SECRETARY of STATE
Sam Reed

Legislative Building
PO Box 40220
Olympia, WA 98504-0220
Tel 360.902.4151
Fax 360.586.5629
www.secstate.wa.gov

August 17, 2005

King County Councilmembers
Councilmember David Irons
Councilmember Steve Hammon
Councilmember Jane Hague
Councilmember Kathy Lambert
Councilmember Reagan Dunn
Councilmember Pete von Reichbauer

Dear King County Council Members,

This will acknowledge and respond to your August 5, 2005 letter requesting the Office of Secretary of State to provide assistance conducting King County's primary election on September 20, 2005.

Our office has followed closely the work of recent oversight groups. State Elections Director Nick Handy represented our office on the King County Independent Task Force that developed recommendations for King County elections. Sheryl Moss is representing our office on the Citizens Election Oversight Committee.

Our office in the past has always been available to King County, as well as other counties, to provide assistance upon request. This assistance typically consists of advice by elections professionals in our office. We have provided assistance to King County on numerous occasions in the past and are certainly available to similarly help during this challenging time for King County.

Our office is not, however, in a position to assemble a "turnaround team" to manage King County elections. Our office simply does not have the ability to release our experienced professionals during this most critical time of the year to work exclusively in one county.

This is, of course, a critical time for every county election office. As such, this is also the most pressing time of the year for the Elections Division staff in our office.

Counties all around the state, many with very limited resources, are needing advice and assistance implementing an unexpected primary, eleven new election reform bills passed by the 2005 Legislature, new state regulations issued by our

office, and requirements of the federal Help America Vote Act. In addition, numerous counties are implementing vote by mail for the first time and many are also using new voting systems.

Given voter trust and confidence concerns in this state, our attention is focused on supporting the needs of every county in this critical election.

Our office is simply not in a position to dedicate our most experienced staff to one county during this time.

As indicated, however, we are more than willing to make selected staff available upon request to provide professional assistance on an issue by issue basis, as we do for all counties.

If you have further questions, please do not hesitate to contact our office further.

Sincerely,

SAM REED
Secretary of State

Cc: King County Council
Ron Sims, King County Executive
Dean Logan, Director of Records, Elections, and Licensing Services