



We the People
CENTER
for **WISE**
DEMOCRACY

1/28/11

Dear Gov. Gregoire,

In another state there is a seven person government office that asked its governor for a pay cut (!) ... and it was granted. This happened in the State of Vorarlberg, Austria, where the seven-person "Office of Future Related Issues" discovered a set of social innovations to end the partisan bickering on hot issues. The results from these innovations were so good the office now aims to bring these methods to cities and states outside of Vorarlberg, in neighboring Germany and Switzerland.

The innovations they discovered were developed here in Washington State. They are a set of breakthrough tools that make it possible for all citizens of Seattle, Island County, or Washington State to come together in a trans-partisan conversation and generate thoughtful shared conclusions about hot issues, like budgets, the environment, economic development, etc. This strategy is easier, safer, less expensive and more transformative than other citizen involvement approaches.

Many government employees within Washington State have already experienced and used the key elements of this Wise Democracy strategy:

- 1) *Dynamic Facilitation* is the ability to assure a high quality conversation among diverse untrained citizens (or meeting participants), where they achieve unity on difficult issues. Over the past 20 years almost 100 Washington State employees have attended Dynamic Facilitation seminars in Port Townsend and Olympia. Leslie Cushman, Deputy Director of the Department of Revenue, used Dynamic Facilitation to help her top management team work through and solve issues that had been intractable for many years.
(www.DynamicFacilitation.com)

The facilitation skills that I learned, that have now become seeded throughout the state system via other trainees, will spawn immeasurable change through future years. I stand in awe at the impact you have had on Washington state.

- 2) The *Wisdom Council Process* allows one small group of randomly selected citizens to evoke a creative system-wide conversation among all citizens. Former Deputy Director Bill Brookreson of WSDA supported front-line employees to institute the Wisdom Council Process throughout WSDA. Over three years the process realized many positive benefits including tearing down silos of separation between the west and east sides of the mountains, improving safety and quality of service, and building the spirit of community throughout the department.

Rand Daley, Mgr., Office of the Secretary of State, 1997

- 3) *Creative Insight Council* uses Dynamic Facilitation to evoke a system-wide

conversation on a pre-determined topic. Liz Luce and Sharon Whitehead, Director and Deputy Director of the Department of Licensing, used the process by randomly selecting employees who met with managers in a dynamically facilitated environment to create and share the departmental mission and vision.

"The Wisdom Council is the future of democracy."

**Sen. Les Ihara, State Senate
Majority Leader, Hawaii**

This Wise Democracy strategy is a way for Washington State and its cities to leap ahead in policy, culture, and Constitutional change, by involving and informing mainstream citizens, elevating the quality of the political conversation, generating trust in government, and building a new kind of political will in the form of "We the People." Recommended resources are:

- 1) The article, "WISE DEMOCRACY: A strategy for involving the citizens, transcending partisanship, and solving impossible public issues" (www.WiseDemocracy.org)
- 2) The book, ***Society's Breakthrough! Releasing Essential Wisdom and Virtue in All the People***, by Jim Rough. (Robert Steele, the #1 nonfiction reviewer for Amazon.com wrote that this is "possibly one of the 10 most important books available in English." www.SocietysBreakthrough.com)
- 3) The video, a 6 min review of the Wisdom Council in a Swiss corporate setting, Swisscom IT. (www.viddler.com/explore/jrough/videos/33/)

I hope you will choose to explore this new possibility in more depth. I would like to meet with you or your representatives to discuss how Washington State can take advantage of these innovations. For this process to work well, it requires your support. But it may not require government monies if we can get funding some other way.

Thank you for your efforts at deep change in the past.



Jim Rough ... 360 385 7118
www.WiseDemocracy.org

P.S. I am including a copy of my book, Society's Breakthrough.