

Pierce County

Office of the County Council

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SHAWN BUNNEY
Pierce County Council
District 1

October 23, 2007

TO: Councilmembers

FR: Shawn Bunney

RE: Proposed Prometa Proviso Amendment

Dear Councilmembers:

Last year I expressed misgivings about Pierce County's financing of the Prometa drug treatment program administered by the Pierce County Alliance. My concerns centered on the lack of independent scientific validation of its effectiveness. I remain concerned.

Over the course of this year a number of articles have been published that question not only the efficacy of the treatment, but also the integrity of the overall process employed to raise the public profile of the Prometa protocols. I have reviewed the performance audit briefing paper on this subject, which confirms my doubts. We need answers before spending more taxpayer money on what may be nothing more than false hope for people who deserve real solutions.

My heart goes out to those fighting methamphetamine addiction. I look forward to the day this epidemic is stamped out. However, serious questions continue to rise out of the contract between Hythiam and the Pierce County Alliance. I believe there is enough reason to doubt the effectiveness of the Prometa protocols that we should no longer use taxpayer dollars for this program.

Until we receive independent scientific data that validates the efficacy of the Prometa program, I believe this Council should halt funding. To that end, I have attached a proviso that I will introduce at the October 23rd Council meeting as an amendment to Ordinance 2007-81s. I am respectfully asking for your support.

Below are two amendments to address this matter. The first amendment deletes the current Prometa proviso, which the Council previously released pursuant to R2007-33s. The second amendment stops further funding of the Prometa program except to the extent that contractual obligations exist for funds on the effective date of this ordinance in recognition that some program participants have already signed contracts to participate in the program. Funding was budgeted through the Pierce County Superior Court's budget, specifically the Family Dependency Drug Court. Earlier this year the

Council authorized the release of Prometa funds pursuant to Resolution No. R2007-33s.
Bunney to Councilmembers
October 23, 2007

To delete the previous proviso and insert a new proviso in its place, the following amendments to Ordinance 2007-81s are:

On Page 4 of 10, delete lines 1 – 9.

On Page 4 of 10, line 10, insert:

PROVIDED; no funds shall be expended towards the Prometa pilot project beyond those that Pierce County is contractually obligated to spend as of the effective date of this ordinance, until independent scientific research is delivered to the Council that declares the Prometa treatment protocols to be effective for the treatment of methamphetamine addiction, and the Council adopts a resolution authorizing further expenditures from this fund.