

From: Kirsten Carlson <kcarlson3416@comcast.net>
Sent: Wednesday, January 25, 2023 3:29 PM
To: Rumbaugh, Sarah
Cc: City Clerk's Office
Subject: Re: Drug Possession

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

Sarah,

I am reading your quote in KOMO news: "I appreciate the gross misdemeanor, but I don't believe that people should be charged first," said Councilmember Sarah Rumbaugh.

Obviously, nobody will face jail time if they aren't even charged first.

Again, why are our standards so low?

I am not naive enough to believe we will ever solve everyone's drug problems. People have to do that for themselves. Last time I checked, addicts are not lining up to avail themselves of the myriad of social services the city, county and state provide.

The drug (and related crime) problem in our community has gotten much worse recently. There are a number of factors that have probably contributed to this including, but not limited to:

1. The state setting free many of the incarcerated at the outset of the pandemic;
2. Counties like Pierce refusing to book all but the most serious felonies into jail;
3. The de-funding and vilification of law enforcement;
4. The Blake decision and the practical consequence of decriminalizing drug possession.

Drug crimes are not victimless crimes. If people choose to destroy their own lives that's on them. However, they do not have the right to destroy the lives of others and the communities in which they live. Fentanyl is a scourge driving overdose deaths and poisoning our children. What is the purpose of minimizing consequences for anyone arrested for possession of a drug like Fentanyl?

The upside of the council's position on drug possession is that you will fix Tacoma's affordability problem. Businesses and dollars will continue to flow out of the city.

Kirsten Carlson

On Jan 25, 2023, at 1:03 PM, Rumbaugh, Sarah <SRumbaugh@cityoftacoma.org> wrote:

Hi Kirsten,

I actually do believe jail time will help people take treatment. If putting people in prison worked, how come we haven't been able to do anything about the drug problem? We incarcerate more people than any other country in the world. My husband is a superior court judge. Diversion works. Getting people to take other options like therapeutic court works. It is unfortunate that we continue to believe incarcerating people works. Using jail time works if it is tied to drug treatment. Read the information on the effectiveness of this.

I will always believe we need to look upstream to stop some of this behavior. Sexual violence such as child sex abuse has a root in much of what we see. Tacoma receives many of those who have been incarcerated when they are released. We need to change this. People should be released to the county or city where they are from, not where they were arrested.

If you want to talk more about this I would be glad to have a conversation.

Thank you.

Sarah

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From: Kirsten Carlson <kcarlson3416@comcast.net>
Sent: Wednesday, January 25, 2023 7:41:36 AM
To: Rumbaugh, Sarah <SRumbaugh@cityoftacoma.org>
Subject: Drug Possession

Council member Rumbaugh,

As a constituent who supported you in your election, I am disgusted that you continue to embrace false narratives and policies that are destroying our once beautiful city. It is unbelievable to me that you are naive enough to believe that you can lever an addict into treatment without the threat of jail time. Stop treating drug use like cancer; it is not. People with cancer and other health issues do not present a hazard to the public at large and do not steal to support their "health problem." More drugs means more addicts, more crime and more overdose deaths. It's that simple. Look at the data on crime and overdose deaths since the Blake decision effectively decriminalized drugs in Washington State. I'm sure if you talk to the police chief and the prosecutor, they will tell you that most of the crime we are experiencing, including violent crime, is linked in some way to drugs. Do you think the recent spate of shootings in our city has anything to do with drugs?

How did we get to a place where we expect so little of people? I implore you to stop preening and start representing ALL of your constituents including those of us who believe in personal responsibility and a social compact as necessary elements of a civilized society.

I am reminded of the phrase, "You broke it, you own it." This applies to politicians who refuse to enact and enforce policies for the good of the community. Every shooting, overdose death and physical blight linked to drugs in on you.

Kirsten Carlson

From: Rumbaugh, Sarah
Sent: Wednesday, January 25, 2023 5:03 PM
To: Kirsten Carlson
Cc: City Clerk's Office
Subject: RE: Drug Possession

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I hear what you are saying. If you read both bills, SB 5467 and 5536, they both require drug treatment. One of the bill allows the individual to be convicted from the point of arrest. The other bill, SB5536, allows the person to put off jail time if they complete drug treatment. If they do not complete drug treatment, which I believe to be therapeutic court with all of the conditions included by the judge, they will then be put in jail. The lowest possible sentence is 90 days, the same as the first bill, SB5467, or up to 364 days in jail. I support this because if making drug a felony worked to rid of our drug problem, it should be gone by now because we have been doing that for over 40 years.

I can't answer questions regarding Pierce County and why they have let people out of jail. I can tell you that we at the city had to follow the Blake decision which meant we had to let people go who were not willing to take drug treatment. It was just voluntary. Both of the bills above require drug treatment.

I appreciate your concerns and hope you will reach out with other questions.

