

WHATCOM COUNTY COUNCIL AGENDA BILL

NO. 2008 - 22 B

CLEARANCES	Initial	Date	Date Received in Council Office	Agenda Date	Assigned to:
Originator:		12/2/2008		12/2/2008	Board of Health
Division Head:					
Dept. Head:					
Prosecutor:					
Purchasing/Budget:					
Executive:					

TITLE OF DOCUMENT:

Resolution Secure Funding for the Public Health System in Washington State

ATTACHMENTS:

SEPA review required? () Yes () NO	Should Clerk schedule a hearing ? () Yes () NO
SEPA review completed? () Yes () NO	Requested Date:

SUMMARY STATEMENT OR LEGAL NOTICE LANGUAGE: *(If this item is an ordinance or requires a public hearing, you must provide the language for use in the required public notice. Be specific and cite RCW or WCC as appropriate. Be clear in explaining the intent of the action.)*

Resolution Secure Funding for the Public Health System in Washington State

COMMITTEE ACTION:

COUNCIL ACTION:

12/2/2008: Board of Health Approved 5-0 Caskey-Schreiber & Kelly absent Res. 2008-083

Related County Contract #:

Related File Numbers:

Ordinance or Resolution

Number: R2008-83

Please Note: Once adopted and signed, ordinances and resolutions are available for viewing and printing on the County's website at: www.co.whatcom.wa.us/council.

SPONSORED BY: Consent
PROPOSED BY: HEALTH
INTRODUCTION DATE: 12/2/08

RESOLUTION NO. 2008-083

SECURE FUNDING FOR THE PUBLIC HEALTH SYSTEM IN WASHINGTON STATE

WHEREAS, it is the responsibility of Whatcom County government to provide public health services to the 190,000 residents of Whatcom County, as well as workers and tourists who enter the County each day;

WHEREAS, in 2008 Whatcom County provided almost three times the amount of general public health funds as was provided by the state;

WHEREAS, state law vests in the Whatcom County Health Board oversight of all matters pertaining to the preservation of the life and health of the people of Whatcom County, including the adoption of Countywide public health policy and the enactment and enforcement of local public health regulations;

WHEREAS, over the past century, public health functions have led to remarkable gains in health that have significantly increased longevity and improved quality of life, including accomplishments such as: safe food and water dramatically reducing illness and deaths; population-wide vaccination programs eradicating smallpox worldwide and making other once-common diseases rare; and better hygiene, nutrition, antibiotics, and access to health care, contributing to a ninety percent decrease in infant mortality and a ninety-nine percent decrease in maternal mortality since 1900, nationwide;

WHEREAS, public health functions provided by the Whatcom County government protect, promote, and provide for the health of the public every day;

WHEREAS, over the past decade, federal and state revenues that support public health have been eliminated, limited or reduced, thus requiring significant increases in the level of county general fund resources for public health services;

WHEREAS, increases in County general fund contributions to public health are not sustainable at the rate needed over the long term;

WHEREAS, Whatcom County projects the 2009 Whatcom County general fund budget deficit at \$5-million, which has required significant reductions in local public health funding;

WHEREAS, in a study on county financial health, the Washington State Department of Community, Trade and Economic Development found that all counties across the state are fiscally distressed;

WHEREAS, the Washington State Legislature's 4410 Joint Select Committee concluded that the Washington state public health system is under-funded by more than \$600 million each biennium and that the need for additional funding for local public health jurisdictions statewide is critical; and

WHEREAS, the 4410 Joint Select Committee concluded that funding for public health must be a joint responsibility of the state and local jurisdictions;

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

- A. The Health Board finds that the potential risks to the health of the public resulting from reduced state funding are unacceptable.
- B. Stable funding for public health should be a part of any state health care reform legislation.
- C. The Health Board finds that it is imperative to identify and acquire adequate, stable, dedicated, long-term state funding sources for public health in order to protect, promote, and provide for the health of the public.
- D. **FURTHER**, the Health Board calls on the State of Washington to provide adequate, stable, dedicated, long-term financing for local public health statewide to protect, promote, and provide for the health of the public.
- E. **FINALLY**, the Health Board urges the State to examine any and all adequate and stable options for state financing for public health.

APPROVED this 2nd day of December, 2008.

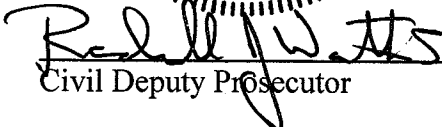
WHATCOM COUNTY COUNCIL
WHATCOM COUNTY, WASHINGTON

ATTEST

A circular seal for Whatcom County, Washington, with the text "WHATCOM COUNTY WASHINGTON" around the perimeter. The seal is partially obscured by a signature and the text "ATTEST".
Dana Brown Devis, Clerk of the Council


Carl Weimer, Health Board Chair

APPROVED AS TO FORM:


Civil Deputy Prosecutor