

WHEREAS, Beth Thew is a passionate advocate and has spent her career working on behalf of Washington’s working men and women, giving voice to their needs and interests, and their vital role in our state’s workforce system; and

WHEREAS, Beth has brought this passion to the Workforce Board, where she has served for 16 years—longer than any other member; and

WHEREAS, Beth has invested tremendous energy and thought into creating pathways for all individuals, but especially disadvantaged young people and adults; and has continuously advocated for apprenticeships, even when they were considered an economic afterthought, rather than a premium, high-skill, high-wage pathway; and

WHEREAS, Beth started her career as a telephone operator, where she had a front row seat to the technological changes that would transform that industry and its workforce; and where she represented workers to ensure they had access to the education and training resources needed, either to grow within the industry or to enter a new career field; and

WHEREAS, Beth took her own advice and went back to school to earn a degree from Eastern Washington University, where she learned both theory and firsthand knowledge of what it means to be an adult learner; and

WHEREAS, Beth never shied away from a problem affecting workers, jobseekers, businesses, or the staff within our system, and, in fact, was often the first to raise her hand to participate in, lead, or co-lead the solution-finding process among all stakeholders; and

WHEREAS, Beth served as an enthusiastic and effective coalition-builder of workers, businesses, government, and community members, always believing in the strength of collective action; and

WHEREAS, Beth continually stood out as a positive, powerful leader and female voice in the male-dominated areas in which she worked; and

WHEREAS, Beth is never afraid to ask a question that is on everyone’s minds; and whose common sense coupled with her kindness, warmth, and openness brought inclusion to a new level, as she welcomed diverse stakeholders into discussions, fostering both personal connections and broad buy-in; and

WHEREAS, Beth enjoys spending time at her home on the Pend Oreille River with her husband Ed, who retired a few years ago, and has been patiently waiting for her to slow down (good luck, Ed!); and

WHEREAS, she is looking forward to spending more time with her four grown children and seven grandchildren; where she can more actively dote on them and encourage them in their myriad endeavors;

NOW, THEREFORE, we, the members of the Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board gratefully acknowledge the many years of service and countless contributions to Washington’s workforce system made by Beth Thew, as she begins her next chapter.

Signed this 30th day of January 2019.

