

Date Created:	June 18, 2019
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Attachments:	

1 ..Title

2 A MOTION requesting the executive to develop,
3 implement and report on a pilot Homeward Bound program
4 specifically and exclusively to provide bus tickets to the
5 homeless for family reunification purposes.

6 ..Body

7 WHEREAS, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development ("HUD")
8 defines homeless as including individuals and families who: (1) are living in a
9 supervised publicly or privately operated shelter designated to provide temporary living
10 arrangements; or (2) have a primary residence that is a public or private place not
11 designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings,
12 including a vehicle, park, abandoned building, bus or train station, airport or camping
13 ground, and

14 WHEREAS, HUD requires all Continuums of Care, which is "All Home" in
15 Seattle and King County, to conduct a Point-in-Time Count of their unsheltered
16 population on a biennial basis and Seattle and King County is among several
17 communities that conducts an annual count, and

18 WHEREAS, according to the Point-in-Time Count, a total of 11,199 individuals
19 were experiencing homelessness in Seattle and King County on January 25, 2019, and

20 WHEREAS, there are a number of jurisdictions in the United States that have
21 extensive Homeward Bound programs, including San Francisco, New York City, West

22 Palm Beach and Portland, and these types of programs invest a range of tens of thousands
23 of dollars to a million dollars to help reunify homeless individuals with their families, and

24 WHEREAS, in 2018, King County invested approximately \$37,000 in family
25 reunification strategies, including transportation costs, and

26 WHEREAS, in 2016, the San Francisco Examiner reported that from 2005-2016,
27 San Francisco provided nearly 10,000 homeless residents Greyhound bus tickets to cities
28 across the United States under its bus ticket home program, and

29 WHEREAS, in that same article, one homeless individual praised the bus ticket
30 home program in San Francisco as a fabulous program, stating that some people may
31 have something terrible happen or no way to make money, and they may need to be
32 around family or someone who can support them, and

33 WHEREAS, a 2016 performance audit for the city of San Francisco showed
34 approximately 800 people accessing their bus ticket home program each year from 2012-
35 2015, and that the bus ticket home program, which is also known as Homeward Bound,
36 combined with other strategies resulted in a significant decline of chronically homeless
37 individuals and families in San Francisco in 2015;

38 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT MOVED by the Council of King County:

39 A. The council requests that the executive develop and implement a pilot
40 Homeward Bound program specifically and exclusively to provide bus tickets to the
41 homeless for family reunification. The program shall set aside, at a minimum,
42 \$1,000,000 annually for the purpose of purchasing bus tickets for homeless individuals
43 who would like to return home. In addition, the program shall prohibit the purchase of

44 bus tickets for any destination in King County and in any county adjacent to King
45 County.

46 B. The council requests that the executive report to the council on the results of
47 the program and that the report:

48 1. Identify the pilot period during which the program was implemented;

49 2. Identify the types of funding that the department of community and human
50 services can use to continue and expand the program in future years, including potential
51 partnerships with external funders;

52 3. Identify any additional outreach needs for the program, as well as any
53 supportive programming for these individuals; and

54 4. Provide any additional recommendations for the long-term implementation of
55 an extensive Homeward Bound program, including goals around the number of one-way
56 tickets to be provided to the homeless and evaluation of the effectiveness of such a
57 program.

58 C. The council requests that the executive transmit the report on the program no
59 later than one year from the date of passage of this motion. The report should be filed in
60 the form of a paper original and an electronic copy with the clerk of the council, who
61 shall retain the original and provide an electronic copy to all councilmembers, the council
62 chief of staff and the lead staff to the health, housing and human services committee, or
63 its successor.