



King County Councilmember

Bob Ferguson

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King County

Dear Neighbors:

Independent, transparent oversight of the Sheriff's Department is now County law.

It was a long and challenging road, but the outcome made it worth the journey.

Earlier this year, I wrote to you about a proposal sponsored by myself and Julia Patterson to improve oversight of alleged police misconduct in the Sheriff's Department. Hundreds of you completed that newsletter survey and overwhelmingly supported this effort.

After nearly a year of public hearings and expert testimony, I am pleased to report that the Council unanimously adopted our proposal. This newsletter provides details about the oversight office and other supporting oversight measures.

These reforms have not been easy to implement—change is often difficult. But I will continue to work to make sure that your County government operates with accountability and integrity.

As always, don't hesitate to contact me with your feedback regarding this or any other County issue.

Sincerely,

Bob

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Old King County System:

- ✗ No independent oversight of police misconduct investigations.
- ✗ No outside audits or review of internal investigations.
- ✗ No formal citizen input in processes and procedures.
- ✗ No alternative dispute resolution process.
- ✗ No annual public reports.



“ Ferguson and Patterson want to institute genuine civilian oversight for the Sheriff’s Office. Accepting the need for outside, impartial review is long overdue.” -Seattle PI, 1/15/06

“ There is inadequate internal and external oversight of policies, procedures, performance, and misconduct investigations.” -Report of the King County Sheriff’s Blue Ribbon Panel

New Ferguson/Patterson Reforms:

- ✓ Independent Office of Law Enforcement Oversight:
 1. Investigates misconduct allegations.
 2. Monitors and evaluates Sheriff's internal investigations.
 3. Reports directly to the County Council and the public.
- ✓ Ongoing law enforcement audit process.
- ✓ Citizen panel to provide continued input.
- ✓ New officer-citizen mediation option.



For more information, visit my website at www.metrokc.gov/ferguson

Blue Ribbon Panel calls for oversight

In September, a Blue Ribbon Panel presented a report and recommendations to the King County Council regarding the state of the Sheriff's Office. Their recommendations helped shape the Ferguson/Patterson legislation.

The report acknowledged the positive efforts of the men and women of the Sheriff's Office, but also delivered a

powerful confirmation that civilian oversight is badly needed to increase transparency in the complaint process and to restore the public's trust that legitimate concerns will be fairly and thoroughly investigated.

The complete recommendations are available online at: www.metrokc.gov/council.



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Council adopts Ferguson-Patterson Proposal for Independent Oversight of Sheriff's office.

Public and Expert Input Helps Shape Independent Oversight of Sheriff's Department

An inclusive, informative and open dialogue on the Ferguson/Patterson oversight legislation was critical to making good policy decisions.

The Council's Law, Justice, and Human Services Committee, which Ferguson chairs, held ten hearings on the proposed legislation. The Committee heard testimony from representatives of the Sheriff's Internal Investigations Unit, the Ombudsman's Office of Citizen Complaints and the Seattle Police Department's Office of Professional Accountability.

The Committee also reviewed materials and evaluated other oversight models, including a personal visit by Ferguson and Patterson to Los Angeles to get a ground-level view of their nationally recognized program.



Ferguson speaks with citizens who attended Bob's Town Hall on Sheriff's Department Oversight held in Kenmore.