

May 23, 2024

Council Chair Jared Mead  
Council Vice-Chair Nate Nehring  
Council Member Megan Dunn  
Council Member Strom Peterson  
Council Member Sam Low

Dear Snohomish County Council:

Today, we ask the Snohomish County Council to approve an ordinance placing a sales tax measure on the November ballot to address public safety needs. The prevalence of violent crime, combined with the visible impacts of the ongoing drug epidemic, threatens community safety, our economy, the quality of life of our residents, and the vibrancy of our businesses. We need additional resources to address these critical issues to help Snohomish County thrive.

We recognize that these issues are complex and multi-faceted. While public safety remains one of the most consistent concerns we hear from constituents, we also know that we must proactively address the underlying issues that result in substance use disorder and remove some of the visible blight throughout the county.

We recognize that Snohomish County must support our law enforcement and criminal justice system partners to hold people accountable, while simultaneously supporting health and human services programs that assist people in turning their lives around. We understand that collaboration between our cities and Snohomish County is necessary for successful initiatives to improve public safety. We propose the following:

1. We are confident that most of our residents support additional investments in public safety, especially in the criminal justice system. We support the inclusion of a public safety sales tax proposal on the November 2024 general election ballot.
2. That Snohomish County actively engages with our cities and towns to identify ways to maximize access to desperately needed behavioral health facilities and programs to combat drug addiction and the fentanyl crisis.
3. That Snohomish County pursues an overall funding strategy that includes opportunities for federal or state appropriations and grants for programs to offset the direct tax burden placed on our residents and businesses.

We understand that placing this measure on the ballot is not an easy decision; however, as the crisis deepens, a decision needs to be made now. Our communities need additional resources for progress to be made. We believe that a significant majority of the new revenue must be invested in new criminal justice system investments, including increasing the number of Sheriff's Deputies and Deputy

Prosecutors, and fortifying behavioral health infrastructure and programming. We all agree that we must act before the significant risks posed to our community by the current crisis become insurmountable. Ultimately, it will be up to the voters of Snohomish County to decide whether this sales tax proposal is the right vehicle to fund those additional investments.

Sincerely,



Don Vanney, Mayor of Arlington



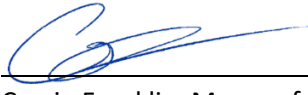
Dale Kaemingk, Mayor of Brier



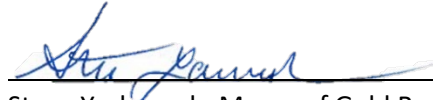
Dan Rankin, Mayor of Darrington



Mike Rosen, Mayor of Edmonds



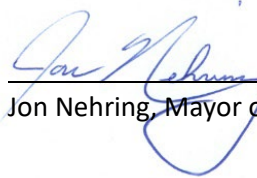
Cassie Franklin, Mayor of Everett



Steve Yarbrough, Mayor of Gold Bar



Brett Gailey, Mayor of Lake Stevens



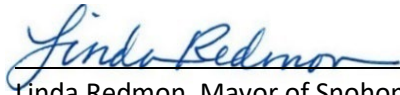
Jon Nehring, Mayor of Marysville



Geoffrey Thomas, Mayor of Monroe



Joe Marine, Mayor of Mukilteo



Linda Redmon, Mayor of Snohomish



Sid Roberts, Mayor of Stanwood



Russell Wiita, Mayor of Sultan



Mike Quinn, Mayor of Woodway