



Legislative Building
Olympia, WA 98504-0482

Washington State Senate

Phone: (360) 786-7550
FAX: (360) 786-1999

September 22, 2021

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

Dear Governor Inslee,

You have recently used your emergency powers to suspend statutes during the statewide COVID-19 emergency when you have believed that it would help Washingtonians. With the emergency still in effect, we are requesting that you suspend the fast-approaching tax assessment and deadline for employees to opt out of the new long-term services and supports trust program.

As you know, unless they become exempt from the program, employees across Washington will soon begin paying an assessment every time they receive a paycheck. Many employees are seeking to become exempt from the new tax in this fragile economy, but they face a November 1 deadline to acquire insurance that is currently unavailable. Your intervention to suspend the tax and insurance purchase deadline would provide temporary relief to employees who face a major new tax and give time for the Legislature to work on a solution.

Furthermore, the Legislature is aware of the need to address some key issues that have been called to your attention by a diverse coalition of stakeholders. These include better defining the opt-out process, addressing employees who reside in neighboring states, determining whether veterans' benefits qualify for opt-out, and avoiding additional disruptions of the private insurance market, among several others.

It is clear that we should push pause on the new Long-Term Services and Supports program and WA Cares Fund. Your actions over the last eighteen months demonstrate that you will not hesitate to suspend the law when you think it is necessary. Please do not hesitate here to provide tax relief to employees and give them more time to find insurance that best suits their own needs.

Sincerely,

Senator Ann Rivers, LD 18

Senator Mark Mullet, LD 5



Senator John Braun, LD 20



Senator Shelly Short, LD 7



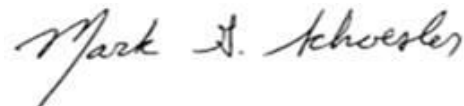
Senator Chris Gildon, LD 25




Senator Lynda Wilson, LD 17



Senator Mike Padden, LD 4



Senator Mark Schoesler, LD 9



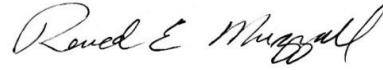
Senator Jeff Wilson, LD 19



Senator Phil Fortunato, LD 31



Senator Steve Hobbs, LD 44



Senator Ron Muzzall, LD 10



Senator Keith Wagoner, LD 39



Senator Brad Hawkins, LD 12



Senator Perry Dozier, LD 16



Senator Jeff Holy, LD 6



Senator Judy Warnick, LD 13



Senator Doug Ericksen, LD 42



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Jim Honeyford

Senator Jim Honeyford, LD15

Sharon R. Brown

Senator Sharon Brown, LD 8

Jim McCune

Senator Jim McCune, LD 2

Curtis King

Senator Curtis King, LD 14

Tim Sheldon

Senator Tim Sheldon, LD 35