A RESOLUTION approving the Board of Health's Plan to Educate the Public on the Value of Public Health.

WHEREAS, it is the responsibility of King County government to provide regional public health services to the 1.8 million residents of King County, as well as the hundreds of thousands of workers and tourists who enter the county each day, and

WHEREAS, state law vests in the King County Board of Health oversight of all matters pertaining to the preservation of the life and health of the people of King County, including the adoption of countywide public health policy, and the enactment and enforcement of local public health regulations; and

WHEREAS, public health services safeguard and improve the health of communities through organized efforts to: protect the public from natural and human-made health threats; promote health by providing reliable information and an environment in which people and communities can make informed decisions that impact their health; and assure the provision of quality preventive and curative health services, and
WHEREAS, the cost of providing the same level of public health services increases each year yet, federal and state revenues that support public health have been eliminated, limited, or reduced, thus requiring significant increases in the level of county general fund resources for public health services, and

WHEREAS, acknowledging that the projected 2009 general fund budget deficit was nearing $86.5 million, possibly requiring significant reductions in public health services, the board adopted BOH Resolution 08-07, calling on the state of Washington to provide adequate, stable, dedicated, long-term financing for local public health statewide and to provide financing options for local jurisdictions to protect, promote and provide for the health of the public, and

WHEREAS, through BOH Resolution 08-07, the board committed to working with the King County executive, King County council, the city of Seattle and other cities in King County and community, regional and state partners to educate the public about the value of public health and the need for adequate, stable, dedicated, long-term state and local funding sources;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Health of King County:

A. The Board of Health finds that increased education is key for the public to recognize and value:

1. The benefits that public health services provide the entire King County population every day through:
a. health protection services, such as restaurant and drinking water inspections to ensure safe food and water, communicable disease control and the prevention of HIV/AIDS, sexually transmitted diseases and tuberculosis;

b. health promotion services to prevent injuries and chronic diseases and to maximize people's ability to make healthy choices; and

c. health provision services that ensure access to quality health care, such as immunizations for children and adults that protect against the spread of communicable diseases, primary care and oral health services that improve health and reduce disease in low-income, vulnerable populations, family planning services that reduce unintended pregnancies and sexually transmitted diseases, and child care facility health and safety programs;

2. The magnitude to which public health centers serve our community's most vulnerable populations, which, in 2007, was 143,025 people, of whom 107,096 were below the poverty line and 44,657 had no insurance;

3. The role that King County and its public health centers play as part of a larger health care safety net, which is facing financial crisis due to declining revenues and an increasing number of uninsured, with over 140,000 uninsured residents in King County in 2008;

4. The impact such public health services as the women, infants, and children's program that improves pregnancy outcomes and children's health and development through food vouchers and nutrition education, and family support services that provide assessment, education, skills-building and case management services to at-risk pregnant women and families with children to assure that babies are born with the best
opportunities to grow and thrive, have on reducing involvement in the criminal justice system later in life; and

5. The consequences that reducing core public health functions, priority services, and cross-cutting capabilities that are necessary to conduct 21st century public health would have on:

   a. providing clinical health preventive services to vulnerable populations;
   b. immunizing the community to prevent and control the spread of communicable diseases;
   c. preventing and controlling chronic diseases, such as diabetes and asthma;
   d. measuring and following health issues through our communities;
   e. supporting and enhancing healthy families through family planning and promotion of healthy development in young child and mothers;
   f. helping people access the health care services they need; and
   g. preparing for, and responding to, health emergencies.

B. The Board of Health approves the attached education plan that proposes
Resolution

numerous methods by which the Board of Health could educate the public about the
benefits of public health services.

Resolution was introduced on and passed by the Board of Health on 9/18/2008, by the following vote:

Yes: 9 - Ms. Lambert, Ms. Patterson, Ms. Clark, Mr. Sherman, Mr. Hutchinson, Dr. Nicola, Dr. Counts, Mr. Gossett and Mr. Licata
No: 0
Excused: 6 - Mr. Ferguson, Mr. von Reichbauer, Mr. Dunn, Mr. Rasmussen, Ms. Frisinger and Ms. Manning

BOARD OF HEALTH
KING COUNTY, WASHINGTON

Anne Noris, Clerk of the Board

Julie Patterson, Chair

Attachments None