



Bob Ferguson

ATTORNEY GENERAL OF WASHINGTON

1125 Washington Street SE • PO Box 40100 • Olympia, WA 98504-0100

November 30, 2017

The Honorable Zack Hudgins
State Representative, 11th District
House State Government, Elections
& Information Technology Committee
P.O. Box 40600
Olympia, WA 98504

The Honorable Mike Volz
State Representative, 6th District
House State Government, Elections
& Information Technology Committee
P.O. Box 40600
Olympia, WA 98504

The Honorable Karen Keiser
State Senator, 33rd District
Commerce, Labor & Sports Committee
P.O. Box 40433
Olympia, WA 98504

The Honorable Michael Baumgartner
State Senator, 6th District
Commerce, Labor & Sports Committee
P.O. Box 40406
Olympia, WA 98504

RE: Report to the Legislature "Addressing State Agency Audits, Inspections and Enforcement Actions Affecting Small Businesses in Washington State," HB 1352 (2017)

Dear Senators Baumgartner and Keiser, and Representatives Hudgins and Volz:

In 2017, the Legislature adopted and Governor Inslee signed House Bill 1352. In response to the bill, the Attorney General's Office was requested to provide a Report to "the relevant committees of the Legislature" by November 30, 2017. A copy of the Report, titled "State Agency Audits, Inspections, and Enforcement Actions Affecting Small Businesses in Washington State," is enclosed. You can also access the document on our website at <http://www.atg.wa.gov/house-bill-1352>.

As requested in HB 1352, the Report:

1. Describes the audit, inspection and enforcement authorities of the six named state agencies;
2. Includes a summary of the legal rights and protections provided to small businesses subject to inspection, audit or enforcement action by those agencies;



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3. Discusses the way in which agencies communicate information about those rights or protections to business owners prior to or at the time of agency action; and
4. Lists recommendations to better delineate, and improve notice of, those rights and protections.

The Legislature and the executive branch have taken many steps to streamline the regulatory environment and improve the overall business climate in Washington State. Much effort has been directed at assisting small businesses, including ensuring that rights and protections are afforded to those businesses when agencies bring an inspection, audit or enforcement action. It is important that business owners understand their rights and protections. More can be done in that regard. Those additional efforts will require cooperation and partnership between agencies and the business community, as well as continued support from policymakers.

I hope the findings and recommendations in this Report are useful to you. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact my Policy Director, Kate Kelly, at katek@atg.wa.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bob Ferguson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending from the end.

BOB FERGUSON
Attorney General

RWF/jlg

Enclosure – Report

cc: Bernard Dean, Chief Clerk, House of Representatives
Sarah Bannister, Deputy Secretary of the Senate