



King County

Citizens' Committee on Independent Oversight

Office of Law Enforcement Oversight

401 Fifth Avenue, Room 131

Seattle, WA 98104-1818

April 7, 2017

Hon. Councilmembers of the Metropolitan King County Council

Metropolitan King County Council

516 3rd Ave. Ste. 1200

Seattle, WA 98104

Dear Honorable Councilmembers,

We write to you today as the appointed members of King County's Citizens' Committee on Independent Oversight (CCIO). As community representatives, we convey the perspectives of the public - your constituents - regarding the provision of police services in King County based on our personal experience, community feedback and knowledge attained through service on the committee. It is also our role to advise both the King County Sheriff's Office (KCSO) and the Metropolitan King County Council on issues of equity and social justice. Our role as a community advisory committee is key to building healthy relationships between law enforcement and the public they serve.

With that in mind, we strongly support proposed ordinance 2017-0139, which empowers OLEO to build systems of accountability for and improves the integrity of KCSO's operations. Issues of public trust in law enforcement have moved to the forefront of conversations on police practices. Police departments are often criticized for having an insular culture, and because of that, it is especially important to have an established avenue for public input on how police services are rendered. This ordinance does exactly that, by seeking to enhance public confidence in law enforcement through its vision for strong, full-service police oversight. It makes it clear that OLEO is an independent and transparent office, and goes far to ensure there is unbiased review of KCSO investigations, policies, training and operations. Most importantly, it improves the integrity of KCSO's operations as a government office in service to the public. The effort to improve community-police relationships can often be long and arduous, but the design, the ordinance's development and implementation of a strengthened and improved oversight model is an important first step in the right direction.

The need for an expanded, fully-empowered independent oversight body to assess the parties and systems at KCSO was affirmed by public vote in 2015. Your leadership as councilmembers in supporting a strong system of oversight in OLEO's ordinance sends a direct message of your

commitment to ensuring our law enforcement practices and systems are effective, making the public safer, and that accountability in policing operations is a priority.

Thank you for your attention to our input on this crucial piece of legislation that is integral to OLEO's role and function moving forward. We greatly appreciate your consideration of our united position, and welcome every opportunity to interact with you about meaningful police oversight models in the future.

Signed,

Co-Chair David Baker, Ph.D.
Contract Cities, District 1

Co-Chair Sili Savusa
Unincorporated, District 8

Rev. Steve E. Baber
Unincorporated, District 2

Tamika Moss
Unincorporated, District 2

Abel Pacheco
At-large, District 2

Liz Campbell
At-large, District 4

Representative Mia Gregerson, 33rd LD
At-large, District 5

John Jensen
Contract Cities, District 9