



STATE OF WASHINGTON
HEALTH CARE AUTHORITY

626 8th Avenue, SE • P.O. Box 45502 • Olympia, Washington 98504-5502

April 23, 2020

The Honorable Jay Inslee
Governor of Washington
P.O. Box 40002
Olympia, WA 98504-0002

Dear Governor Inslee:

Please accept the Health Care Authority's (HCA) letter of support for the Poverty Reduction Work Group's (PRWG) *10-year Plan for the Future* to reduce poverty and inequality in Washington State. For the past two years, PRWG has worked diligently to develop a plan that, if implemented, will meaningfully and measurably reduce poverty and inequality in Washington State. We are grateful to you for your support of poverty reduction, and look forward to bringing the plan to action.

Reducing poverty and inequality is critically important to the mission of HCA as we strive to provide high quality health care and address social needs through innovative health policies and purchasing strategies, to achieve our vision of a healthier Washington. HCA cannot fully achieve this vision without a concerted, intentional focus on eliminating health inequities and we know that myriad social determinants, including poverty, contribute to and exacerbate health inequities. To that end, reducing poverty is an integral step towards ensuring that all Washington residents have the opportunity to be as healthy as possible. HCA is confident that the success of the *10-year Plan for the Future* will not only benefit HCA's mission and vision, but the entire state of Washington.

We understand that the PRWG co-lead agencies will be conducting a series of community engagement meetings and finalizing the *10-year Plan for the Future* this summer. We look forward to supporting their efforts. In the meantime, we urge your continued support of the strategic plan and taking immediate steps to begin implementing it by:

- Directing state agencies to write action plans to fulfill the strategies outlined in the plan.
- Elevating the influence and expertise of people most affected by poverty in the implementation of the plan.
- Support improved and expanded data collection and utilization efforts to ensure continuous active monitoring of health disparities.

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- Expand the scope, utilization, and funding of non-traditional health workers, such as community health workers and doulas.
- Encourage piloting, evaluating, and funding for services that address social determinants of health and integrate social services in Medicaid managed care.
- Funding the PRWG's short-term priorities in the next budget cycle.

We believe these actions will lay a strong foundation for the full implementation of the plan over the next ten years, and provide immediate, urgent relief for the 1.8 million Washingtonians currently struggling to make ends meet in communities throughout our state.

Thank you for supporting the PRWG and your passion for making Washington State a place where every child, adult, and family can thrive. Please contact me by cell phone at 360-878-0129 or via email at sue.birch@hca.wa.gov if we can do anything further to support this effort.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Susan E. Birch". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end.

Susan E. Birch, MBA, BSN, RN
Director