

State of Washington
Decision Package

DRAFT

Agency: 354 Workforce Train & Educ Coord Board
Decision Package Code/Title: 02 Health Workforce Council Staff

Budget Period: 2017-19

Budget Level: PL - Performance Level

Recommendation Summary Text:

The Health Workforce Council (Council) is charged to collaboratively identify and resolve barriers to building the health workforce capacity needed by the state's population, with a focus on rural and underserved areas. On behalf of the Council, the Workforce Board is requesting 1.5 FTE (with a total cost of \$183,000 per year) to provide dedicated staff for this group, which has recommended additional staff support in the last two annual reports to policymakers. The Council's historic staff support for initiatives has operated on federal grant funding that is no longer available, which is dramatically limiting opportunities for the Council to utilize the expertise and diversity of members to explore key issue areas.

Agency Total

Fiscal Detail

Operating Expenditures	<u>FY 2018</u>	<u>FY 2019</u>	<u>Total</u>
001-1 -General Fund - Basic Account-State	183,000	183,000	366,000
Staffing	<u>FY 2018</u>	<u>FY 2019</u>	<u>Annual Average</u>
FTEs	1.5	1.5	1.5

Program 110-Workforce Policy

Operating Expenditures	<u>FY 2018</u>	<u>FY 2019</u>	<u>Total</u>
001-1 -General Fund - Basic Account-State	183,000	183,000	366,000
Staffing	<u>FY 2018</u>	<u>FY 2019</u>	<u>Annual Average</u>
FTEs	1.5	1.5	1.5

Package Description:

The Health Workforce Council (Council) is composed of a comprehensive mix of healthcare stakeholders including professional/occupational groups, employers, health facilities, education providers, governmental and regulatory bodies, and organized labor. The Workforce Board, by statute (RCW 28C.18.120), convenes the Council and provides the research, policy and administrative support to facilitate their work. Due to the conclusion of several critical federal funding sources to support the work of the Council, limited staff and resources at the Workforce Board are impacting the scope and detail of what the Council is able to accomplish in its work. No state resources have been specifically dedicated to this purpose since the Council was established in statute in 2003.

The Council was convened by the Workforce Board and the Legislature in 2003 in a time of dramatic healthcare worker shortages. The Governor, Legislature, broader healthcare and education community, and all Washingtonians have benefited from the work of the Council, and continue to do so as the state's health workforce adapts to the increased demand under the Affordable Care Act. The Council has provided leadership, policy development, research and advocacy on issues such as the development of programs such as healthcare industry skill panels, the creation of the Center of Excellence for Allied Health at Yakima Valley Community College, and convening stakeholders to develop workforce recommendations for the state's application for the Healthier Washington project. Council members led an initiative from 2004-2011 to ramp up completion in nursing programs to address a serious nursing shortage. This coalition was successful in obtaining dedicated high employer demand funding, which allowed the state's community and technical

colleges to add nursing courses and slots for new students. Nursing completions increased 72 percent during this initiative. The Council is currently leading an analysis of the behavioral health workforce, funded by Governor Inslee's Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act discretionary funds. This project will provide policymakers with targeted recommendations from an extensive stakeholder process on strategies to increase access to, and production of, the behavioral health workforce.

The Council provides tremendous value to the state in bringing together a wide range of health and education stakeholders and focusing on recommending priorities where these disparate groups have consensus. With dedicated staff support of a 1.0 policy analyst and a .5 administrative assistant, the Council could focus on identifying further opportunities for addressing health workforce shortages; engage in more detailed analysis of shortages and uneven distribution of providers by occupation and geographic area; further exploration and testing of health occupation data; and exploring policy options and barriers to addressing health workforce challenges. The Council could also expand its portfolio of health workforce data collection and analysis to help policymakers and education providers make informed decisions that about the distribution of limited education and training dollars.

Narrative Justification and Impact Statement

What specific performance outcomes does the agency expect?

