

March 2, 2020

Governor Jay Inslee
Office of the Governor
PO Box 40002
Olympia, WA 98504-0002

Dear Governor Inslee,

On behalf of the Poverty Reduction Work Group Steering Committee, we the undersigned are pleased to submit this letter of support for the **Poverty Reduction Work Group's 10-year Plan for the Future to reduce poverty and inequality in Washington state**. For the past two years the PRWG has worked diligently, with open and honest leadership and guidance from this Steering Committee, to develop a plan to meaningfully reduce poverty in Washington state. We appreciate your leadership in this endeavor and look forward to taking action in support of the plan.

As people with direct experience of poverty, we understand that the work of reducing poverty in our state is one that is difficult, but necessary. Many of the families on the Steering Committee and throughout Washington state are suffering now. We know that immediate policy changes are needed to improve the lives of men, women, and children living with very low incomes. We also know these immediate changes will not solve the structural challenges – racism, sexism, ableism – and culture that have allowed this problem to take hold in our state. The plan is full of our ideas to address both of these needs. We recommend changes that the legislature could make this session and trainings that state agencies could implement right now to improve the treatment of our families and communities, as well as broad changes that would redefine poverty and economic stability.

We are proud of the work we have done to bring our stories forward and transform those experiences into a series of policy recommendations. The work was hard, emotional, and liberating for both the Steering Committee and the PRWG, but was very necessary and we thank you for your full support of a process that was led and shaped by people in poverty. We believe that this Steering Committee has laid a foundation and should serve as a model for other policy efforts and across state agencies and task forces.

As we move into the plan's phase of community engagement, we look forward to supporting these efforts. We hope you will also continue supporting this strategic plan 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; and
- Embracing bold and innovative policy proposals that address poverty and inequality.

After two years of deep conversation, studying, and understanding, we believe this plan will work to reduce poverty, make our state a better place to live, and give our children the opportunities that they deserve. We have taken the critical step of bringing this plan forward; now the real work begins.

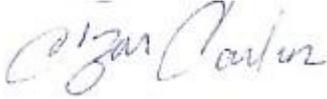
Thank you for your support. Now, let's get to work!

Sincerely,

Poverty Reduction Work Group Steering Committee

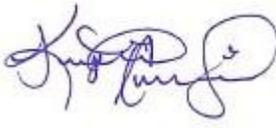
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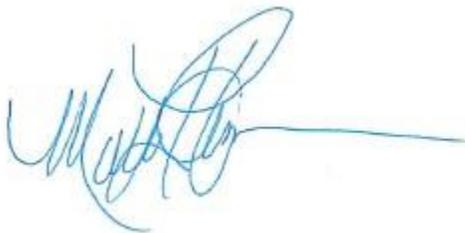
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