

**RESOLUTION NO. H-01-2019**

**A RESOLUTION URGING THE WASHINGTON STATE LEGISLATURE TO RECOGNIZE  
PUBLIC HEALTH IS ESSENTIAL AND PROVIDE CRITICAL FUNDING TO  
SUPPORT LOCAL PUBLIC HEALTH**

WHEREAS, the public health system provides the foundation for the larger health care framework, working to prevent illness and disease while supporting the work of community partners; and

WHEREAS, after a century of increasing life expectancies, today these gains are threatened by new and more complex diseases, putting today's children at risk of becoming the first generation to have shorter life expectancies than their parents; and

WHEREAS, Washington state spends less on public health protection (\$38.08 per person) than other northwest states like Idaho (\$54.35 per person) and Wyoming (\$89.75 per person); and

WHEREAS, public health officials, together with local leaders, have identified and agreed upon a set of core public health services that should be available for every Thurston County resident which include control of communicable disease, preventing environmental health hazards, preventing chronic disease and injury, helping children be as healthy as possible, and improving access to medical, dental and behavioral health care; and

WHEREAS, over the last four years public health leaders and community partners developed a plan to modernize the state's public health system, ensuring core services are available everywhere; and

WHEREAS, as a result of Foundational Public Health Services (FPHS) funding provided by the state legislature Thurston County Public Health & Social Services (PHSS) has invested in expanding capacity to respond to disease outbreaks and protect children from preventable illnesses; and

WHEREAS, Thurston County's population has grown by more than 74,000 residents since 2000, and is expected to grow by another 54,000 residents by 2030 creating an increasing need and demand for core public health services; and

WHEREAS, Thurston County is home to the state capital and numerous state agencies creating a unique risk if governmental public health systems fail due to natural or man-made health emergencies; and

WHEREAS, even with FPHS funding PHSS was challenged to respond to an active case of pulmonary tuberculosis in a homeless individual. The response included disease investigation, care coordination, provision of social supports, daily medical case management, interpretation and translation services, and enforcement of isolation. The incident cost PHSS over \$20,000 to respond; and

WHEREAS, even with FPHS funding Thurston County PHSS struggled to respond to a toxic algae bloom at Summit Lake that made the drinking water source for more than 400 homes unsafe for two months, and cost PHSS \$77,218 to respond; and

WHEREAS, without stable, ongoing, dedicated funding for core public health services, our communities are vulnerable to outbreaks of preventable diseases like measles and whooping cough, are less able to address the impact of emerging health issues including the increase in suicide and opioid overdoses, and are less prepared for the impacts of climate change such as wildfires, flooding, extreme temperatures and zoonotic diseases; and

WHEREAS, rebuilding and refocusing our public health services means we can better monitor and coordinate a community response to local, regional, statewide and national health concerns – keeping our families safe, reducing costs for taxpayers, and protecting our local economy.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the Thurston County Board of Health calls on the Washington state legislature to recognize that public health is essential and to provide the crucial \$100 million in funding needed for the 2019-2021 biennium and beyond to support core services in all communities and allow public health to rebuild its statewide system with added efficiency.

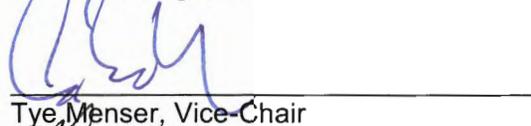
ADOPTED: March 12, 2019

ATTEST:

  
Clerk of the Board

Board of Health  
Thurston County, Washington

  
John Hutchings, Chair

  
Tye Menser, Vice-Chair

  
Gary Edwards, Commissioner