The work of the Health Workforce Council currently, and in the future, can be included in Goal 4: Healthy and Safe Communities, particularly in 1.3c: Increase the percentage of residents who report they have a personal doctor or health care providers from 75% to 82% by 2016. Goal 4, strategy 3.2, which is focused on providing care for residents in their homes as long as possible, also reflects the work of the Council. Both sections benefit from the work of the Council, and the Council's overarching goal to ensure that Washington residents have access to a broad range of healthcare providers throughout the state. For long-term care needs, the Council has recommended in the past that a workgroup be convened to focus on recruitment, training and retention of entry-level health providers such as home care providers and certified nursing assistants. Ensuring quality providers for these occupations is a frequent concern of health facilities and families. This is one example of how the Council could provide an additional benefit to policymakers by providing additional research, analysis, and policy development with dedicated staff support that has not been possible in previous years.

Additionally, expanding the staff capacity of the Council could also help with Goal 1: World Class Education; specifically 1.3: Increase annual attainment of certificates, apprenticeships and degrees from 72,000 to 149,000 by 2023. As stated in a previous section, the Council, through an infusion of federal funds from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA), led an initiative to dramatically ramp up access to nursing courses and programs in response to a critical nursing shortage. Council leadership is well-positioned to weigh in on strategies to increase the number of healthcare providers graduating from Washington's postsecondary education programs. Currently, the Council Chair is the Vice Dean for Academic, Rural and Regional Affairs at the University of Washington's School of Medicine, and the Vice-Chair is the President of Renton Technical College.

Performance Measure Detail

Activity

Incremental Changes

No measures submitted for package

Is this decision package essential to implement a strategy identified in the agency's strategic plan?

Funding this request for dedicated staff support for the Council would allow extensive in-depth research, analysis and policy development on health workforce issues. This could provide direct support to policymakers, education institutions and health providers in targeted allocation of limited training funds, a focus for the distribution of usage of resources for training or development of specific occupations by geographic area, and offer additional insight or testing on reports and workgroup recommendations.

Does this DP provide essential support to one or more of the Governor's Results Washington priorities?

The Council does not have a specific update to the performance measures relating to Goals 1 and 4. However, the expanded work of the Council will certainly have a positive impact on increasing access to the appropriate level of care providers for Washington's residents (Goal 4), and in healthcare-specific postsecondary program completions (Goal 1) through a focus on K-12 pipeline development and targeted education and advocacy on the value of health occupations

What are the other important connections or impacts related to this proposal?

Funding this request for dedicated staff support for the Council would allow extensive in-depth research, analysis and policy development on health workforce issues. This could provide direct support to policymakers, education institutions and health providers in targeted allocation of limited training funds, a focus for the distribution of usage of resources for training or development of specific occupations by geographic area, and offer additional insight or testing on reports and workgroup recommendations.

What alternatives were explored by the agency, and why was this alternative chosen?

The Workforce Board has been operating on the alternative option for several years, and is now asking on behalf of the Council for additional resources to allow this group to not only continue its important work, but to operate at its full potential. The Workforce Board has been supporting the work of the Council out of its base budget since federal grant funding for the Council ended in 2012. Staff support for the last few years has been allocated as available on a very limited basis from policy, administrative and research staff.

The agency chose to not submit a budget request for the 2016 Legislative Session, despite two years of recommendations from the Council for dedicated staff support, due to the tremendous budget challenges facing the state. However, the 2015 Council report to the Governor and Legislature indicated that the Council would be submitting a budget request for the 2017 Legislative Session. The Workforce Board believes strongly in the work of the Council, but competing priorities and limited resources have impacted the level of work and capacity for additional projects that could be done by the Council. Further, the implementation of the federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act and the state strategic workforce plan, Talent and Prosperity for All, has further limited the availability of staff resources and funding, as the Workforce Board has been refocused on meeting federal funding obligations and strategic plan targets.

