. Youth participated in the development and dissemination of the survey, which was completed and returned by more than 1,000 youth, to understand the most pressing issues facing 12 to 24 year olds in King County and to identify strategies for King County to increase meaningful youth engagement.

The Youth Action Plan submitted with this letter contains a comprehensive set of recommendations that reflects that outreach to community members, youth, county departments, and non-government

entities and organizations, as well as the knowledge and expertise of the Youth Action Plan Task Force members. The Youth Action Plan responds to each of the eleven topics outlined in the legislation, as follows:

1. Identification of the **mission and vision** of the Youth Action Plan, and whether the Executive's stated vision that "infants reach adulthood healthy and safe, academically and vocationally succeeding, and socially and civically engaged" reflects the recommendations of the task force.
2. A **bill of rights for King County's youth**, akin to the youth bills of rights adopted by jurisdictions in California and elsewhere around the country.
3. Whether King County should establish a single **point of accountability for children and youth services, programs and policies**, along with recommendations on what form, model or structure that point of accountability should take, and on its role and duties.
4. Identification of what **age range** the Youth Action Plan will address, and **whether families are included** in the plan.
5. Identification of **improvements, efficiencies, gaps and opportunities** to take promising practices to scale, along with areas for better integration or coordination of services, programs and policies for children and youth within and outside of King County government.
6. Recommendations on King County's **role and involvement with early childhood learning** programs and initiatives.
7. Identification of the **barriers within and outside of King County government** that prevent children, youth and families from realizing their full potential, and recommendations on how to eliminate those barriers.
8. Recommendations on the **update to the King County Strategic Plan, and on social justice and equity goals**, as related to youth.
9. Identification of the children, youth and family **programs, methodologies and service models that the county should prioritize** to achieve outcomes and meet policy goals;
10. Recommendations on **King County's funding of services and programs** for youth, including the prioritization of existing and potential new resources to achieve recommended outcomes;
11. Identification of an **evaluation and reporting structure**, process and implementation timeline for the Youth Action Plan.

As noted in the Executive's September 2014 budget speech, the Youth Action Plan work inspired the discussion and development of a potential funding mechanism known as Best Starts for Kids. Best Starts for Kids is an evolving initiative under development by the King County Executive and the King County Council for a prevention-oriented regional investment that supports healthy development of kids, families and communities across the county. As of the drafting of our Youth Action Plan, representatives from the Youth Action Plan Task Force are working with a leadership circle of advisors to inform Best Starts for Kids, building on the work that is reflected in the attached Youth Action Plan. Thus, our plan acknowledges that some aspects of our

work, such as identifying an implementation timeline and outlining a detailed reporting and evaluation structure, are inherently interwoven with the success or failure of Best Starts for Kids. Therefore, we are recommending the development of an implementation timeline and evaluation and reporting structure occur as a next phase of the county's work post-Best Starts for Kids.

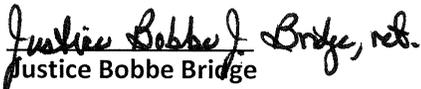
Thank you for the opportunity to serve on the Youth Action Plan Task Force and assist King County in setting its priorities for serving the county's youth. We look forward to answering questions and providing further information on our work as you consider our recommendations.

Respectfully,

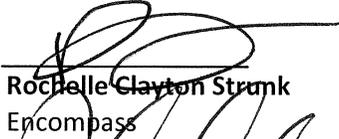
The Youth Action Plan Task Force



Janis Avery  
Treehouse



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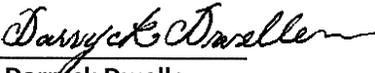
Darryl Cook  
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Sound Cities Association



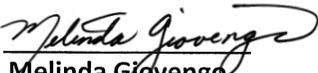
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King County Councilmember



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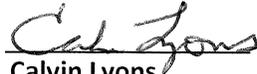
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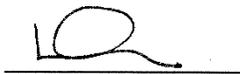
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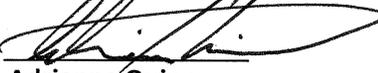
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Committee to End Homelessness



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Terry Smith  
City of Bellevue



Judge Wesley Saint Clair  
King County Superior Court



Sorya Svy  
SafeFutures Youth Center



Sheriff John Urquhart  
King County Sheriff's Office



Sam Whiting  
Thrive Washington