

CHRISTINE O. GREGOIRE
Governor



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September 10, 2008

The Honorable Patty Murray
United States Senate
173 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20003

Dear Senator Murray:

I understand that prior to the Congressional recess you had an opportunity to meet with Bill Basl, the Executive Director of the Washington Commission for National and Community Service, and Alison Carl White, the Executive Director of Seattle Works, about the need to include community volunteering infrastructure as a part of the reauthorization of the national service programs in the next Congress in the form of what Bill, Alison and others are calling a "Volunteer Generation Initiative."

As with many things, Washington State is leading the way with cutting-edge approaches to community volunteering. For example, Seattle Works has applied its team-based volunteer model to match young professional men with foster care boys, resulting in 15 boys having a meaningful relationship with 12 outstanding men. This program would not have been possible if not for the diligent efforts of the volunteer managers at Seattle Works and Treehouse who utilized creative programming in order to pull in a willing and able group of young volunteers just starting out on their own career paths who are able to volunteer *some*, but not *all*, of their time.

We know that many Washingtonians are stepping up to serve as community volunteers in various capacities. In fact, according to the Corporation for National and Community Service, Washington has the third-highest number of volunteer hours per capital in the country. However, we want to ensure that *every* Washingtonian, regardless of where she or he lives in the state, has an opportunity to serve in a volunteer capacity in programs that are well-managed, where volunteers are appropriately screened and trained, and programs through which the work being done is directed effectively to address real problems in communities.

It is looking at volunteerism in this broader context where a federal Volunteer Generation Initiative comes in. By providing competitive grants to, for example, established national non-profits and to the states through the service commissions, we can ignite a nationwide network of volunteer connector organizations to engage diverse populations – such as Baby Boomers and veterans – to concentrate the talent and energies of the American volunteer on our most pressing social needs in a low cost and effective manner and also create volunteer engagement models that can be replicated in communities around the country.



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September 10, 2008

Page 2

I want to thank you for your steadfast support of national and community service and look forward to working with you through the reauthorization of national service legislation in the next Congress where we can explore the inclusion of a Volunteer Generation Initiative.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Chris".

Christine O. Gregoire
Governor