

**From:** [Kelsey Sanders](#)  
**To:** [Zahilay, Girmay](#); [Lambert, Kathy](#); [Dembowski, Rod](#); [Steadman, Marka](#); [Bowman, Nick](#); [Upthegrove, Dave](#); [Kohl-Welles, Jeanne](#); [Dunn, Reagan](#)  
**Subject:** Support of Proposed Ordinance No 2020-0253  
**Date:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 10:30:31 AM

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Dear King County Counsel Law and Justice Committee,

Thank you for taking the time today to discuss the Youth Right to Counsel Ordinance.

I support Proposed Ordinance No. 2020-0253.

As a Seattle-based teacher, with experience teaching in both Seattle Public Schools, the King County Correctional Facility, and Echo Glen Juvenile Children's Center, I have seen first hand how institutions have failed our Black, Indigenous, and other Students of Color. Not only does the current educational model disproportionately impact BIPOC in negative ways, but it also fails to protect them with legal education to navigate racist tactics of the Police State and Criminal Justice System.

If 86.1% of the youth incarcerated in 2019 were BIPOC, and 52.5% of them were Black, then something needs to be done to support the 22% of youth charged in Juvenile Court referred by Seattle Police Department. Since 72.4% of youth charged in juvenile court are BIPOC, specifically 40.9% being Black, the burden to provide this type of legal education falls on communities and families of color, which shouldn't bear the burden to begin with, let alone be disproportionately represented in our criminal justice system.

In no way should this Youth Right to Counsel Ordinance be an end-all approach to protect BIPOC youth in Seattle; it serves merely as a bandaid, that takes a reactive approach giving youth the tools necessary to fight racist institutions like Seattle Police Department and the Criminal Justice System. Please continue to support the defunding of the Seattle Police Department, and find ways to combat White supremacist institutions that make the proposed ordinance necessary in the first place.

For now, please support the Youth Right to Counsel Ordinance, as Seattle works to dismantle the institutions that are harming BIPOC in the Greater Seattle area. My students do not fully comprehend the consequences of waiving their rights. They feel voiceless, and should not have to speak up to assert their rights; they should be protected at all costs.

Thank you for your time,

Kelsey Sanders