



City of Seattle
Office of the Mayor

Date: June 7th, 2011

To: Mike O'Brien, Councilmember, Chair, SPUN Committee
Bruce Harrell, Councilmember, Member, SPUN Committee
Richard Conlin, Council President, Member, SPUN Committee

From: Sol Villarreal, Mayor's Office

Copy: Esther Handy, Councilmember O'Brien's Office

Subject: **Youth Commission confirmation hearing, 6/10/11**

The Seattle Youth Commission was created by CB 116791 in February of 2010 in order to "advise the Mayor and City Council on policies of importance to the City, including but not limited to policies directly affecting youth." The 2010-2011 commissioners took that mission to heart, and made great strides in building relationships with elected officials in order to more effectively advocate on behalf of teenagers across Seattle.

One major goal for the 2011-2012 Youth Commission is to increase the number of teenagers that its members represent. Legislation requires the Youth Commission to have one member from each of the 13 Neighborhood Districts, but we also felt it was important to have a commissioner from every public high school, so the interview committee and I made that an explicit goal of ours as well. This year, in addition to preserving the demographic and geographic diversity that the commission has always had, we've also added school diversity, with at least one member from Ballard, Chief Sealth, Cleveland, Franklin, Garfield, Nathan Hale, Ingraham, Rainier Beach, Roosevelt, and West Seattle high schools, as well as the Center School, the Interagency Academy, and Washington Middle School; and Bishop Blanchet, Seattle Academy, and the Northwest School. One commissioner will also be graduating from high school this month and taking a year off next year before college.

In the current economic climate, serving the needs of as many as possible with the limited resources at our disposal is more important than ever. The wide diversity of voices that the 2011-2012 Youth Commission will bring with them to every meeting will ensure that the city's elected officials always have access to an active, engaged group of students who represent the residents who will be most affected by the decisions that they make today.