



# Pierce County

## Office of the County Executive

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March 4, 2008

Pierce County Councilmembers  
930 Tacoma Ave So., Room 1046  
Tacoma, WA 98402

Re: Proposal No. 2007-118s2

Dear Councilmembers:

It appears that the Council is prepared to vote on an ethics ordinance, Proposal No. 2007-118s2, which does not include all the key council staff among those who are required to report personal, financial information annually to the Auditor. You will recall that earlier I proposed that in addition to department directors and chief of staff in the Executive branch, the Council's chief administrators, senior budget analyst, contracted budget advisors, legal advisors, councilmember assistants, performance audit staff and communications officers be included in the reporting requirement. The reasons should be apparent. Individuals in these positions wield enormous influence over the legislative process and its outcomes, particularly the budget, which affects so many citizens, organizations and businesses. Their ability to effect vital decisions exceeds that of any of the administrators required to financially report under this ordinance. From the standpoint of public trust and confidence in the integrity of county government, it is essential that these positions be required to financially report. An ordinance lacking this requirement is incomplete and in my view fails in its essential purpose, to promote confidence in county government.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "John W. Ladenburg".

John W. Ladenburg  
Pierce County Executive

hs/km

