



STATE OF WASHINGTON  
WASHINGTON STATE BOARD OF HEALTH

PO Box 47990 • Olympia, Washington 98504-7990

February 6, 2007

The Honorable Karen Keiser  
Health & Long-Term Care Committee Chair  
Washington State Senate  
PO Box 40433  
Olympia, WA 98504-0433

Dear Senator Keiser:

I am writing as chair of the Washington State Board of Health to support the concept behind Senate Bill 5729, 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: Senate Health & Long-Term 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