Councilmember Sarah Rumbaugh

City of Tacoma | District 2

747 Market Street, Room 1020

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srumbaugh@cityoftacoma.org | www.cityoftacoma.org

(she/her/hers)

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Kirsten Carlson

From: Tacoma Business Council <info@tacomabusinesscouncil.com>
Sent: Friday, January 27, 2023 12:51 PM
To: Woodards, Victoria; Woodards, Victoria; Warren, Bucoda; Ushka, Catherine; Bushnell, Joe; Hines, John; Blocker, Keith; Daniels, Kiara; Rumbaugh, Sarah; Diaz, Olgy; Blocker, Keith; Walker, Kristina; City Clerk's Office
Cc: City Manager; Mark Bardwil; Steve Jones; Kristina Maritzak; Lisa Hunt; Dena Jones; Webb Bowie; Jim Henderson; Courtney Farmer; Christina Dobler; Jessica Johnston; Sheila Irish; Valentine Smith; Kristen Wynne
Subject: Letter from the Tacoma Business Council on Police Pursuits and Drug Possession laws
Attachments: Letter to the Mayor and City Council on Police Pursuits and Drug Possession laws003.pdf
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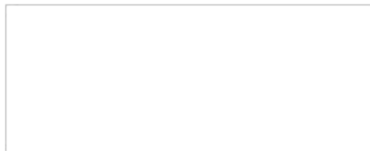
Dear Honorable Mayor Woodard and Honorable City Councilmembers,

Attached please find a letter from the Board of the Tacoma Business Council regarding Tacoma's position on police pursuits and drug possession legislation.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Best regards,

Kristen Wynne
President



Safety Is Our Business!
Tacoma Business Council
tacomabusinesscouncil.com



Dear Honorable Mayor Woodard and City Councilmembers,

We write to ask that the Council take a public stand on Washington's drug possession laws and on police pursuits. It is not enough that you direct Tacoma's lobbyist to advocate for your priorities. When the Mayor declined to sign the County Prosecutor's letter a very public message was sent that Tacoma disagreed with that letter. The city now must fix that. Please vote on January 31st to make a public statement on these important issues. The citizens of Tacoma need you to take concrete action to address the drug crisis that is taking so many lives. And we need you to speak clearly on police pursuits. Tacoma is one of the 3 largest cities in the State. Our voice matters. Please use that voice to influence Olympia to address the crime wave we are experiencing.

We ask that the City Council make a public statement addressing both drug possession and police pursuits. That statement must do the following:

- Call for our state delegation to introduce legislation returning drug possession to a felony offense. With a felony offense, we would have an effective legal structure in place immediately to fight the drug crisis - which is not the case if the offense is merely a misdemeanor. That is based on the following facts:
 - Pierce county jails will book felony offenders. They do not currently book for nonviolent misdemeanors.
 - Pierce County has a well-funded and well-established therapeutic court system that could immediately begin offering help. In contrast, our municipal court relies on a grant to operate.
 - Pierce County has the capacity to address the influx of diversions to therapeutic courts. In contrast, our municipal court already has a large backlog.
- Call for all criminal offenses to be automatically vacated when the defendant successfully completes the court mandated treatment.
- Demand an end to the current "2 referrals" scheme so that the law can be enforced and that those suffering from addiction can begin to get the help they need.
- Call for the law to be enacted as an emergency measure so that it can take effect immediately.
- Call for changes to the Growth Management Act provisions to ensure that local governments have a say on where treatment facilities are located.
- And, importantly, it must call for **police pursuits** to be allowed on "reasonable suspicion" standard to create a credible threat that police could pursue those who break the law.

If the Council cannot support a felony charge, then your public letter to the state delegation must call for a "gross misdemeanor" and must demand significant state funding to equip our municipal court and therapeutic court with the staffing and resources to fully implement this law. In addition, the City must commit to making our therapeutic court system robust, and immediately contract with a jail that will book those who are arrested on misdemeanors since the Pierce County jail does not.



Both violent and property crime in Tacoma continues to rise despite real efforts to get crime under control. One clear root cause of crime is addiction and the drug trade. We must put teeth back into the law to address this. Not in an effort to, "lock people up" as suggested by CM Blocker on the 24th, but because the threat of criminal charges and time in prison is the leverage needed to get people into treatment. How many more people must die from overdoses due to fentanyl, meth and other illegal drugs before we decide to take concrete action?

Now is the time. A public statement of Tacoma's position is critical to ensuring that all our legislators hear clearly what our city demands to address the drug crisis through which we are living.

Thank you for your consideration.

Signed by,

Kristen Wynne

Kristen Wynne, President
Tacoma Business Council

Kristina Maritczak

Kristina Maritczak

Mark Bardwil

Mark Bardwil

Dena Jones
Dena Jones (Jan 26, 2023 15:01 PST)

Dena Jones

Steve Jones (authorized by email)

Steve Jones

Lisa Hunt
Lisa Hunt (Jan 26, 2023 13:28 PST)

Lisa Hunt

Jessica Johnston
Jessica Johnston (Jan 26, 2023 12:17 PST)

Jessica Johnston

Chris Dobler
Chris Dobler (Jan 27, 2023 09:32 PST)

Chris Dobler

WEBB BOWIE
WEBB BOWIE (Jan 26, 2023 18:37 PST)

Webb Bowie

Sheila Irish
Sheila Irish
authorized by email

Jim Henderson
Jim Henderson
authorized by email