# **KING COUNTY**

1200 King County Courthouse 516 Third Avenue Seattle, WA 98104

# Signature Report

## **Motion 16106**

**Proposed No.** 2022-0153.2 **Sponsors** Balducci and Kohl-Welles 1 A MOTION declaring King County's support for the Cities 2 for Citizenship initiative and directing the executive to sign 3 the county onto the initiative as a participating community. 4 WHEREAS, there are approximately 290,000 lawful permanent residents in 5 Washington state and over 75,000 lawful permanent residents eligible to naturalize in 6 King County, and 7 WHEREAS, naturalization provides benefits to lawful permanent residents by 8 providing them with full civil and political rights, protection against deportation, easier 9 travel abroad, and full access to government jobs and assistance, and 10 WHEREAS, research from the Center for the Study of Immigrant Integration 11 found that immigrants who naturalize can see an estimated 8 percent to 11 percent 12 increase in their earnings and suggest the increased earnings not only boost financial 13 security for families but also generate spending and economic activity in the community, 14 and 15 WHEREAS, according to reports from the Migration Policy Institute and the Pew 16 Research Center, far fewer immigrants naturalize than are eligible to do so and barriers to 17 naturalization include low English language proficiency and the cost and complexity of 18 the naturalization process, and 19 WHEREAS, cities and counties are uniquely situated to encourage and support 20 their immigrant constituents to apply for citizenship, and

WHEREAS, the Cities for Citizenship initiative is a national initiative aimed at
increasing citizenship among eligible permanent residents in the United States and
encouraging local jurisdictions across the country to invest in citizenship programs, and
WHEREAS, Cities for Citizenship is premised on the idea that when municipal
leaders develop and invest in naturalization efforts, they produce substantial economic
and civic benefits for all of their constituents, and
WHEREAS, the Cities for Citizenship initiative, coordinated by the National
Partnership for New Americans, is a network of over 100 cities and counties, including
the cities of Kirkland, Redmond, Seattle, Tacoma and Yakima as well as Kitsap County,
and
WHEREAS, participation in the Cities for Citizenship initiative is free and
participating communities receive access to technical support and policy advice, research
and demographic data, best practices from cities and counties across the country and
networking opportunities with other jurisdictions, and
WHEREAS, communities participating in the Cities for Citizenship initiative are
encouraged to share information on their naturalization efforts via an annual survey,
participate in monthly partner calls and attend the initiative's annual Municipal
Gathering, and
WHEREAS, King County has a history of supporting immigrants and refugees,
including establishing the King County immigrant and refugee commission, establishing
translation assistance requirements for limited English proficient individuals, enhancing
county services for immigrant and refugees, providing legal aid to residents seeking

43	documented status and citizenship and providing direct financial assistance during the
44	COVID-19 pandemic, and
45	WHEREAS, in 2021 the King County council approved \$5 million to create a
46	first-in-the-nation program to help pay for filing fees and other costs for people applying
47	for legal status and an additional \$11.2 million for a grant fund to assist immigrants and
48	refugees who have otherwise not been eligible for federal coronavirus pandemic relief,
49	and
50	WHEREAS King County could benefit from joining the Cities for Citizenship
51	initiative to network with and learn from national experts and other local jurisdictions
52	engaged in similar work;
53	NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT MOVED by the Council of King County:
54	A. King County supports the Cities for Citizenship initiative. The executive is
55	directed to sign the county onto the initiative as a participating community.
56	B. The executive shall designate a county representative to serve as the liaison to
57	the Cities for Citizenship initiative.
58	C. King County will work collaboratively with the Cities for Citizenship

- 59 initiative and local community-based organizations to increase citizenship among
- 60 immigrants in King County.

Motion 16106 was introduced on 4/5/2022 and passed by the Metropolitan King County Council on 4/19/2022, by the following vote:

Yes: 9 - Balducci, Dembowski, Dunn, Kohl-Welles, Perry, McDermott, Upthegrove, von Reichbauer and Zahilay

KING COUNTY COUNCIL KING COUNTY, WASHINGTON

DocuSigned by:

Claudia Balduci
7E1C273CE9994B6...

Claudia Balducci, Chair

ATTEST:

— DocuSigned by:

92FC09E4162E45A...
Melani Pedroza, Clerk of the Council

Attachments: None

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