April 24, 2020

The Honorable Governor Jay Inslee
Governor of Washington Sate
416 14th Ave SW,
Olympia, WA 98504

From: Cities of Snohomish County Washington

Dear Governor Inslee,

Thank you for your leadership during this unprecedented time in our state's history. Your early, decisive actions continue to protect the lives of millions of Washington's residents. We remain committed to working with you to ensure the health and well-being of our communities, large and small, rural and urban.

We are tremendously proud of the resiliency that Snohomish County communities are demonstrating and our collective success in slowing the spread of COVID-19. However, we're becoming increasingly concerned about our residents' rising frustration with the uncertainty surrounding plans to re-open our places of business, recreation, and worship. We appreciated your news conference on April 21st, where you shared your outline for a plan to focus on these very issues. The outline contained steps that seemed appropriate to us, but our own planning would benefit from more detail and a more concrete understanding of a timeline, even if provisional. We're working on plans for recovery in our respective cities and as a region and wish for these plans to reflect alignment with the statewide framework. Greater transparency would help inform the development of local strategies and guidelines for the recovery phase of this pandemic. We believe our local strategies will be critical for keeping our residents safe and guiding their return to work, recreation, and a full life.

We would like to offer our assistance in building out the state's recovery plan.

Areas where we believe we can assist you and your team in developing a more detailed plan include:

1. Outlining the conditions under which each and all economic sectors can begin to return to safe operations.
2. Outlining the conditions under which people can recreate, particularly outdoor recreation.
3. Outlining the conditions under which people can gather to worship and pray.

We certainly understand the very difficult position that you are in trying to address the simultaneous health and economic crises in our state, and we share your priority of ensuring that we do not see a resurgence of this virus as we re-open. We are also becoming increasingly aware of the very real and tragic circumstances many of our small business owners, workers, and residents face. We're hearing daily about people struggling to pay their mortgage or rent; struggling to keep food on the table; struggling to keep their business afloat. As local elected leaders, we owe it to our community to be able to communicate to them a transparent and realistic plan that will give some hope to their ability to survive economically in the wake of this pandemic. Your leadership is essential to our ability to do this.

Providing a strategy with good-faith estimates, and modifying it as changes are needed, allows us as residents and as representatives for our shared constituencies a path forward to recovery -- not just for our economy, but also for the health and safety of our communities. We share a very real concern that without hope and an understanding of what happens next, we'll experience widespread non-compliance in our communities, undoing all the great progress we've accomplished thus far. We know that you are working hard to demonstrate leadership to that end, and we want you to know we stand beside you in that fight.

Your decision to put strong measures in place has proven to be effective in battling COVID-19, and we collectively owe you a debt of gratitude. Please let us know how we can continue to be of assistance to you and your office as we take the next steps in this generational challenge. Millions count on our actions over the next few weeks.

Respectfully,

Mayor Cassie Franklin, Everett

Mayor Jon Nehring, Marysville

Mayor Brett Gailey, Lake Stevens

Mayor Barb Tolbert, Arlington

Mayor Geoffrey Thomas, Monroe

Mayor Jennifer Gregerson, Mukilteo

Mayor Carla Nichols, Woodway

Mayor Nicola Smith, Lynnwood

Mayor Bob Colinas, Brier

Mayor John Kartak, Snohomish

Mayor Leonard Kelley, Stanwood

Mayor Pam Pruitt, Mill Creek

Mayor Russell Wiita, Sultan

County Council, Nate Nehring

County Council, Sam Low

Mayor Matt Hartman, Granite Falls

Mayor Liam Olsen, Liam Olsen

Mayor Kyoko Matsumoto Wright, Mountlake Terrace

Kyoko Matsumoto Wright

Mayor Dan Rankin, Darrington