



**Date:** September 18, 2024

**To:** Members of the Governor's Interagency Council on Health Disparities

**From:** Victor Rodriguez and Jessica Zinda, Council Redesign Leads

**Subject:** Approving the 2025 Request Legislation Proposal

## Background

The state Legislature created the Governor's Interagency Council on Health Disparities (Council) through [Second Substitute Senate Bill 6197](#) (2SSB 6197) in 2006. The bill was intended to "create the healthiest state in the nation by striving to eliminate health disparities in people of color and between men and women." The Council's authority, structure, and membership were incorporated in statute, mainly in Revised Code of Washington (RCW) [43.20.270](#), [RCW 43.20.275](#), and [RCW 43.20.280](#).

Over the years, the Council has worked in partnership with state, public, private, and community organizations to identify priorities, convene advisory committees, and create policy recommendations. The Council has heard from its advisory committees and members of the public, particularly communities most impacted by inequities, that state government needs to address the structural and institutional inequities in our state system as a key strategy for eliminating health inequities. Additionally, grassroots organizations and organizations across various sectors are also working to promote health equity, optimal health, and wellbeing and there are opportunities to coordinate and amplify impact.

Several years ago, the Council began discussing the need to redesign its statute to incorporate many years of work and learning, and to create opportunity for greater collective impact. In September 2021, the Council voted to form an advisory committee to make recommendations to update its statutory authority. Throughout this redesign project, the Council has centered its [vision](#) and [operating principles](#).

Many voices have contributed to the Council's redesign proposal. Activities have included:

- A series of public redesign workshops between 2022 - 2023;
- Conversations with key governmental and community partners to consider how the Council could lead or support unified goals; and
- Focused meetings with community-based organizations during Summer 2023 to learn about their [priorities and suggestions](#).

In September 2023, the Council voted to put forward request legislation (for statutory changes) and a decision package (for dedicated Council funding) for the 2024 legislative session. As a result of the 2024 legislative session, the Council's decision package was partially funded, allowing the Council to bring on additional staffing and other resources. However, the Council's request legislation, [House Bill 2346](#), did not pass the legislature.

The Council can choose to submit request legislation for the upcoming 2025 session for the Governor's consideration. If the Council chooses to do so, it must follow the Governor's procedures including the enterprise-wide deadline for submittals (September 13, 2024). As a placeholder, Council staff submitted a draft request legislation package to the Office of Financial Management (OFM) to make that deadline. Today's meeting materials include that placeholder proposal.

### Summary

At today's meeting, Council members will discuss the draft request legislation package prepared for the 2025 legislative session. Members have the opportunity to make minor and technical revisions to finalize the proposal, in alignment with the Council's past redesign discussions (e.g., redesign core concepts and foundational truths).

### Recommended Council Action

After discussion, the Council may choose to consider, amend if necessary, and adopt the following motion:

**Proposed Motion:** The Council approves the legislative proposal, as drafted on [DATE], and discussed and revised at today's meeting. The Council directs staff to work with Council leadership, Redesign Leads, Council members and their agencies, and additional partners to advance the proposal for the 2025 legislative session. The Council recognizes that specific language in the proposal may evolve during the legislative process due to legal and technical considerations as well as guidance from OFM, the Governor's Office, and others. The Council encourages staff to adjust specific language in the request legislation and proposal as needed, while honoring the intent, foundational truths, and core concepts of the Council's redesign process, as much as feasible. Whenever practicable, staff should reach out to individual Council members to share information and receive members' input and guidance.

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