



KING COUNTY

1200 King County Courthouse
516 Third Avenue
Seattle, WA 98104

Signature Report

Motion 15651

Proposed No. 2020-0200.2

Sponsors Balducci

1 A MOTION requesting the executive to prepare an
2 assessment report to inform council deliberations regarding
3 possible renewal of the best starts for kids levy.

4 WHEREAS, in November 2015, King County voters passed the first best starts
5 for kids levy to generate funding for a wide range of programs to support promotion,
6 prevention and early intervention for King County's children, youth and families, and

7 WHEREAS, the goals of the existing best starts for kids levy are to ensure that:
8 babies are born healthy; King County is a place where everyone has equitable
9 opportunities for health and safety as they progress through childhood; and communities
10 offer safe, welcoming and healthy environments that help improve outcomes for all of
11 King County's children and families, regardless of where they live, and

12 WHEREAS, the best starts for kids levy was created to align with King County's
13 equity and social justice principles and includes a focus on systems and policies change
14 so that all communities in King County can thrive and prosper regardless of race or place,
15 and

16 WHEREAS, fifty percent of the existing levy's proceeds are allocated to
17 promotion, prevention and early intervention programs for children under age five and
18 pregnant families, thirty-five percent are allocated to promotion, prevention and early
19 intervention programs for children and youth ages five through twenty-four years old; ten

Motion 15651

20 percent are allocated to creating safe and healthy communities of opportunity; and five
21 percent are allocated to evaluation of the best starts for kids initiative. The allocation has
22 been beneficial in delivering services to populations in need of the services, and

23 WHEREAS, the best starts for kids levy will expire December 31, 2021, and

24 WHEREAS, the best starts for kids levy is a voter-approved, six-year levy lid lift,
25 renewal of which requires voter approval of a ballot measure, and

26 WHEREAS, the best starts for kids levy distributes resources across the region,
27 targeting investments to those most in need, and

28 WHEREAS, current events have underscored the urgency of the continued need
29 to dismantle systems of racial and other forms of oppression which affect youth, families
30 and communities in King County, like the school to prison pipeline, and

31 WHEREAS, over twenty-five thousand new babies are born in King County in
32 each year, and

33 WHEREAS, while King County as a region is thriving, research shows that there
34 are significant disparities in birth outcomes by race, geography and income, and some
35 children and youth are in danger of being left behind, and

36 WHEREAS, infant mortality is four times higher in some areas of King County
37 than others, twenty-nine percent of elementary age children are flourishing and resilient,
38 thirty-three percent of adolescents report depressive feelings and twenty-four percent
39 report using alcohol or other illicit drugs, and

40 WHEREAS, those disparities persist throughout a child's life course, contributing
41 to sustained disparities in long-term success, and

42 WHEREAS, services supported by proceeds of the best starts for kids levy have

Motion 15651

43 directly addressed those disparities through promotion, prevention and early intervention,
44 allowing King County's children, youth and families to be happy, healthy, safe and
45 thriving, and

46 WHEREAS, sustained investment in funded strategies and programs is necessary
47 to fully realize long-term beneficial impacts for children, families and communities, and

48 WHEREAS, the King County council is considering whether to submit to the
49 qualified electors for their approval in 2021 a ballot measure to renew the best starts for
50 kids levy, and

51 WHEREAS, the purpose of an assessment report is to support council awareness
52 of initiative implementation and outcomes to inform deliberations regarding the potential
53 ballot measure for a renewed levy;

54 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT MOVED by the Council of King County:

55 A. The council requests that the executive submit for council review an
56 assessment report of the best starts for kids levy-funded goals, strategies and programs.
57 The assessment report submitted to council shall be developed in consultation with
58 stakeholders, including, but not limited to, soliciting feedback from the regional policy
59 committee, and shall include:

60 1. An assessment of how levy proceeds are being allocated, the status of
61 strategy and program implementation, design or policy changes, challenges and
62 outcomes. The report shall detail the context and impact of the best starts for kids levy-
63 funded goals, strategies and programs outlined in Ordinance 18088, including, but not
64 limited to:

