



STATE OF WASHINGTON
WASHINGTON STATE BOARD OF HEALTH

PO Box 47990 • Olympia, Washington 98504-7990

February 6, 2007

The Honorable Eileen Cody
House Health Care and Wellness Committee Chair
Washington State House of Representatives
Post Office Box 40600
Olympia, Washington 98504-0600

Dear Representative Cody:

I am writing as chair of the Washington State Board of Health to support the concept behind House Bill 1825, which is scheduled to be heard before your committee on February 7. This bill would provide dedicated state funding for public health services, and would tie that funding to performance measures.

House Bill 5729 is an effort to implement the recommendations of the Joint Select Committee on Public Health Financing. The Board has endorsed those recommendations. It is keenly aware of the funding difficulties facing the public health system in Washington State. It also believes that performance standards are necessary. Only through such standards can accountability be achieved.

We are endorsing the general policy direction of HB 1825 only, since dedicated funding for public health from tobacco tax dollars that now go to the general fund is not supported by the Governor's budget (the Governor has requested \$10 million in new state funding to support expanded local health activities, particularly in the area of communicable disease control). We also recognize that this legislation is most likely a work in progress. Since any new funding from this legislation would not go to the Board, and since the Board would not have the primary responsibility for meeting the proposed performance standards, it will defer to local public health and the Department of Health to discuss details such as the level of appropriation, the funding formula and the makeup of the Public Health Improvement Partnership or its possible successor.

Thank you for taking up this critically important issue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Treuman Katz".

Treuman Katz
Chair, Washington State Board of Health

cc: House Care Health Care Committee Members
Washington State Board of Health Members
Ms. Christina Hulet, Governor's Executive Policy Office
Mr. Brian Peyton, Department of Health
Mr. Craig McLaughlin, Washington State Board of Health