



**King County**

**Larry Phillips**

Councilmember, District Four

**Metropolitan King County Council**

June 22, 2009

Kurt Triplett  
King County Executive  
401 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Suite 800  
Seattle, WA 98104

Dear Executive Triplett,

The State Auditor's Report of King County presents a great opportunity for improving the government's operations.

The specter of poor management raised by the audit is disturbing indeed:

- checks lying unprocessed in a drawer;
- transit fare cash left unsecured and stacked in two-foot high piles on a table; and
- inadequate accounting for county assets such as pharmaceuticals and computer monitors.

These few examples, combined with the auditor's description of lax and inconsistent management of construction projects, at best indicate sloppy and inadequate conduct of county affairs.

The role of the King County Council is to oversee the functions of government—albeit after-the-fact. Therefore, I am introducing legislation to ensure the Auditor's recommendations are implemented. Council oversight, however, is no substitute for strong, consistent daily management of King County's activities, and according to best-practices. Anything less is unacceptable.

I am sure you share the view that we can make the necessary improvements called for by the State Auditor. The motion I am introducing requests a written action plan, within 60 days, to get this work underway.

I have been a strong proponent of exercising the Council's oversight role to encourage auditing of county departments and bring effective reforms to King County. Some examples of reform initiatives I have sponsored include forming the Citizens Elections Oversight Committee and pushing for implementation of their recommendations, creating a Capital Projects Oversight Program within the County Auditor's Office to control cost overruns and unforeseen scope, schedule, and budget changes, conducting a performance audit of Metro Transit to increase budget transparency and

Kurt Triplett  
June 22, 2009  
Page 2

find opportunities to free up revenue for service through savings and efficiencies, and passing the Performance and Accountability Act last year to establish a comprehensive countywide performance management and reporting system.

You have my full cooperation as we work to address the Auditor's findings.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Larry Phillips", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Larry Phillips, Councilmember  
Metropolitan King County Council, District Four