



**KING COUNTY**

1200 King County Courthouse  
516 Third Avenue  
Seattle, WA 98104

**Signature Report**

**Motion 16157**

**Proposed No.** 2022-0229.2

**Sponsors** Dembowski, Kohl-Welles, von Reichbauer and Dunn

1                   A MOTION requesting the executive develop an  
2                   implementation plan to establish a personal locator beacon  
3                   lending program.

4                   WHEREAS, a personal locator beacon ("PLB") is a small portable device that  
5 transmits a personalized distress signal in the 406 MHz spectrum range to a National  
6 Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration ("NOAA")-operated fleet of geostationary  
7 satellites ("COSPAS-SARSAT") which, for the mainland United States, routes the signal  
8 to the Air Force Rescue Coordination Center, which in turn alerts the relevant search and  
9 rescue jurisdiction. For King County, the alert is sent to the state of Washington Search  
10 and Rescue coordinator and is then sent to the King County sheriff's office, and

11                   WHEREAS, all PLBs are required by federal law to be registered with NOAA  
12 with a name, address, phone number and any pertinent information such as medical  
13 problems, and this information is sent to search and rescue personnel along with the GPS  
14 location, and

15                   WHEREAS, NOAA credits COSPAS-SARSAT, which transmit emergency  
16 beacons including PLB signals, from saving three hundred thirty lives in 2021, and

17                   WHEREAS, in partnership with the sheriff's office, King County Search and  
18 Rescue conducts over two hundred missions annually, which include numerous  
19 backcountry rescues, and

Motion 16157

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20 WHEREAS, the King County department of natural resources and parks, parks  
21 division, manages thirty-two thousand acres of open space and two hundred fifty miles of  
22 backcountry trails with year-round accessibility for hiking, mountain biking and  
23 horseback riding, and

24 WHEREAS, the National Park Service recommends taking a PLB when going  
25 into the backcountry or wilderness area where mobile phone coverage is limited, and

26 WHEREAS, the Washington Trails Association states that PLBs have saved  
27 many lives and should be strongly considered by all backcountry travelers, and

28 WHEREAS, the Washington state Parks and Recreation Commission also  
29 recommends carrying a PLB while paddleboarding and boating, and

30 WHEREAS, as of June 2022, the retail price for a PLB ranged from one hundred  
31 dollars to six hundred dollars, making the purchase unaffordable to many lower income  
32 individuals and thereby increasing disparate safety outcomes depending on income level,  
33 and

34 WHEREAS, the Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson in Alaska established a free  
35 PLB program to provide service members and civil-service employees the ability to  
36 check out a PLB to enhance safety while enjoying the outdoors, and

37 WHEREAS, the New South Wales National Parks and Wildlife Service in  
38 Australia also lends PLBs for free at its visitor centers and police stations;

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

40 A. The council requests that the executive develop an implementation plan to  
41 establish a personal locator beacon ("PLB") lending program. The program shall lend

Motion 16157

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42 PLBs at no cost or low cost to King County residents or visitors to King County Parks, or  
43 both. The implementation plan should include, but not be limited to, the following:

44 1. An estimate of the costs to implement the program, including funding source  
45 options;

46 2. Consideration of whether establishing partnerships with private entities such  
47 as Recreational Equipment, Inc., and nonprofit entities such as the Washington Trails  
48 Association and King County Search and Rescue to support the program is advisable;

49 3. Strategies to ensure the program is publicized widely throughout the county  
50 to bring awareness of the program and throughout the state to encourage other local  
51 jurisdictions to follow suit;

52 4. A plan to educate program participants to ensure they continue to plan and  
53 prepare and exercise safety practices and rely on PLBs as last resort;

54 5. Considerations to expand the scope of the program to include paddleboarders,  
55 boaters, snow skiers and others who participate in recreational water and snow activities;  
56 and

57 6. A project plan to enable launch of the program in 2023.

58 B. The executive should electronically file the implementation plan no later than  
59 May 31, 2023, with the clerk of the council, who shall retain an electronic copy and  
60 provide an electronic copy to all councilmembers, the council chief of staff and the lead  
61 staff for the transportation, economy and environment committee, or its successor.

Motion 16157

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- 62 C. The council requests that the executive include an appropriation in the 2023-  
63 2024 Proposed Biennial Budget to enable launch of the PLB lending program in 2023.

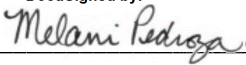
Motion 16157 was introduced on 6/14/2022 and passed by the Metropolitan King County Council on 7/5/2022, by the following vote:

Yes: 9 - Balducci, Dembowski, Dunn, Kohl-Welles, Perry, McDermott, Upthegrove, von Reichbauer and Zahilay

KING COUNTY COUNCIL  
KING COUNTY, WASHINGTON

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Claudia Balducci, Chair

ATTEST:

DocuSigned by:  
  
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Melani Pedroza, Clerk of the Council

**Attachments:** None

**Certificate Of Completion**

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	Suite 100
	Seattle, WA 98104
	Cherie.Camp@kingcounty.gov
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**Signer Events**

Claudia Balducci  
 claudia.balducci@kingcounty.gov  
 King County General (ITD)  
 Security Level: Email, Account Authentication (None)

**Signature**

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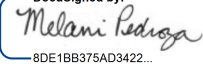
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Melani Pedroza  
 melani.pedroza@kingcounty.gov  
 Clerk of the Council  
 King County Council  
 Security Level: Email, Account Authentication (None)

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Intermediary Delivery Events	Status	Timestamp
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Carbon Copy Events	Status	Timestamp
Witness Events	Signature	Timestamp
Notary Events	Signature	Timestamp
Envelope Summary Events	Status	Timestamps

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