

JEFFERSON COUNTY
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

REGULAR AGENDA REQUEST

TO: Board of County Commissioners

FROM: Mark McCauley, County Administrator

DATE: February 10, 2025

Discussion: Proposed Letter to our Congressional Delegation Regarding the Federal Financial Assistance Spending Freeze and Review

STATEMENT OF ISSUE:

During the February 3rd Board of County Commissioners meeting I was tasked with drafting a letter to our Congressional Delegation regarding the federal spending freeze and review of federal financial assistance programs.

ANALYSIS:

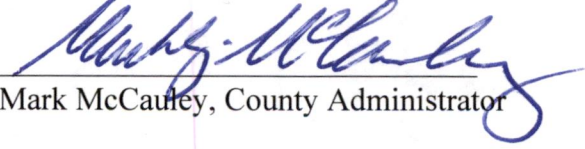
I drafted the letter which I then shared with Commissioner Eisenhower who revised it. The revised version is attached.

FISCAL IMPACT:

None

RECOMMENDATION:

Review the letter, discuss and revise as necessary.


Mark McCauley, County Administrator

2/5/25
Date



Board of County Commissioners
1820 Jefferson Street
PO Box 1220
Port Townsend, WA 98368

Heather Dudley-Nollette, District 1 Heidi Eisenhour, District 2 Greg Brotherton, District 3

February 10, 2025

Senator Patty Murray
154 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Senator Maria Cantwell
511 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Representative Emily Randall
1531 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Senators Cantwell and Murray and Representative Randall,

We are writing today to thank you for your leadership in these unsure times and to express our grave concern regarding executive orders being issued by President Trump that may adversely impact funding sources that Jefferson County and its residents rely on.

As you well know, the OMB memo of January 27th required agencies to identify and review all Federal financial assistance programs and activities consistent with the President's policies and requirements and to suspend distribution of this funding while the review was underway which went into effect the next day. Then Judge Alikhan issued a temporary stay order that paused the funding freeze. The memo was then rescinded on the 29th however the Administration said the funding review would continue. Mixed reports are coming in as to whether funding has continued to flow to our community. As you can imagine, this has led to confusion and chaos.

Now, a few days later, as this chain of events sinks in, local recipients of federal financial assistance worry that their regular funding which enables core services in our communities will be reduced or eliminated. We are a distressed rural county with many people receiving federal assistance without which they could not survive. We also have many non-profits that receive federal funds that do important work here. A few of these programs whose funding is uncertain include housing supports via Olympic Community Action Programs (OlyCAP), USDAs Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC) and the RECOMPETE pilot program via the Economic Development Administration, which would create and connect people to good jobs in distressed communities targeting prime-age employment (25-54 years).

Further, we are very concerned about the changing of data and guidance at the CDC, particularly the erasure of transgender, non-binary, and intersex individuals from large national datasets, as well as the removal of guidance documents on reproductive health, vaccination, the prevention of intimate partner and sexual violence. There is no place for the destruction of data or the erasure of whole populations of marginalized people in a free society. All Americans deserve access to accurate information so that they can make informed decisions for themselves and their families.

Finally, we have concerns – and are hearing from members of our communities about their concerns - relative to access being given to the Treasury Department's payment system, the Office of Personnel Management and the General Services Administration, to the Administration's appointees who are the equivalent of a temporary staff or in our lexicon – 'clerk hire'. We imagine you all share this concern but wanted to make sure to add our voices.

Please share our concerns and more importantly work to convince your persuadable colleagues to reconsider their support for the President's objectives. Rather than what appears to be knee jerk actions we would appreciate an organized and professional approach that considers the most vulnerable among us. It feels like the least we can ask from leaders in our nation's capital.

Again, thank you for your leadership. We appreciate each of you.

Sincerely,

Heather Dudley-Nollette, Dist. 1

Heidi Eisenhour, Dist. 2 - Chair

Greg Brotherton, Dist. 3