

CLERK OF THE COUNCIL
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WHATCOM COUNTY COUNCIL

March 7, 2023

Senator Sharon Shewmake
sharon.shewmake@leg.wa.gov
Senator Liz Lovelett
liz.lovelett@leg.wa.gov
Rep. Alicia Rule
Alicia.Rule@leg.wa.gov
Rep. Joe Timmons
Joe.Timmons@leg.wa.gov
Rep. Debra Lekanoff
Debra.Lekanoff@leg.wa.gov
Rep. Alex Ramel
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 and urge that Whatcom County be included. 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. Access to this state grant funding will help Whatcom County 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, and hope that Whatcom County's courthouse security needs are considered. We want everyone to feel safe in our public buildings, and this funding will ensure the financial support needed for critical security upgrades.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Barry Buchanan". The signature is stylized and cursive.

Barry Buchanan
Whatcom County Council, Chair

Cc: Council Correspondence, 2023