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## WHATCOM COUNTY COUNCIL

March 7, 2023

Senator Sharon Shewmake  
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Senator Liz Lovelett  
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Rep. Alex Ramel  
[alex.ramel@leg.wa.gov](mailto:alex.ramel@leg.wa.gov)

Dear Senator Shewmake, Senator Lovelett, Rep. Rule, Rep. Timmons, Rep. Lekanoff, and Rep. Ramel,

The Whatcom County Council would like to express our support for the Small and Rural Courthouse Matching Grant Program currently before the State Legislature for consideration. State funding is needed to close the gap between what local governments can afford and what we need to ensure the safety of our courthouses.

Courthouses are bustling government buildings intended to be peaceful and safe places to resolve disputes. However, in recent years, many courthouses have seen increases in disturbances and threats to security. Our courthouse also has experienced an increase in threats, including a breach where an individual gained unauthorized access over an entire weekend and caused significant damage to the building. State grant funding will help fund additional screening staff and equipment, security cameras, emergency notification systems, and other security enhancements.

The Whatcom County Council respectfully requests your support for the creation of the Small and Rural Courthouse Matching Grant Program. We want everyone to feel safe in our public buildings, and this funding will ensure the financial support needed for critical security upgrades.

Sincerely,

Barry Buchanan  
Whatcom County Council, Chair

Cc: Council Correspondence, 2023