Resolution in Support of Foundational Public Health Services

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

WHEREAS, tracking, responding to, and preventing costly food and water contamination and disease outbreaks is essential to protecting the public's health; AND

WHEREAS, state and local public health officials, together with local leaders, have identified an agreed upon set of core public health services that should be available for every Washingtonian; AND

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

WHEREAS, the public’s well-being is also threatened by public health’s inability to meet is basic responsibility to provide these core services due to changes in its funding structure, complex and new diseases, and growing populations; AND

WHEREAS, the motor vehicle excise tax was repealed in 2000, leaving the public health system without an adequate and sustainable funding source; AND

WHEREAS, Washington State’s population has grown by more than one million residents since 2000, and is expected to grow by another two million residents by 2025; AND

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

WHEREAS, over the last four years, state and local public health leaders have developed a plan to modernize the state’s public health system, ensuring core services are available everywhere and designating others that can be effectively and efficiently shared between health departments; AND
WHEREAS, without securing ongoing, stable, and dedicated funding for core public health services, our communities are left unprepared for emergencies like the 2015 wildfire season that impacted regional air quality, and vulnerable to the spread of communicable diseases like mumps and whooping cough; AND

WHEREAS, rebuilding and refocusing our public health services means we can better monitor and coordinate emergency responses—keeping our families and communities safe, reducing costs for taxpayers, and protecting our local economy; AND

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the Northeast Tri County Board of Health calls on the Washington State Legislature to recognize that public health is essential and provide the critical down payment to support core services in all communities and allow public health to rebuild its statewide system with added efficiency.

Done this 22nd day of March, 2017 in Colville, Washington and effective immediately upon signatures as of this date.

[Signatures]
Board Member, Ferry County
Board Member, Ferry County
Board Member, Pend Oreille County
Board Member, Pend Oreille County
Board Member, Stevens County
Board Member, Stevens County
Health Officer
Board Member, Town of Marcus
Board Member, City of Newport
Board Member, City of Republic
STATE FUNDING FOR CORE PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES

Tracking, responding to, and preventing costly food and water contamination and disease outbreaks is essential to protecting the public's health. Yet new, complex threats and recession budget cuts have made it harder for the public health system to protect and serve Washington's families and communities.

Public Health is a shared responsibility.

Providing public health services and response is a shared state and local responsibility. Some public health services are so critical that they must be provided to every resident of Washington state. Other public health needs may be unique to certain regions of our state, so each community determines and implements locally-driven priorities based on local needs.

FOUNDATIONAL PUBLIC HEALTH IN WASHINGTON STATE
Ensuring all residents can depend on a core set of services which only governmental public health can provide.

+ PROGRAMS
A basic set of programs that are accessible in every community across the state.

+ CAPABILITIES
Capabilities & infrastructure to support foundational programming.

+ MEETING LOCAL NEEDS
In addition to these core programs and capabilities, there are other services implemented to meet community-driven needs.

What's at stake.

Washington's population has grown by more than one million residents since 2000. In that same time, when adjusted for inflation and population growth, public health funding has decreased by 40%. Disease epidemics like polio-like Acute Flaccid Myelitis (AFM) and Zika are more complex, increasing investigation time; and our population is expected to grow by another 2 million residents by 2025. Our families and communities deserve reliable and efficient public health services, information and response.
Our public health system has an agreed upon set of core services that the state should financially support so that every community in Washington has equal access to public health programs and services. The legislature is being asked to support those core services, and to allow us to rebuild our system with added efficiency, by providing the following down payment:

$50 Million for Local Health Departments
Local health departments track, respond to, and prevent public health epidemics at the community level – this funding will fill critical gaps in disease prevention and response.

$6 Million for State Department of Health
Our State Department of Health also needs to improve its capacity for disease monitoring and investigations – and expand its laboratory capacity to meet increased demand.

$4 Million for Modernization
Local public health must respond quickly and efficiently to outbreaks. Over the last four years, state and local public health leaders have developed a plan to modernize the state’s public health system, ensuring core services are available everywhere and designating others that can be effectively and efficiently shared between health departments.

“A disease epidemic or food contamination outbreak cost us all. An ounce of prevention saves money for taxpayers, businesses, and all of us in the long run.”
—Bill Ecret, Small Business Owner and former Mayor of Moses Lake

Rebuilding our public health services means we can better monitor and coordinate emergency responses – keeping our families and communities safe, reducing costs for taxpayers, and protecting our local economy.

www.PublicHealthIsEssential.org | info@wspha.org