What are the consequences of adopting or not adopting this package?

The Council has been operating on extremely limited resources for several years. Without dedicated staff support, the Council will not be able to undertake some of the more complex initiatives or review of healthcare provider data, which limits the output and value of a group that has tremendous potential to provide health workforce expertise to the Governor and Legislature. Additionally, the priorities and requirements of the agency under the rapidly changing expectations from the federal government and state workforce plan may require even further reduction of the staff time allocated to the Council.

What is the relationship, if any, to the state's capital budget?

There is no relationship to the state's capital budget.

What changes would be required to existing statutes, rules, or contracts, in order to implement the change?

There are no known changes required to existing statutes, rules, or contracts, in order to implement this change.

Expenditure and revenue calculations and assumptions

Agencies must clearly articulate the workload or policy assumptions used in calculating expenditure and revenue changes proposed.

The Workforce Board is requesting one full-time FTE for a Policy Analyst 1, and one half-time FTE for an Admin Assistant 4 in this decision package. The cost of the FTEs is listed in the "Fiscal Summary" section on Page 1.

Activity: A005 Talent and Prosperity for All (TAP) & Special Projects, program 110.

Which costs and functions are one-time? Which are ongoing? What are the budget impacts in future biennia?

The Council has never been directly funded by the state budget. The Workforce Board supplemented the work of the Council with federal funds in the early years, including the Governor's workforce discretionary dollars and healthcare grants. As those limited funds and grants ended, the Workforce Board has done what it can to support the work of the Council. The Workforce Board is a small agency with limited capacity to provide the staff resources necessary to support the work of the Council. As the 2014 federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act is fully phased in, the Workforce Board faces many new obligations and the funds available to support the continued work of the Council, let alone an expanded research and analysis portfolio, are even more limited.

<u>Object Detail</u>	<u>FY 2018</u>	<u>FY 2019</u>	<u>Total</u>
A Salaries And Wages	89,000	89,000	178,000
B Employee Benefits	33,000	33,000	66,000
E Goods\Other Services	39,000	39,000	78,000
G Travel	5,000	5,000	10,000
T Intra-Agency Reimbursements	17,000	17,000	34,000
Total Objects	183,000	183,000	366,000

2016 Health Workforce Council Members

NAME	ORGANIZATION
Suzanne Allen, M.D., Chair	Vice Dean for Academic, Rural & Regional Affairs, University of Washington School of Medicine
Kevin McCarthy, Vice-Chair	President, Renton Technical College
Dan Ferguson	Allied Health Center of Excellence – Yakima Valley Community College
Dana Duzan	Allied Health Professionals
Marianna Goheen	Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction
Diane Sosne	Service Employees International Union (SEIU) 1199NW
Amy Persell	SEIU Healthcare NW Training Partnership
Marty Brown	State Board for Community and Technical Colleges
Mary Looker	Washington Association of Community and Migrant Health Centers
Deb Murphy	Washington Association of Housing and Services for the Aging
Sofia Aragon	Washington Center for Nursing
Lauri St. Ours	Washington Health Care Association
Nancy Alleman	Washington Rural Health Association
Joe Roszak	Washington State Community Mental Health Council
Bracken Killpack	Washington State Dental Association
John Wiesman	Washington State Department of Health
Ian Corbridge	Washington State Hospital Association
Russell Maier	Washington State Medical Association
Heather Stephen-Selby	Washington State Nurses Association
Daryl Monear	Washington Student Achievement Council
Eleni Papadakis	Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board
COUNCIL STAFF	
Nova Gattman , Council Staff Coordinator	Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board

HEALTH WORKFORCE COUNCIL

September 12, 2016

Dear Nova,

The Health Workforce Council has asked the Workforce Board staff to submit on our behalf a budget request for 2017-2019. You and other Board staff have done an incredible job of staffing the Council in an ad hoc fashion. But this is a critical time in the transformation of our healthcare delivery system across the state. We need the coordinated policy planning, research, and reform that the Council performed prior to federal funding cuts. We need dedicated staff support.

