

To: Whatcom County Council and Executive Sidhu

From: Whatcom County Fire District #16 Commissioner Hindman

Date: October 3, 2023

RE: Revisions to the Administrative Board of What-Comm

The Administrative Board of What-Comm has functioned well for the last several years with the current representation on the Board.

The recent proposal to revise the current make up of the board appears to be without merit. The need for more "elected" representation on the board serves no real purpose. The Administrative Board of What-Comm currently makes recommendations that are presented to both the Whatcom County Council as well as the City of Bellingham Council for final approval. The need for accountability to the voters is met through this process.

The desire to remove the current voting members of the Administrative Board of What-Comm will only weaken the discussion and value placed on the experts that are currently represented and responsible for the day to day operations of a very vital part of Whatcom County's ability to respond to emergencies.

The uncertainty of these types of decisions based on local politics can also cast some doubt to the staff of What-Comm in the midst of their current staffing crisis. Executive Sidhu expressed concern and support for the What-Comm staff and indicated that he was willing to do what he could. Showing stability and security for the entire program is paramount, especially during this time when we are on the verge of building a new What-Comm facility.

I would urge the Whatcom County Council to table any further discussion on the revisions to the Administrative Board of What-Comm and allow business to continue to run successfully as it has for years.

Respectfully

Jeff Hindman