



November 1, 2016

Representative Ruth Kagi, Co-Chair  
Judge Anne Levinson, Co-Chair  
Governor's Blue Ribbon Commission  
P.O. Box 40002, Olympia, WA 98504-0002

Dear Representative Kagi and Judge Levinson,

The Washington Association for Children and Families is the child welfare network representing agencies providing residential care, foster care, shelter care, and family preservation and support services to Washington's most vulnerable children and families. We partner with the DSHS Children's Administration and the Department of Commerce to deliver these services and strive for a strong public-private partnership in doing so.

We are writing to express our support for the work of the Blue Ribbon Commission and to express our ongoing commitment to the process established for its work. Our Executive Board had the opportunity to meet with Andi Smith from the Governor's office shortly after your last meeting, and commission staff came to our September general membership meeting to conduct a focus group. We greatly appreciate the opportunity to participate at this level in your process and believe that our input will be helpful in your work.

From a practice standpoint, our members have voiced strong support and enthusiasm for the commission's emphasis on the ACES work and the impact of trauma on children, youth and families. It is very encouraging to see the Commission have this core issue as the centerpiece for discussions on the possible configuration and responsibilities of a new cabinet level department.

Our association will continue to attend and participate in the commission meetings as possible and welcome the opportunity to do so. If our organization can assist the commission in any other way, please do not hesitate to contact me at any time.

Once again, thank you and all members of the commission for your commitment and good work on this issue of incredible importance.

Sincerely,

Thomas Rembiesa  
President