

Governor's Interagency Council on Health Disparities Policy & Procedure

Policy Number:	2009-01
Subject:	LETTERS OF SUPPORT
Adopted:	February 5, 2009

Policy Statement:

The Governor's Interagency Council on Health Disparities (Council) was created to help Washington become the healthiest state in the nation by striving to eliminate health disparities by race/ethnicity and gender. Toward this end, the Council is charged with:

- creating a state policy action plan to eliminate health disparities;
- promoting and facilitating communication, coordination, and collaboration among state agencies, the private sector, and communities of color to address health disparities;
- developing recommendations for improving the availability of culturally and linguistically appropriate health literature and interpretive services; and
- gathering information to understand how the actions of state government ameliorate or contribute to health disparities.

In some instances, the Council's responsibilities may be served through public statements in support of programs, policies, grants, or funding initiatives. This policy and procedure provides guidance to assist the Council in its decisions related to issuing letters of support.

Procedure:

Any unit of state, local, or tribal government or any private non-profit entity with a public health or health care mission may ask the Council for a letter of support for a public health program, policy, grant, or funding initiative. For the purposes of this policy/procedure, providing a letter of support may also include adding the Council's name to a letter being signed by a group of organizations. Recognizing that requests for letters of support often need to be acted upon in a short timeframe, the Council authorizes the Chair to approve or deny a request on behalf of the Council. The Chair may, however, at his or her discretion, consult with individual Council members or submit the request to the entire Council for its consideration.

The Chair or Council shall consider the following guidance when deciding upon a request:

- The program, policy, grant, or funding initiative falls within one of the Council's responsibilities to address health disparities as described in its above policy statement or it addresses one or more of the Council's priority health topics, and
- the request is thoughtfully conceived, realistic, and will likely result in improved health for Washington's diverse communities, and
- the program, policy, grant, or funding initiative will bring additional needed resources into the state to help improve the health of Washington's diverse communities, and
- the program, policy, grant, or funding initiative does not run counter to any policy, guidance, or other activity of the Governor or any agency, board, or commission with representation on the Council.

In the event that the Council receives more than one request for a letter of support for a competitive grant, the Council may approve more than one request so long as each request is consistent with the Council's guidance for approval.