The Council's work over its nearly fifteen years of existence highlights the value to the healthcare community, policymakers, and the entire state of a group of disparate voices speaking with a unified voice on policies and improvements to the healthcare system. However, the Council is at a tipping point. It has never been directly funded by the state; instead relying on federal grants and the limited staff support and resources the Workforce Board could absorb in its base budget. This cannot continue forever. The Workforce Board has for several years fully supported the research, policy development, convening work and advocacy for the Council, but competing state and federal priorities have limited the resources allocated to this group.

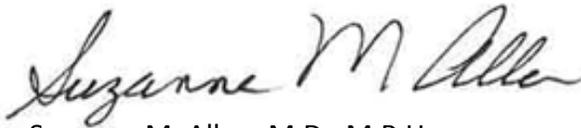
We have long been convinced of the great value of the Council to the healthcare industry and the citizens of the state through its targeted policy development, consensus-based recommendations, and advocacy on health workforce issues. The Council's focus on the delivery of top quality healthcare in Washington is fully supported by its multi-stakeholder membership, including all sectors of health providers, education, organized labor, and advocates. The policy initiatives of the Council have been based on a unified front, which enhanced our success with advancing policy recommendations. Our state is extremely fortunate to have such a dedicated group of members advocating for this critical industry sector. The Council's role is unique among industry sectors; the diversity of members ensures a collective voice for high-priority issues of value to the entire healthcare industry, rather than a silo-ed focus on individual organizational priorities.

In our time with the Council, we have seen the results that this group can accomplish with the necessary funding support—from its study of paraprofessional allied health positions, to targeted career development for entry-level positions, to the critical importance of loan repayment and residency programs for family practice physicians. The Council's work in

developing targeted recommendations for addressing health workforce issues made great strides in addressing critical personnel and skill shortages over the past 15 years. The current challenges of an aging healthcare workforce, the implementation of the Affordable Care Act, and economic and demographic shifts across our state have increased the significance of the role of the Council to study the changing nature of our health workforce, and make meaningful recommendations to the Governor and Legislature.

We wholeheartedly support this request of the Governor and the Legislature, in fact believe it is imperative, to put the necessary resources into ensuring that this Council can not only continue to do the powerful work for our state, but expand its role to allow for a more targeted focus on many important health workforce issues resulting from systemic and statutory transformation.

Respectfully,



Suzanne M. Allen, M.D., M.P.H.
Health Workforce Council Chair
Vice Dean for Academic, Rural and Regional Affairs
University of Washington School of Medicine



Kevin McCarthy, Ph.D
Health Workforce Council Vice-Chair
President
Renton Technical College



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September 13, 2016

Nova Gattman
Staff Coordinator, Health Workforce Council
128 10th Ave, Southwest
PO Box 43105
Olympia, WA 98904

The Washington State Allied Health Center of Excellence (AH COE) hereby confirms our commitment to support the Washington State Workforce Training Board's request for funding to expand capacity to support the work of the Health Workforce Council. The Center of Excellence represents the health workforce programs of the State's community colleges and as such are constant partners with the health workforce council in identifying demand data, trends and workforce needs of the health care industry. The Center is a member of the Council and actively supports the initiatives and strategies being pursued to understand health workforce needs and to share effective and innovative practices in our state to both our industry and college partners.

The Center is able to leverage its Statewide Advisory Board made up of a broad cross sector of healthcare employers, industry association representatives, educators and workforce development entities to support the initiatives of the Council. The Workforce Training Board and its efforts to staff the health workforce Council has provided a significant benefit to Washington's State workforce system with limited resources. The request for additional funding will allow for more robust research and evaluation of the state's workforce needs as well as identify and invest in additional innovative projects being developed to address new and emerging models of care.

