

John Creighton
Seattle Port Commission President
King County, Washington

May 10, 2007

Dear [REDACTED]

I write to ask your urgent support of elections reforms that will return confidence in the election process in King County and the state.

King County is the 11th largest county in the United States with nearly one million registered voters. The job of managing King County's tremendously complex registration and balloting operation is at present overseen by a political appointee. Every other county in Washington State – except for King County – elects the person that oversees practices and procedures for counting ballots.

While I was able to handily win my election for port commissioner in 2005 with your support, recent events have shown that it is time to make the head of elections in King County accountable to the people like every other county in Washington.

In 2002, King County citizens were concerned that absentee ballots were mailed late, threatening to disenfranchise many overseas voters, especially those serving in the military. In 2004, the problems made headlines and affected the outcome of the gubernatorial election. There have been improvements, but there is a need to be more accountable to the people so that all the people can have confidence in the process.

The King County Council and the Executive appointed bi-partisan commissions to review the office and make recommendations for change. Both commissions concluded that King County should have an elected, and independent, Director of Elections.

The Election Task Force Report completed in 2005 said this:

"The Task Force believes that an official elected in a non-partisan race with primary responsibility for conducting elections would increase accountability to citizens, be better able to encourage citizens to participate fully in the electoral process, to be a more effective advocate for improved technology and resources, and establish an independent election system."

I agree with their recommendation.

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The King County Council received the recommendations of both appointed commissions but declined to make the head of the Elections Department an elected position. They have discussed placing the issue on the ballot in 2009 for an advisory vote but have made no promises to do so.

A group of citizens, Citizens for Accountable Elections, have decided that voters should not have to wait. They believe an elected Director of Elections should be in place before the 2008 elections.

In order to make this County Charter change, they are circulating an Initiative petition – I-25 - throughout King County. They have less than 60 days left to turn in the needed signatures – almost 70,000. This is a tall order but the signature drive is on target.

But the reality is this: while volunteers are working, the signature requirements demand paid circulators. I-25 sponsors must generate funds each week to pay those out on the street corners working to make this a success.

I urge you to check out the website at www.accountableelections.org to read the Initiative and see the reasons for supporting it.

Then I ask that you write as generous a check as you can so that elections in King County can be fully accountable to the voters.

We must have confidence that our ballots are handled properly and our votes counted accurately. To achieve that, we have to have I-25 on the ballot.

Please act now and send a check, credit card donation or make an online contribution to support Initiative 25.

Warm regards,



John Creighton, President
Port of Seattle Commission

P.S. – Donations are not tax deductible. There are no limitations on the size of your donation to an initiative – so give generously!