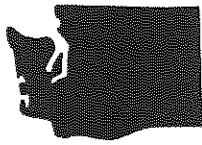


JAY INSLEE  
Governor



STATE OF WASHINGTON  
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

P.O. Box 40002 • Olympia, Washington 98504-0002 • (360) 902-4111 • [www.governor.wa.gov](http://www.governor.wa.gov)

July 10, 2017

Senator Mike Padden  
106 Irv Newhouse Building  
PO Box 40404  
Olympia, WA 98504

Dear Senator Padden,

You have requested our office provide you with our position on SB 5952. We have previously met with you and caucus staff regarding a prior version of this bill, SB 5294. I have also provided a written list of technical issues we have identified with the bills. I believe you are aware of those concerns, but I am attaching the list I previously provided for your reference.

The list of issues we have previously provided addresses the technical issues we viewed in the bill, but does not resolve the underlying difference in how we view an Ombuds office. Though the changes made in the bill do address many concerns, the underlying fundamental difference of view on the purpose of an Ombudsman's Office remain in the current version.

We have continued to hold the position that we are not opposed to an Ombudsman who is an independent entity that works to address issues related to people who are incarcerated and their families. In this regard, we are supportive of the standards promulgated by the United States Ombudsman Association relating to the creation and authority of the Office of the Ombudsman for the purpose of addressing issues related to people who are incarcerated and their families.

While we have not been opposed to the creation of an Ombudsman Office for this purpose, we do not believe it is an efficient use of government resources to allocate limited funding for this position to engage in whistleblower investigative activities. The Washington State Legislature created the state Whistleblower Program through the Whistleblower Act to provide an avenue for state employees to report improper governmental activities. The State Auditor's Office is responsible for investigating and reporting on reports received through this program. Because we have an existing state program dedicated to this function, we cannot support an additional government funded entity to perform the same function. Because SB 5952 creates an Ombudsman position which is intended to serve many of the same functions as currently performed in the existing Whistleblower program, we cannot support the bill in its current form.

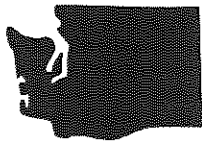
Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "S. Hallum".

Sonja Hallum  
Senior Policy Advisor

cc: Members of the Senate Law and Justice Committee

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Governor



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Sonja Hallum  
Senior Policy Advisor

cc: Members of the Senate Law and Justice Committee