

From: [Gina Custer](#)
To: [KCC - Legislative Clerks \(Email Group\)](#)
Subject: Veterans, Seniors, and Human Services Levy
Date: Wednesday, March 8, 2023 1:40:13 PM

Good afternoon, King County Regional Policy Committee members,

My name is Gina Custer, and I am here on behalf of Valley Cities Behavioral Health to urge you to renew our Veterans, Seniors and Human Services Levy so that we can continue vital services to King County residents in South King County. Valley Cities relies on the Veterans, Seniors and Human Services Levy funding to provide Permanent Supportive Housing to chronically homeless individuals with 20 units set-aside to house veterans and 78 additional units for homeless families with children, young adults and couples.

As members of the Seattle/King County Coalition on Homelessness and the King County Alliance for Human Services, we appreciate Executive Constantine's special focus in this proposal to invest in the workers who provide essential support, housing, and care for our elders, young children, and other neighbors in need of assistance.

- We join the community call for you to make the most of this once-in-six years opportunity, and increase the Veterans, Seniors, and Human Services levy an additional 2 cents to 12 cents per \$1000 of assessed value – just \$34 a year more for the average homeowner.
- The current proposal will not be enough to address inflation and increased operating costs, the serious and chronic underpayment of human services staff, or to invest in proven solutions to homelessness at scale.
- This Levy represents nearly all of the County's total investment in human services.
- All service providers are struggling to meet the INCREASED needs in our community, and to hire and retain diverse, skilled staff to do this essential work.
- Federal one-time COVID funds made a BIG difference to prevent homelessness, increase services, and expand housing options, but they are ending. King County residents already feeling the pain of that lost

funding. We cannot wholly make up for federal funding, but we can and must do everything we can to prevent people from becoming homeless.

- We need you to seize this opportunity to bring another \$100M in over six years for housing and homeless services, and lifting workers' wages.

Thank you for your time and consideration to the needs of our community.

Sincerely,
Gina Custer

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