

2017 - 2018 Seattle City Council Statement of Legislative Intent

Ready for Notebook

Tab	Action	Option	Version
306	1	B	1

Budget Action Title: Report by SEEC related to outreach for the Democracy Voucher program

Ongoing: No

Primary Sponsor: González, M. Lorena

Councilmembers:

Staff Analyst: Lish Whitson

Date		Total	SB	TB	LG	BH	LH	RJ	DJ	MO	KS
	Yes										
	No										
	Abstain										
	Absent										

Statement of Legislative Intent:

This Statement of Legislative Intent would ask the Seattle Ethics and Elections Commission (SEEC), in collaboration with the Office of Immigrant and Refugee Affairs (OIRA) and Department of Neighborhoods (DON), to identify and report on best practices related to outreach to Legal Permanent Residents and limited English proficient residents regarding the Democracy Vouchers program, with a report due to Council by April 15, 2017.

With the passage of Initiative 122, the Commission now administers the Democracy Voucher program, a public campaign financing program with funding provided by a voter-approved levy. Consistent with the language of Initiative 122, Legal Permanent Residents are eligible to opt in to the program, receive Democracy Vouchers and assign their vouchers to participating candidates, but unlike registered voters will not automatically receive vouchers under the Initiative. Because Legal Permanent Residents are not registered to vote, it is challenging to identify qualified Legal Permanent Residents who would otherwise qualify to participate in the program. The SEEC, with DON and OIRA, should include a plan to effectively and meaningfully increase the participation of Legal Permanent Residents in the program in their report to Council.

Reaching limited English proficient residents who qualify to participate in the Democracy Voucher program is also a priority and the SEEC with OIRA and DON should identify in their report how they plan to effectively and meaningfully increase the participation of these residents in the program. The Departments should work with non-profit community based organizations to identify and report on best practices to educate non-English-speaking, Legal Permanent Residents that are difficult to reach through traditional means to contact registered voters regarding the Democracy Vouchers program.

Responsible Council Committee(s): Education, Equity and Governance Committee

Date Due to Council: April 15, 2017