

May 7, 2024

Whatcom County Council  
311 Grand Ave  
Bellingham, WA 98225

Subject: Expressing Disappointment in the Handling of a Sexual Harassment Case

Dear Members of the Whatcom County Council,

We, the undersigned employees of Whatcom County, are writing to express our deep disappointment and concern regarding the recent handling of a sexual harassment case within our organization. We bring this matter to your attention because we firmly believe in the necessity of maintaining a safe and inclusive work environment for all employees.

As employees, we expect that our concerns regarding sexual harassment will be treated with the utmost gravity, subject to thorough and expeditious investigation, and actions will be taken to rectify the issue. However, in this particular case, we feel that our trust in the process has been compromised and the victims did not receive the support and justice they deserved. Moreover, the accused was recommended for employment elsewhere in a similar position of power, posing a potential risk of recurrence. This constitutes a failure on the part of our organization. The actions taken by the administration have had far-reaching consequences, impacting both our organization and the broader community.

The mishandling of this case has eroded the trust and confidence we have in the County Administration's commitment to addressing sexual harassment cases effectively. We do not feel safe or supported. It is disheartening to witness a lack of accountability and transparency, which are essential in creating a workplace free from harassment, discrimination and bullying.

We applaud the County Council's vote to conduct an independent investigation into the incident and we urge you to ensure that appropriate measures are implemented to prevent such incidents from occurring in the future. Specifically, we request:

1. Reaffirmation of the County commitment to ensuring employees are provided with a safe and inclusive work environment, with clear and robust policies against sexual harassment and a zero-tolerance approach.
2. Implementation of a transparent process for creating and maintaining policies and procedures, such as an annual independent review by a third party, gathering feedback from stakeholders, and incorporating and addressing employees' suggestions, concerns and questions.
3. Increased HR support with expanded and ongoing training and resources to educate employees, supervisors, and high-level leadership on preventing and addressing sexual harassment effectively.
4. Regular communication and updates on the progress made in addressing this issue, to regain our trust and confidence in the County's commitment to its employees.

We believe that by addressing these concerns promptly and transparently, the County Administration can demonstrate its commitment to the well-being of Whatcom County employees and work towards creating an environment where everyone feels safe, respected, and valued.

We kindly request a timely response to this letter outlining the actions that will be taken to address our concerns. We look forward to a resolution that upholds the principles of fairness, equality, and justice.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.



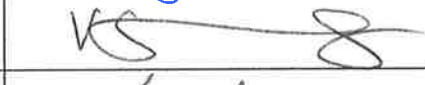

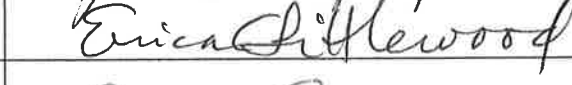





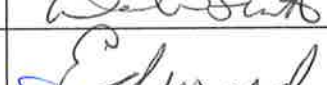


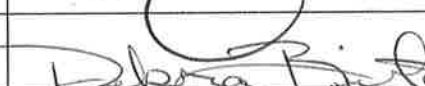
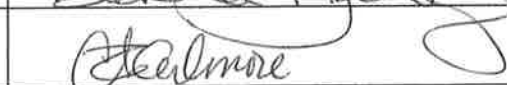
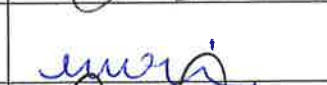

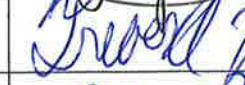


Sincerely,

The Undersigned Employees of Whatcom County



















cc: Human Resources Department  
County Executive's Office

Encl.: Employee signatures of support

RE: Expressing Disappointment in the Handling of a Sexual Harassment Case

PRINT NAME	SIGNATURE
Tom Kunesch	
Angela Foster	
Heidi Vogel	
Jennifer Ayrey	
Erica Littlewood	
Cynthia Hansen	
Jennifer Hayden	
Sue Sullivan	
JOSHUA LEINBACH	
Arend Meijer	
Wade Bessett	
Edward Halasz	
Stephanie Webster	
Audrey Alf	
Debra Bailey	
Carmen Gilmore	
Lorri Vining	
Jacqueline Hindman	
Trevor Mullins	
Laurette Rasmussen	

