



LARRY PHILLIPS

Chair

Metropolitan King County Council

June 22, 2006

AJ Culver
Citizens' Election Oversight Committee
Chair
17409 SE 47th Street
Bellevue WA 98006

Dear Mr. Culver,

I am pleased to announce that the Metropolitan King County Council recently took action to follow up on recommendations of the King County Citizens' Election Oversight Committee (CEOC) with the goal of restoring and maintaining public confidence in King County elections.

Over the past month and a half, the Council passed four key pieces of legislation in support of the CEOC's recommendations for election reform. It was an honor to co-sponsor and vote in favor of all four pieces of legislation. All of the CEOC's high priority recommendations made in your March 2006 report to the Council are addressed by one or more of these pieces of legislation; for detailed information please see the enclosed copies. The list below highlights each CEOC recommendation and Council follow up:

- **Consolidate Election Facilities**

Council policy dictates that King County shall consolidate all elections operations into a single facility. Council requests that the Executive transmit legislation by August 15, 2006 to acquire or construct a specific facility. Council will take action on this legislation by October 2, 2006 (Motion 2006-0230).

- **Contract with a Consultant to Assist in Management of Elections**

The Council requests that the Executive hire a management consultant to assist the Director of Records, Elections and Licensing Services in leading the King County Elections Section to become a model elections operation and to function at a very high level of competence with high morale, low turnover, and full staffing (Motion 2006-0230).

- **Improve Voter Registration**

The Council requests that the Executive first provide a report on progress made to improve the accuracy of voter registration records. Next, by August 15, 2006 the Council requests that the Executive transmit a plan for further improving and maintaining voter registration records (Motion 2006-0230).

- **Improve Election Security**

The Council requests that the Executive first provide a report on progress made to improve elections security. Then, by July 31, 2006 the Council requests that the Executive transmit a security plan addressing security related to facilities, personnel, electronic systems and ballots (Motion 2006-0230).

- **Elect the County Auditor**

The Council will request that the county Charter Review Commission give its advice on whether or not the County Auditor should be an elected position and if so, whether or not the position should be a nonpartisan office (Motion 2006-0180).

- **Continue the CEOC Function**

The Council establishes the CEOC as an ongoing committee that will make recommendations to the improve performance of the King County Elections Section and help ensure that accountability and performance of the Elections Section is provided in a transparent manner that is meaningful to King County residents. The CEOC will meet at least quarterly and submit a report to the Council by February 1st of each year. After four years, by March 31, 2009, the CEOC will evaluate the extent to which elections operations have improved and whether there is a need to further continue the CEOC (Ordinance 2006-0183).

- **Move to All-Mail Elections**

The Council authorizes the conduct of vote-by-mail elections and directs the Director of the Records, Elections and Licensing Services Division (REALS) to conduct all elections entirely by mail ballot beginning on a date in 2007 or 2008 only after certain conditions are met. These conditions include 1) appointment and confirmation of a REALS Director and a Superintendent of Elections; 2) completion of the CEOC-recommended cultural change and management training; 3) Council approval of an Executive plan that includes cost estimates, locations, and security measures for regional voting centers and ballot drop boxes (Ordinance 2006-0191).

Thank you for your hard work and thoughtful recommendations on election reform in King County. With your help and suggestions we have already made great progress toward restoring voter confidence in our elections system, but there is still more work to do. With a vigilant Council and the continuing work of the CEOC, I am confident we will forge an elections system that citizens and policymakers alike can be proud of.

Sincerely,



Larry Phillips, Chair
Metropolitan King County Council