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**INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT**

June 21, 2000

County Executive  
Whatcom County  
Bellingham, Washington

We have audited the accompanying general purpose financial statements of Whatcom County, Washington, as of and for the year ended December 31, 1999, as listed in the table of contents. These financial statements are the responsibility of the County's management. Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements based on our audit.

We conducted our audit in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free of material misstatement. An audit includes examining, on a test basis, evidence supporting the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. An audit also includes assessing the accounting principles used and significant estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall financial statement presentation. We believe that our audit provides a reasonable basis for our opinion.

Our audit was performed pursuant to the *Revised Code of Washington* 43.09.260, under which a full report on the results of this audit will be issued. This report may include findings and recommendations on compliance matters, internal control procedures, and questionable costs or contingencies that would not be material in relation to the general purpose financial statements taken as a whole.

In our opinion, the general purpose financial statements referred to above present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of Whatcom County, Washington, as of December 31, 1999, and the results of its operations and cash flows of its proprietary fund types and similar nonexpendable trust funds for the year then ended in conformity with generally accepted accounting principles.

Our audit was made for the purpose of forming an opinion on the general purpose financial statements taken as a whole. The combining, individual fund, and account group financial statements and schedules listed in the table of contents are presented for purposes of additional analysis and are not a required part of the general purpose financial statements of Whatcom County, Washington. Such information has been subjected to the auditing procedures applied in the audit of the general purpose financial statements and, in our opinion, is fairly stated, in all material respects, in relation to the general purpose financial statements taken as a whole.

The other data included in this report, designated as the statistical section in the table of contents, has not been audited by us and, accordingly, we express no opinion on such data.

Sincerely,

**BRIAN SONNTAG, CGFM**  
STATE AUDITOR