



**KING COUNTY**  
**Signature Report**

1200 King County Courthouse  
516 Third Avenue  
Seattle, WA 98104

**August 8, 2008**

**Resolution**

**Proposed No. 08-07.2**

1           A RESOLUTION relating to the King County department  
2           of public health budget and calling on the state of  
3           Washington to provide adequate, stable, dedicated, long-  
4           term financing for local public health statewide and to  
5           provide financing options for local jurisdictions to protect,  
6           promote and provide for the health of the public.

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8           WHEREAS, it is the responsibility of King County government to provide  
9           regional public health services to the 1.8 million residents of King County, as well as the  
10          hundreds of thousands of workers and tourists who enter the county each day, and

11          WHEREAS, state law vests in the King County Board of Health oversight of all  
12          matters pertaining to the preservation of the life and health of the people of King County,  
13          including the adoption of countywide public health policy and the enactment and  
14          enforcement of local public health regulations, and

15          WHEREAS, over the past century, public health functions have led to remarkable  
16          gains in health that have significantly increased longevity and improved quality of life,  
17          including accomplishments such as: safe food and water dramatically reducing illness

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18 and deaths; fluoridation of water reducing tooth decay and tooth loss; population-wide  
19 vaccination programs eradicating smallpox worldwide and making other once-common  
20 diseases rare; and better hygiene, nutrition, antibiotics and access to health care,  
21 contributing to a ninety percent decrease in infant mortality and a ninety-nine percent  
22 decrease in maternal mortality since 1900, nationwide, and

23 WHEREAS, public health functions provided by the King County government  
24 protect, promote and provide for the health of the public every day, and

25 WHEREAS, over the past decade, federal and state revenues that support public  
26 health, such as the motor vehicle excise tax, have been eliminated, limited or reduced,  
27 thus requiring significant increases in the level of county general fund resources for  
28 public health services, and

29 WHEREAS, increases in county general fund contributions to public health are  
30 not sustainable over the long term, and

31 WHEREAS, on August 4, 2008, the King County executive projected the 2009  
32 King County general fund budget deficit at \$86.5 million, which may require significant  
33 reductions in public health services, and

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

37 WHEREAS, the Washington state legislature's 4410 Joint Select Committee  
38 concluded that the Washington state public health system is under-funded by more than  
39 \$600 million each biennium and that the need for additional funding for local public  
40 health jurisdictions statewide is critical, and

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

43 WHEREAS, counties have limited local authority to provide for adequate funding  
44 for public health, and

45 WHEREAS, in 2007, King County and the King County Board of Health adopted  
46 a Public Health Operational Master Plan ("PHOMP"), establishing a mission, goals,  
47 principles and strategies to guide the delivery of public health services and increase the  
48 number of healthy years lived in King County.

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

51 A. The Board of Health reaffirms the mission, goals, principles, functions and  
52 strategies adopted in the PHOMP and finds that the lack of adequate financing for public  
53 health places implementation of the PHOMP at risk, as described in Attachment A to this  
54 resolution.

55 B. The Board of Health finds that the resulting risks to the health of the public are  
56 unacceptable.

57 C. The Board of Health finds that it is imperative to identify and acquire  
58 adequate, stable, dedicated, long-term state and local funding sources for public health in  
59 order to protect, promote and provide for the health of the public.

60 D. The Board of Health calls on the state of Washington to provide adequate,  
61 stable, dedicated, long-term financing for local public health statewide and to provide  
62 financing options for local jurisdictions to protect, promote and provide for the health of  
63 the public.

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64 E. The Board of Health calls on King County, the city of Seattle and other cities  
65 in King County to pass legislation to place public health financing as a top priority on  
66 their state legislative agendas.

67 F. The Board of Health commits to working with the King County executive,  
68 King County council, the city of Seattle and other cities in King County, and community,  
69 regional, and state partners to educate the public about the value of public health and the  
70 need for adequate, stable, dedicated, long-term state and local funding sources.

71 G. The Board of Health urges the State to examine any and all adequate and  
72 stable options for state and local financing for public health.

73 H. The Board of Health requests that the department consider possible revenue  
74 enhancements and propose for the board's consideration reasonable fees and fee increases  
75 that fully pay for the cost of services they support, in lieu of reductions in services.

76 I. The Board of Health recognizes that the growing lack of adequate health  
77 insurance coverage is a major contributor to the increasing need for public health services  
78 and the lack of revenue to support them. The Board of Health requests that the provision  
79 committee forward to the board a set of principles that the board and others can use in

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81 advocating for state or national healthcare reform.

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Resolution was introduced on 8/7/2008 and passed by the Board of Health on 8/7/2008, by the following vote:

Yes: 7 - Mr. Ferguson, Ms. Lambert, Ms. Patterson, Ms. Clark, Mr. Rasmussen, Mr. Hutchinson and Dr. Counts

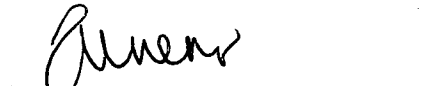
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Excused: 8 - Mr. von Reichbauer, Mr. Dunn, Mr. Sherman, Ms. Frisinger, Dr. Nicola, Ms. Manning, Mr. Gossett and Mr. Licata

KING COUNTY BOARD OF HEALTH  
KING COUNTY, WASHINGTON

  
Julia Paterson, Chair

ATTEST:

  
Anne Noris, Clerk

**Attachments**      A. Public Health at Risk