65 a. an analysis of investments by geographic area, including maps or data

Motion 15651

66 summaries reflecting available zip code data of residence of clients or participants served;

67 b. an analysis of investments by strategy, including the rationale for and status

68 of any unspent or reallocated levy proceeds;

69 c. progress of levy implementation;

70 d. preliminary measurement of changes experienced by families and

71 communities;

72 e. an analysis of the impact of investments in advancing equity and social

73 justice and changing systems and policies of racial and other forms of oppression; and

74 f. an analysis of levy proceeds used to fund technical assistance and capacity

75 building; and

76 2. Recommendations that address the following:

77 a. how a renewed levy, or an increased or expanded levy, would deepen the

78 current levy's work to dismantle systems of oppression, heal continuing wounds and

79 realize justice for black, indigenous and people of color across all strategies;

80 b. whether to maintain or modify the best starts for kids levy's three primary

81 goals enumerated in the implementation plan approved in Ordinance 18373, which are to

82 ensure that: babies are born healthy; King County is a place where everyone has

83 equitable opportunities for health and safety as they progress through childhood; and

84 communities offer safe, welcoming and healthy environments that help improve

85 outcomes for all of King County's children and families, regardless of where they live;

86 c. whether to maintain or modify the relative allocations of levy proceeds to

87 each goal area;

88 d. whether a renewed levy, or an increased or expanded levy, should

Motion 15651

89 incorporate new or revised goals or strategies such as child care, recommendations from
90 the children and families strategy task force or other county efforts focused on children
91 and youth;

92 e. how a renewed levy would align and coordinate with programs such as: the
93 veterans, seniors and human services levy; mental illness and drug dependency fund;
94 children and families strategy task force recommendations; the Puget Sound Taxpayer
95 Accountability Account; and other federal, state and local funding streams and programs
96 to integrate, align and avoid duplication of efforts;

97 f. whether a renewed levy should retain, or make modifications to, existing
98 strategies that are intended to: support parents, families and caregivers; screen children
99 to prevent potential problems and intervene early to link to treatment; cultivate caregiver
100 knowledge; support high-quality childcare; build resiliency of youth and reduce risky
101 behaviors; meet the health and behavior needs of youth; create healthy and safe
102 environments for youth; help youth stay connected to their families and communities;
103 help young adults who have had challenges successfully transition into adulthood; stop
104 the school-to-prison pipeline; support priorities and strategies to facilitate collaboration
105 with communities that have much to gain; engage multiple organizations in institutional,
106 system and policy change; and prevent youth and family homelessness;

107 g. how a renewed levy would benefit the entire region while targeting
108 resources to those most in need; and

109 h. whether a renewed levy should modify any, or any combination of, the role;
110 the structure or the representation of the children and youth advisory board.

111 B. The executive shall file the assessment report requested by this motion by

Motion 15651

112 September 30, 2020, in the form of a paper original and an electronic copy with the clerk
113 of the council, who shall retain the original and provide an electronic copy to all
114 councilmembers, the council chief of staff, the policy staff director and the lead staff for

Motion 15651

115 the committee of the whole and the regional policy committee, or their successors. The
116 report shall be accompanied by a proposed motion accepting the report.
117

Motion 15651 was introduced on 6/9/2020 and passed as amended by the Metropolitan King County Council on 7/7/2020, by the following vote:

Yes: 9 - Ms. Balducci, Mr. Dembowski, Mr. Dunn, Ms. Kohl-Welles, Ms. Lambert, Mr. McDermott, Mr. Upthegrove, Mr. von Reichbauer and Mr. Zahilay

KING COUNTY COUNCIL
KING COUNTY, WASHINGTON

DocuSigned by:

Claudia Balducci

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Claudia Balducci, Chair

ATTEST:

DocuSigned by:

Melani Pedroza

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Melani Pedroza, Clerk of the Council

Attachments: None