The Washington State Center of Excellence wholeheartedly supports this request for additional funding and looks forward to the continued benefit the Council work provides not only to higher education but to the broader health workforce development system across the state.

Sincerely,


Signature of Authorized Representative

September 13, 2016
Date

Dan Ferguson, M.S. - Director
Washington State Allied Health Center of Excellence





Nova Gattman
Staff Coordinator, Health Workforce Council
128 10th Avenue SW, PO Box 43105
Olympia, WA 98504

September 10, 2016

Dear Ms. Gattman,

Community Health of Central Washington (CHCW), a community health center in south central Washington serving Kittitas and Yakima counties, is pleased to write a letter of support to Governor Inslee on behalf of the Health Workforce Council.

At CHCW, we are working hard to respond to the need for primary care access in our communities. Over the last few years we have expanded significantly. New and expanded clinics and hours/days of service have driven the need for new providers, MA's, nurses, psychologists, pharmacists, pharmacy techs, and other health professionals. Recruiting in our area of the state is difficult. The importance of teams and integrated care, especially behavioral health, will only lead to further recruitment needs to meet the increased demands for access.

The work of the Council in providing advocacy for areas of high demand, monitoring the real time need for certain professionals through the Health Workforce Sentinel Network, and especially the work on increasing access to behavioral health are valued.

Those efforts address one aspect of the response needed. Distribution of training programs and anticipating and building programs for the rapidly changing health care environment can't be done for free. As we look at improving care, enhancing the patient experience, and reducing cost, innovation will be essential. We know how we might deliver care differently, but we need a workforce trained to deliver 21st century care.

Without a modest investment in the State Health Workforce Council we will keep functioning - less efficiently and at higher cost. Please consider supporting the increased staff needs of the Health Workforce Council.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mike Maples", is written over a light blue horizontal line.

Mike Maples, MD
CEO
Community Health of Central Washington

September 12, 2016

Nova Gattman
Staff Coordinator, Health Workforce Council
128 10th Avenue SW, PO Box 43105
Olympia, WA 98504

Re: Health Workforce Council Integral to Health Care Transformation

Kitsap Mental Health Services (KMHS) finds the efforts of the Health Workforce Council essential to address the acute health care workforce challenges currently faced by behavioral health providers, primary care, and community behavioral health centers in urban and rural areas throughout our state. As a not for profit, designated community behavioral health provider we have been particularly watchful and willing to participate in the Council's advocacy and policy efforts to address health care professional shortages.

In 2012 KMHS received a three year CMS Innovation Award to improve the Triple Aim by integrating behavioral health and better coordination with physical health care. We recognized at the time that to accomplish and sustain real health care transformation into the future would require State support to develop and set the standards for a workforce capable of providing whole person care, with the academic preparation, professional expectations, licensures and credentialing that can support fully integrated care. KMHS involvement in the Health Workforce Council thus began so as to participate in the high level conversations and policy recommendations that ultimately will result in the creation of a sufficient and transformed workforce and health care delivery system.

The Council has been a highly effective avenue for bringing our issues to the table, especially these past several years as the behavioral health workforce increasingly is unable to meet demand let alone future projections. We are deeply appreciative of the expertise of the Health Workforce Council staff, and recognize that as demand escalates for health care workers, so has demand for Council staff to provide advocacy for employer concerns and a workforce available and well prepared for health care services delivery to Washington residents. We recognize professional transformation requires great attention to myriad projects requiring convening of stakeholders and detailed planning to address emerging issues, and to accomplish high volume, intensive work requires the Council itself is sufficiently staffed. We applaud the staff for their skill and expertise in conducting their work, and ask for allocation of increased resources that will facilitate the continuance of the Council's charge during a time of rapid change in the provision of health care services.

Sincerely,


Joe Roszak
Chief Executive Officer



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The mission of Kitsap Mental Health Services is to shape the future of mental health through state of the science service delivery, community partnerships and advocacy.

