

Legislation Text

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Clerk 11/08/2018

A RESOLUTION encouraging the Washington state Legislature to
support funding for foundational public health services.

WHEREAS, the public health system in Washington provides the foundation for the larger health
framework, working to prevent illness and disease while supporting the work of community partners, and

WHEREAS, tracking, responding to and preventing costly food and water contamination and disease
outbreaks is essential to protecting the public's health, and

WHEREAS, state and local public health officials, together with local leaders, have identified an agreed
-upon set of foundational public health services that should be available for every Washingtonian, and

WHEREAS, no state or local public health department should be without foundational public health
components and programs which include communicable disease control, chronic disease and injury prevention,
environmental public health, maternal, child and family health, and access to and linkage with clinical care, and

WHEREAS, after a century of increasing life expectancies, these gains are threatened by new and more
complex diseases and emerging threats, putting today's children at risk of becoming the first generation to have
shorter life expectancies than their parents, and

WHEREAS, public health's ability to address social and community conditions could improve health,
life expectancy and quality of life, while also reducing related health care costs and productivity losses, and

WHEREAS, the public's well-being is also threatened by public health's inability to meet its basic
responsibility to provide those foundational services due to changes in its funding structure, complex and new
diseases and growing populations, and

WHEREAS, the motor vehicle excise tax was repealed in 2000, leaving the public health system without an adequate and sustainable funding source, and

WHEREAS, the Washington state Legislature made an initial investment of \$15 million for foundational public health services in the 2017-2019 biennium, representing a one-time, partial restoration of cuts to public health services that were made during the Great Recession, and

WHEREAS, due to that funding, Public Health - Seattle & King County: notified partners infected with sexually transmitted diseases; increased partnerships with health care systems to implement best practices that keep patients safe; and expanded communicable disease response, and

WHEREAS, without securing ongoing, stable, and dedicated funding for foundational public health services, our communities are vulnerable to the spread of communicable diseases like measles, mumps and sexually transmitted diseases ; at risk for food, water and environmental health threats; and without resources to adequately track data critical to identifying and responding to emerging threats, and

WHEREAS, investing in communities to improve the health and well-being of people could also revitalize and improve economic opportunity, enhancing prosperity in the community and for its residents and businesses;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Health of King County:

The Board of Health calls on the Washington state Legislature to allocate sustainable and significant funding necessary to support foundational public health services in all communities, and allow public health to continue rebuilding its statewide system with added efficiency.