



STATE OF WASHINGTON
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL AND HEALTH SERVICES
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December 19, 2014

Dear Human Services Stakeholder,

Yesterday Governor Jay Inslee released his proposed biennial budget for the two-year period starting July 1, 2015, and my first reaction is a deep sense of pride and gratitude. After years of hearing from other leaders that they know our clients desperately need help, but the cupboard is bare, Governor Inslee said, effectively, "I cannot turn a blind eye to the suffering of the vulnerable."

So, as to children subject to physical abuse, sexual abuse and abject neglect, Governor Inslee said, "I see you and I am morally-bound to help you;" as to foster children at risk for sex trafficking, he said, "I see you and I will not let you be exploited on my watch;" as to cognitively-impaired seniors and individuals with disabilities, he said, "I see you and I will not leave you without help;" as to people with serious and persistent mental illness (some of whom have been adjudged a danger to themselves or others), he said, "I am duty-bound to see that you get treatment."

This extends the values-based leadership we saw from Governor Inslee in his first budget, but this time the stakes, and the courage required, were much greater. The Supreme Court decision in the McCleary case requires billions in additional spending on education and there were loud voices saying, fund education first, and effectively turn a blind eye (again) to the vulnerable. The Governor refused to turn a blind eye.

Don't get me wrong, DSHS, and our state's social services programs took some serious cuts, and not every hole in the safety net was repaired. But this proposed budget truly moves us forward in critical areas. A summary of the highlights of that forward movement can be found at <http://www.dshs.wa.gov/budget/index.shtml>. The messages are clear: saving vulnerable people matters, transforming lives is a critical mission.

Trying something new, I've attached (<http://youtu.be/Dn5-Hqo7bc>) a video that outlines my personal thoughts on how the Governor's proposed budget impacts our mission and I hope you will consider reviewing it.

Importantly, remember this is just the first step in the process. The Legislature is tasked with passing the final budget and that process starts in mid-January 2015 and by law should finish by early April. Let's hope our legislative leaders will see our clients and step up to a values-based budget as the Governor has.

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Thanks for your commitment to partner with us to transform lives. Thanks also to Governor Jay Inslee for his commitment to transforming lives.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Kevin W. Quigley". The signature is stylized with large loops and a prominent "K" at the beginning. There is a small "cm" mark below the signature.

Kevin W. Quigley
Secretary

DSHS: *Transforming Lives*