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September 14, 2016

Nova E. Gattman
Legislative Director
Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board
Staff Coordinator, Health Workforce Council
nova.gattman@wtb.wa.gov

Dear Ms. Gattman,

I am pleased to offer the support of SEIU Healthcare 1199NW, for the request to the Governor and Legislature for dedicated staff to support the Health Workforce Council.

SEIU Healthcare 1199NW has long appreciated the value of the Council to our organization and our members, and has been honored to represent health care workers on this multi-stakeholder group. We are excited about the opportunity to fund again the research and policy work that the Council was able to do with adequate staff support.

SEIU Healthcare 1199NW members have directly benefitted from many of the strategic projects of the Health Workforce Council. We particularly appreciated the grant-funded initiative that developed a policy, and successfully advocated for the funding and changes necessary to greatly increase nursing program slots during serious shortages through 2011. The Council's work on "grow your own" talent in healthcare pathways led to the creation of the Hospital Employee Education and Training (HEET) grants, a partnership between local facilities, post-secondary institutions and SEIU Healthcare 1199NW to develop the pipeline for health careers, as well as the development of stackable credentials for ease of transition between nursing assistants, licensed practical nurses and beyond.

These initiatives were all accomplished in a time when the Council was supported by federal grant funding. We are excited about the future potential for the Council, are pleased to offer our strong support of this request to enable dedicated staff support to the Council.

Sincerely,

Chris Barton, RN
Nurse Alliance Director
SEIU Healthcare 1199NW Multi-Employer Training and Education Fund Trustee



September 13, 2016

Nova Gattman
Staff Coordinator, Health Workforce Council
128 10th Avenue SW, PO Box 43105
Olympia, WA 98504

To whom it may concern:

On behalf of the nine-member Washington State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC), I am pleased to extend our support for the Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board's state funding request to continue the work of the Health Workforce Council.

Under Engrossed Substitute House Bill 1852 (2003-04), the Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board was given the responsibility to:

- Facilitate ongoing stakeholder collaboration to address the health care personnel shortage.
- Establish and maintain a statewide strategic plan to ensure an adequate supply of health care personnel and safeguard the health care delivery system in Washington state.
- Report annual progress to the governor and legislature and make recommendations as needed.

To fulfill these responsibilities and support a stable pipeline for the health workforce in Washington, the SBCTC supports the Health Workforce Council request.

SBCTC has been an active Health Workforce Council member since its inception in 2001 as the Health Personnel Shortage Taskforce. The Council has provided an invaluable forum to examine and discuss issues facing healthcare in Washington state and to build relationships across the industry.

Our state's workforce continues to diversify at the same time the shortage of healthcare personnel grows. We believe one solution is to increase access to education in health careers for non-traditional students. Our college programs are an example of how high quality training programs can:

- Help students who might otherwise not reach higher rungs of the healthcare career ladder.
- Respond to industry needs while meeting the state community and technical college system's commitment to align workforce education with community needs.

The Health Workforce Council is instrumental as a forum to continue, expand and deepen vital policy conversations that will impact the health of our state's workforce and economy.

SBCTC endorses the Workforce Board's proposal for continued funding for the Health Workforce Council. Please contact me if you have questions or need additional information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Marty Brown". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Marty Brown, Executive Director

UW Medicine

UW SCHOOL
OF MEDICINE

September 14, 2016

Nova Gattman
Staff Coordinator
Health Workforce Council
128 10th Ave SW
PO Box 43105
Olympia, WA 98504

Dear Ms. Gattman,

I am writing to express our support for the great work done by the Washington Health Workforce Council. As the Director of the University of Washington Center for Health Workforce Studies and Associate Professor in the Department of Family Medicine at University of Washington, my team has worked closely for years with the Health Workforce Council over a variety of projects evaluating the health workforce needs in Washington state.

