



## Dear Friends and Neighbors,

As you know, I have been working to help improve behavioral health services in Pierce County for a long time - even before I became a member of the Pierce County Council.

I'm proud to say that, along with fellow Councilmember Derek Young, we have taken the first step toward real, meaningful change that will hopefully lead to an end to the mental health crisis facing our citizens today.

We've introduced a resolution - **R2015-91** - calling for a comprehensive audit of Pierce County's behavioral health system in order to identify gaps in service, where investments would be appropriate and what success should look like..

The mental health crisis in our community is not currently being addressed by existing efforts. An audit would allow the Council to determine its role in responding to this crisis and to make informed decisions about a comprehensive approach to providing needed services. The County has to stop ignoring this problem and blaming others for not stepping up. It is all of our responsibility to care for those who are least able to care for themselves.

As Councilmember Young points out, we have a moral obligation to help people suffering from mental illness but it's also in the County's financial best interest. This crisis is straining public and private resources from hospitals, social services and even the jail.

The County's Performance Audit Committee will informally discuss this resolution on Monday, and the Council will take action on it in the coming weeks. I sincerely hope we can finally begin addressing this critical need in our communities, and I appreciate any support you can offer.

As always, it's an honor serving as your representative on the Pierce County Council.

Sincerely,

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