

<b>Respondent Name</b>
Satpal Sidhu
<b>Complainant Name</b>
Dena Jensen
<b>Complaint Description</b>
<p><u><a href="#">Dena</a></u>  replied  <i>a day ago (Mon, 23 Oct 2023 at 7:46 AM)</i>  To:"PDC Support" &lt;pdcc@pdcc.wa.gov&gt;</p> <p style="text-align: right;">External Email</p> <p>Dear PDC Support:</p> <p>After reading the response from Whatcom County Executive Satpal Sidhu to my complaint #142918, I contacted the Incarceration Prevention and Reduction Task Force to help raise awareness so that future violations of either the letter or spirit of <a href="#">RCW 42.17A.555</a> don't occur because the response to the PDC from Executive Sidhu did not disclose some critical details. My email did not state any position of mine regarding the ballot measure in question.</p> <p>I let them know I was most concerned about situations where members of any local government body are warned in the early part of a meeting about the RCW, and a potential violation occurs without any questioning of the occurrence, while subsequent to that, a warning about the RCW is then issued again in the same meeting right before public comment would occur.</p> <p>This was the case in the situation in the meeting related to my complaint filed against County Executive Sidhu and something I didn't initially provide in my complaint. To me this was a violation of the RCW, regardless of these circumstances, but the circumstances of the warning about <a href="#">RCW 42.17A.555</a>, the Executive being unquestioned regarding his advocating for the ballot measure shortly after that warning, and then a warning being issued again right before public comment help display the reason this violation can negatively impact public engagement during an open public meeting.</p> <p>I also felt it important to bring this to your attention because Executive Sidhu did not acknowledge in his response to the PDC that there was nothing in the question he was asked during the meeting that called on him to disclose his position on the ballot</p>

measure. He was only asked about actions he would take if the ballot measure did not pass. Executive Sidhu's seeming unawareness of this and request to have this complaint dismissed lead me to believe there needs to be enforcement action that ensures he does not violate [RCW 42.17A.555](#) in the future.

Sincerely,  
Dena Jensen  
Birch Bay, WA

dbobena@yahoo.com

<https://noisywatersnw.com/2023/10/13/satpal-sidhu-responds-to-pdc-complaint-regarding-2023-ballot-measure-to-fund-whatcom-jail-noisy-waters-northwest/>

I call on you all to take action and help raise awareness related to the critical importance of following all rules and practices meant to safeguard and promote non-discriminatory participation in open public meetings.

Sincerely,  
Dena Jensen  
Birch Bay, WA

dbobena@yahoo.com

#### **What impact does the alleged violation(s) have on the public?**

Without enforcement of RCW 42.17A.555 in this case, I am concerned that violations will continue, giving an unfair platform for government officials to advocate for a ballot measure during open public meetings without the ability for opponents to respond.

With ample notice of the content of RCW 42.17A.555 having been announced to meeting attendees during meetings where Whatcom County Executive Sidhu was present, including the meeting where I believe the violation of RCW 42.17A.555 occurred, he made remarks that seemed to indicate his clear advocacy for a November 2023 Whatcom County ballot measure for the collection of a local sales and use tax of two-tenths of one percent for the purpose of providing funds for costs associated with public health, safety, and justice facilities and services including a new jail, among other things.

Furthermore, during the open public meeting in question, government officials who were present did not point out the likely violation the County Executive made, which can create an appearance there there would be no consequence to any future violations by some of those in attendance.

Violations related to past ballot measure sales tax campaigns for new Whatcom County Jail facilities have been enforced by the PDC. So this seems to be an issue which is proving to require continued oversight and enforcement.

**List of attached evidence or contact information where evidence may be found**

At around 00:37:45 [https://youtu.be/YE\\_pDPmCUH4?si=MKcgjX\\_308PmrmP1&t=2265](https://youtu.be/YE_pDPmCUH4?si=MKcgjX_308PmrmP1&t=2265)

<https://www.whatcomcounty.us/DocumentCenter/View/78243/Agenda-Steering-Committee-September-7-2023>):

At around 00:02:10 [https://youtu.be/lqOnji\\_h6g0?si=Igt-fOWWqb8vwwYL&t=129](https://youtu.be/lqOnji_h6g0?si=Igt-fOWWqb8vwwYL&t=129)

<https://www.whatcomcounty.us/DocumentCenter/View/78688/IPRTF-Meeting-Summary-for-9182023?bidId=>

At around 00:26:10 [https://youtu.be/lqOnji\\_h6g0?si=VUwNDPy7k4aXPUj8&t=1571](https://youtu.be/lqOnji_h6g0?si=VUwNDPy7k4aXPUj8&t=1571)

At around 00:26:35 [https://youtu.be/lqOnji\\_h6g0?si=7goa8WTdL\\_o4iJoK&t=1595](https://youtu.be/lqOnji_h6g0?si=7goa8WTdL_o4iJoK&t=1595)

**List of potential witnesses with contact information to reach them**

Members of the Whatcom County Incarceration Prevention and Reduction Task Force:

Jill Nixon

[iprtaskforce@co.whatcom.wa.us](mailto:iprtaskforce@co.whatcom.wa.us)

Whatcom County Council Office

311 Grand Ave., Suite 105

Bellingham, WA 98225

Phone: 360-778-5010

IPRTF member and Whatcom County Council Chair Barry Buchanan:

[bbuchanan@co.whatcom.wa.us](mailto:bbuchanan@co.whatcom.wa.us)

phone: 360-224-4330

9/18/23 IPRTF meeting Attendee and Whatcom County Executive Special Initiatives

Manager Kayla Schott-Bresler:

[kschottb@co.whatcom.wa.us](mailto:kschottb@co.whatcom.wa.us)

(360) 778-5220

**Certification (Complainant)**

I certify (or declare) under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of Washington that information provided with this complaint is true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief.