

RESOLUTION NO. _____

REPEALING RESOLUTION 2023-054 (A RESOLUTION ESTABLISHING AN INDEPENDENT REVIEW OF COUNTYWIDE FIRE AND EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES STRUCTURES)

WHEREAS, on December 5, 2023, the Whatcom County Council approved Resolution 2023-054 (Attachment A), establishing an independent study of countywide fire and emergency medical services (EMS) structures and authorizing Council staff to begin the process of hiring an independent consultant to conduct the study; and

WHEREAS in early 2024 the Whatcom County Council received resolutions and other correspondence from several fire districts and commissioners (Attachment B) requesting that Resolution 2023-054 be repealed; and

WHEREAS, documents received from the fire districts and commissioners state numerous reasons for the repeal request, including the following statements:

- The Whatcom County Council has no authority over Fire Districts and RFAs (Rural Fire Associations) as they are not subdivisions of a county.
- Legally independent, volunteer, and professional Fire Districts and RFAs (the Agencies) have been providing exceptional and progressive emergency services in Whatcom County for over 125 years as recognized by the Council.
- The Agencies have a consistent record of providing excellent, cost-effective service and have a long history of trust with community stakeholders that should not be disturbed, infringed upon, or disrupted for political agendas.
- The many errors in the data the Council put forward in their Resolution 2023-054 and supporting documents show an alarming lack of knowledge of both the history and current status of emergency services in Whatcom County.
- The Council ignored the Agencies' attempts to correct the errors in Resolution 2023-054 and adopted this Resolution despite the incorrect information.
- The Council displayed fiscal irresponsibility in adopting the Resolution mandating that a study be performed without (i) having obtained Requests for Proposals to know the cost of such study, (ii) identifying the source of funding for the study or (iii) explaining how such study will be of benefit to the County which has no authority over the Agencies.
- The lack of notice, collaboration, and unwillingness of the Council to partner with the Agencies illustrates the willingness of the Council to interfere with the duties and responsibilities of the elected officials of legal entities with individual and separate powers and gives us reason to believe the Council does not have the best interest of our communities or the Whatcom County fire service in mind.
- The belief that the Council acted irresponsibly by approving, by a vote of 5-1-1, Resolution 2023-054 with no consultation, collaboration, or forewarning to the legally elected officials who govern said Agencies.
- The belief that the Council conducted itself in a manner both undemocratic and unprofessional; and

WHEREAS, the Council acknowledges receipt of the request(s) to repeal Resolution 2023-054; and

WHEREAS, upon careful consideration, the Council wishes to support the request(s) to repeal Resolution 2023-054.

1 **NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** by the Whatcom County Council that
2 Resolution 2023-054 is hereby repealed.

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4 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Council supports and encourages ongoing
5 dialogue and collaboration between the County and the fire districts to ensure the very best
6 use of all currently available and future resources.

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8 **BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED** that the Council reserves the right to re-establish the
9 groundwork for a future study through resolution process if deemed necessary.

10 **APPROVED** this ____ day of _____, 2024.

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14 ATTEST:

WHATCOM COUNTY COUNCIL
WHATCOM COUNTY, WASHINGTON

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19 _____
Dana Brown-Davis, Clerk of the Council

Barry Buchanan, Council Chair

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22 APPROVED AS TO FORM:



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25 _____
Civil Deputy Prosecutor
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