



Legislative Building
Olympia, WA 98504-0482

Washington State Senate

Phone: (360) 786-7550
FAX: (360) 786-1999

June 22, 2020

David Ammons, Chair
Public Disclosure Commission
PO Box 40908
Olympia, WA 98504

Dear Chair Ammons:

We are writing to express our sentiments about the issue of reposting Personal Financial Affairs statements ("F-1") in June.

We proudly support open transparency in government and the right of any individual or organization to request and receive F-1 reports directly from the commission. That practice, common until recent action by the commission, is an extremely low bar of required effort for any media source or individual interested in the data contained in F-1 reports. We believe the risks and vulnerabilities associated with posting these detailed financial reports on the Internet is a disservice to the most elementary privacy rights of filers. We urge the commission not to repost F-1 statements on the Internet for global actors to access and abuse.

As we have seen recently, there is a historic vulnerability for personal information in Washington's public data bases. We know and have seen that foreign players are constantly examining public resources and the information contained in F-1s is highly valued in their marketplace. The unique nature of the content contained in the F1 reports provides a rich treasure trove for those constantly building personal profiles in order to commit fraud and other nefarious purposes.

Financial disclosure forms are the only reports held by the commission that require disclosure of personally identifiable information in addition to the person's name. The listing of spousal information further adds to the vulnerability.

In this instance, we would encourage you to reflect on both the letter and spirit of the people's initiative. We believe you can aggressively support full and open access to F-1s through a simple request to the PDC while showing the most modest level of effort to protect filers. Moreover, we encourage you to revisit the words of former Washington Supreme Court Justice Charles Wiggins's dissent in a recent case where he wrote "In our age of technology, information is fuel. And personal information is collected and shared around the world--with good and bad actors alike." He went on to write "(t)he right to privacy is not extinguished because the information may be available from third parties. Nor is the right surrendered upon public service."

Therefore, we urge the commission to return to the time-honored policy of making this information available upon request from the PDC.

Sincerely,

Senator Sam Hunt
22nd Legislative District

Senator Reuven Carlyle
36th Legislative District

Senator Andy Billig
Majority Leader
3rd Legislative District


Senator Mike Padden
4th Legislative District


Senator Dean Takko
19th Legislative District



Senator Christine Rolfes
23rd Legislative District


Senator Kevin Van De Wege
24th Legislative District



Senator Emily Randall
26th Legislative District


Senator Steve Conway
29th Legislative District


Senator Phil Fortunato
31st Legislative District


Senator Jesse Salomon
32nd Legislative District



Senator Karen Keiser
President Pro Tempore
33rd Legislative District


Senator Joe Nguyen
34th Legislative District


Senator Rebecca Saldaña
37th Legislative District


Senator June Robinson
38th Legislative District


Senator Liz Lovelett
40th Legislative District


Senator Jamie Pedersen
43rd Legislative District


Senator Mona Das
47th Legislative District


Senator Patty Kuderer
48th Legislative District