**Re: Expressing Disappointment in the Handline of a Sexual Harassment Case**

PRINT NAME	SIGNATURE
Amy Keenan	
Sarah Watts	
Belinda Burk-Jaeger	
Jennifer Gonzalez	
Craig Ostrom	
Kyla Walters	
Rhys Butt	
Eric Chamberlin	
SAM McDaniel	
Kelly Chamberlain	
Sarah Ciarebiej	
Maddie Schacht	
Lucas Clark	
McKenna Thompson	
Aileen Kogut-Aguon	
Thomas Brisseauden	
Kyle Kulm	
Eric Canbo	

Re: Expressing Disappointment in the Handling of a Sexual Harassment Case

CATHERINE CRAVER



Alyssa Voelker



Kate Rice



Brittany Ballard



Melissa Donley



LONI PATTERSON



Becky Snijder van Wissenkerke



Erin Page



Jessie Smiley



Remy McConnell



Cody Swan



Ted Miller



Laurel Baldwin



Joshua Fleischmann



Kirsten Gallacher



Chris Elder



Austin Rose 

Holly Faulstich 





Jamie Quach 



RE: Expressing Disappointment in the Handling of a Sexual Harassment Case

PRINT NAME

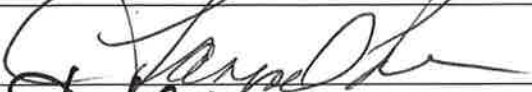








SIGNATURE

PRINT NAME	SIGNATURE
Shannon Kizer	
Rosie Montoya	
Rachel Sagers	
Chanelle Lopez	



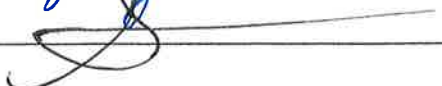
RE: Expressing Disappointment in the Handling of a Sexual Harassment Case

PRINT NAME

SIGNATURE

PRINT NAME	SIGNATURE
Tanya P. Rose	
Deb Slater	
Harriet Bouwman	
Julie Hansen	
Kathy Benish	
Ashley Ackerman	
Ben Vanderway	
Samantha Robinson	
Jennifer A. Larson	

**Re: Expressing Disappointment in the Handline of a Sexual Harassment Case**




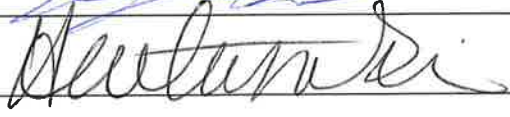
PRINT NAME	SIGNATURE
Cody Hunter	
SYDNEY SCHLOTTERBACK	
Charles Sullivan	



RE: Expressing Disappointment in the Handling of a Sexual Harassment Case

PRINT NAME

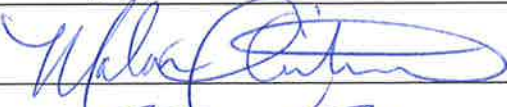




SIGNATURE

PRINT NAME	SIGNATURE
Ashley Smith	
Matt Welch	
Thomas McSullivan	
Heather McGuinness	

RE: Expressing Disappointment in the Handling of a Sexual Harassment Case

PRINT NAME

SIGNATURE

PRINT NAME	SIGNATURE
Malora Christensen	
Riley Myers	
Hannah Satran	Hannah Satran
Greg Smith	
Emilie Regan	
Adam Estrada	Adam Estrada
Ashleigh Eastham	Ashleigh Eastham
Melissa Esquivel	M. Esquivel
Evarosa Purviance	
Desi Miller	