

THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF SEATTLE-KING COUNTY

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LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS URGES "VOTE YES" ON "BEST STARTS FOR KIDS" LEVY

Seattle, WA, September 21, 2015—The League of Women Voters of Seattle-King County urges voters to vote for King County's Best Starts for Kids levy in the November general election.

"We think that Best Starts for Kids is a smart investment that will reap long-term savings and create a more equitable community," said local League President Amanda Clark. "We support programs helping children and families and early intervention and prevention of problems down the road."

Some of the reasons the League supports this levy are:

1. It should bring long-term savings for the County and taxpayers.

Currently, 75 percent of the County budget is used to provide the services of the court system and law enforcement. The investments made in this levy can provide a very different method of government intervention into the lives of at-risk babies, mothers, children, and families.

2. It restores some funding to successful programs.

Funding for public health has been drastically cut. Without levy support, good programs such as the nurse/family partnership will be cut.

3. It invests in strategies to build safe and healthy communities.

A portion of the levy is a partnership with the Seattle Foundation, which will support communities themselves in building their own capacity to create positive change, including affordable housing, expanding economic opportunities, and increasing access to healthy food.

We do have concerns about some of the provisions in the levy:

- 1. Adequate oversight. There is not yet a provision for auditing the service providers other than an annual reporting. With such a large and far-reaching undertaking, we are concerned that there might not be adequate oversight.
- 2. Privacy Concerns. Some of the levy money is to be spent on data collection and research on children and their parents. It is important that this research be done with informed consent and that the data be kept confidential.

Since both of these concerns can be addressed by diligent oversight as the process moves forward, we believe the benefits of this investment in the well-being of all our communities is well worth adopting.

The League of Women Voters, a nonpartisan political organization, encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues and influences public policy through education and advocacy.

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If you would like more information about this topic, please contact Allison Feher/Amanda Clark at 206-329-4848 or email at info@seattlelwv.org.