

Easy Citizen Involvement

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Initiative 24 passes key milestone with favorable committee vote: Citizen-outreach program heading to King County Council for vote Friday

Seattle – Dick Spady, co-founder of *Dick's Drive-In Restaurants* and campaign chairman for Initiative 24, today praised I-24's passage by the King County Council's Committee of the Whole. "We are now one step closer to making the 'Easy Citizen Involvement Initiative' a reality in King County," Spady said. With today's favorable committee vote, I-24 now goes to the full Council for final passage on Friday, Sept. 7.

During public testimony at today's hearing, Spady renewed his pledge to fund the entire program with voluntary donations, not taxes, and explained that this pledge would cover not only the estimated \$20,000 a year in direct costs of the program, but also the King County Council's staff estimate of an annual \$130,000 of indirect costs for program oversight by the King County Auditor.

"I told the council members that it seemed a shame to spend \$50,000 dollars on a political campaign when we could spend it instead to immediately begin helping citizens communicate more easily and conveniently with their county officials," said Spady, "and while I find it hard to believe that it will actually cost the county \$130,000 every year to oversee a \$20,000 program run by volunteers, I pledged that my company, *Dick's Drive-In Restaurants*, would guarantee that sufficient donations would be made to cover that cost as well."

Jim Spady, Dick's son and I-24 campaign manager, believes that with the citizens' program now fully funded without tax dollars for the first two years, "all roadblocks to passage have been removed." "It's a winning situation all around," said Spady, "and with the Council's approval on Friday, I-24 will soon become King County's most successful, and least expensive, citizen outreach program."

"Over 80,000 people signed the I-24 petitions," Spady said, "reflecting a growing consensus that the doors of local government should open wider to the ideas and opinions of average citizens."

Endorsements of I-24 include two top-level state leaders, State Auditor Brian Sonntag and Speaker of the House Frank Chopp. Both officials have supported similar state-level legislation in the past. The full endorsements are posted on the campaign web page: www.EasyCitizenInvolvement.com

For more information, call campaign manager Jim Spady at 206-949-8484 or visit www.EasyCitizenInvolvement.com

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