



**Legislative Department
Seattle City Council
Memorandum**

Date: August 29, 2013

To: Government Performance and Finance Committee Members

From: Nate Van Duzer, Mike Fong

Subject: **Chair's proposal for Whistleblower Code Revisions**

On August 7, the Government Performance and Financing Committee received a briefing from the Seattle Ethics and Elections Commission (SEEC) on changes they have proposed to the City's whistleblower code. At that meeting, the Commission outlined four objectives for their revisions:

- 1) Update and clean-up of the code for best practices since 1994 (the last time it was revised);
- 2) Clearly state employee rights and responsibilities;
- 3) Provide for independent investigations of retaliation claims; and
- 4) Strengthen enforcement and remedies available to employees that have been subject to retaliation.

Councilmember Burgess indicated at the committee meeting that he would be preparing legislation that would largely reflect the changes proposed by the SEEC, with a few additional modifications. The revised bill would also include technical changes that Council staff and the City Attorney's Office has been working on in consultation with SEEC staff. A track-changes version of the bill is available in your notebooks. Staff has prepared a table summarizing the most substantive process and policy changes to the existing whistleblower code proposed by the SEEC and to highlight further modifications proposed by Councilmember Burgess in the introduced version of the bill that is in front of the committee.