Washington's Health Workforce Council represents a rare resource for state health workforce planning in the United States. They bring together representatives from a diverse set of players including those from the education sector, health care industry, labor unions and professional organizations, who are not usually at the same table to strategize over a common goal – improving the health of citizens of Washington State. Led by members of the Health Workforce Council, this important group of leaders and community members identify the needs and ways to train, recruit, and retain a strong health workforce to improve health care delivery and ultimately the health of the state's population. With one unified strategy, the Health Workforce Council is able to greatly impact the size, shape and distribution of the health workforce in the state.

We look forward to continuing our partnership with the Health Workforce Council as we provide our research and evaluation expertise on the health workforce to inform members of the Health Workforce Council and their partners. We are also aware, however, of the resource challenges to accomplish such intensive work. I believe that the Health Workforce Council is an important partner for us to make effective change in our health care system, and strongly encourage others to support their great work for many more years to come.

Best regards,



Bianca Frogner, PhD
Associate Professor, Department of Family Medicine
Director, Center for Health Workforce Studies



Nova Gattman
Staff Coordinator, Health Workforce Council
218 10th Avenue SW, P.O. Box 43105
Olympia, WA 98504

September 15, 2016

Dear Nova,

I am writing in strong support of additional funding for the Health Workforce Council.

Participation in the council benefits WCN by facilitating connections and partnerships with key health care organizations. Coordination between our organizations is key to achieving the common goal of a robust healthcare workforce to meet the needs of our state.

The Council has advocated for issues that strongly support nursing workforce development, such as re-funding of the Health Professions Scholarship and Loan Repayment Program. Nursing also benefits from the Council's work in convening the Behavioral Healthcare Workforce taskforce. This is an example of increasing expectations on the Health Workforce Council staff. Even with limited staffing and resources, Council staff demonstrate dedication and excellent work. As a result, I am sure expectations for additional work will continue to rise and more resources needed for Council staff.

I would like to see the Council do more work in coordinating and supporting statewide workforce analysis. There are a number of entities that perform health workforce analysis, each with a different focus. Some have had a role for several years, some are embarking on new workforce development endeavors. The Health Workforce Council has the potential to better coordinate to these efforts. This would reduce duplication of effort and contribute to the goal of a coordinated statewide effort to boost workforce numbers.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Sofia Aragon, JD, BSN, RN
Executive Director



September 12, 2016

Nova Gattman
Staff Coordinator, Health Workforce Council
Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board
128 10th Avenue SW
Olympia, WA 98504

Subject: Support for funding request for additional staffing for the Health Workforce Council

Dear Nova,

Please accept this letter of support for the Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board's request for a new full-time policy analyst position to assist with leading and coordinating the work of the Health Workforce Council. Healthcare is a key sector in Washington's economy, providing vital services to the state's residents, and it is essential that we are able to effectively measure developing workforce needs and monitor progress in this field.

The Health Workforce Council fills an important role in analyzing evolving workforce needs in this area and acting as a key advocate for the sector to meet these critical needs. The health sector is complicated, with rapidly changing supply and demand needs, and poses its own set of analytical challenges. Having sufficient staffing to take a deep dive into issues associated with evolving training requirements, aging workforce and retirement issues, and accurate assessments of rural and urban healthcare needs is crucial.

This work complements the Health Professional Loan Repayment Program, administered by our agency, which provides educational repayment assistance to licensed professionals who agree to provide primary health care in rural or underserved urban areas. We also rely upon the Health Workforce Council's work for its analysis of healthcare worker demand in its Skilled and Educated Workforce report, which it conducts in collaboration with the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges and the Workforce Board.

For these reasons I fully support the need for additional staffing at the Workforce Board to provide the analytical and administrative resources necessary to effectively assess and monitor Washington's developing health workforce needs.

Sincerely,

Rachelle Sharpe
Acting Executive Director
Washington Student Achievement Council

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