



# Bellingham / Whatcom County Fire Fighters

## IAFF Local #106

P.O. Box 1024 • Bellingham, Washington 98227



**Washington State**  
Council of Fire Fighters

10-18-2024

To Whom It May Concern,

The members of IAFF Local 106, are writing to express our strong support for the county to adhere to the full EMS levy rate as approved by the voters. Voters in Whatcom County approved an EMS levy rate of 29.5 cents per \$1,000 of assessed valuation to fund essential emergency services. In the first year, the county opted to take less than the approved rate. However, according to the county assessor and other sources, the county can still take the full amount originally approved.

The EMS levy rate and plan was set by the executive oversight board to account for projected costs and system impacts. Any deviation from this plan—particularly by purposefully underfunding the levy or not taking the planned and now needed amount—risks undermining the critical emergency medical services that the citizens of Whatcom County rely on. Failing to meet the funding expectations approved by the voters could result in significant cutbacks to Advanced Life Support (ALS) services, services that are essential to maintaining public safety and health.

Reducing resources could lead to longer response times, negatively impacting outcomes for individuals in need of urgent care. This is not in the best interest of the taxpayers who approved this levy with the understanding that it would fully fund EMS services as planned. We respectfully urge the county to take the full levy amount that voters supported and ensure that Whatcom County's emergency medical system continues to meet its obligations without regression.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Tony Melillo".

Tony Melillo

Political Action Committee, Chair

Bellingham/Whatcom Local 106

International Association of Firefighters

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On behalf of the IAFF Local 106 Executive Board