KCBA supports expanding access to court-administered alternative programs and services for youth referred for charging in juvenile justice system (identified as "referred youth"), prior to those referred youth being charged with a criminal offense.

**Background**
Washington state legislators have introduced companion bills in the House and Senate that would authorize juvenile courts to provide programs and resources to referred youth before they are formally charged with a crime.

The Juvenile Justice Act currently only permits diverted and adjudicated (sentenced) youth access to these critical programs and services (e.g., family counseling and restorative justice programs). By allowing the court to make these programs and resources available prior to charging, King County Superior Court judges and juvenile justice reform advocates believe further recidivism can be reduced within the juvenile justice system.

King County Superior Court has asked KCBA to endorse this proposal, as has KCBA's Juvenile Justice Reform Task Force. King County Juvenile Justice Equity Steering Committee has sent a letter of support for this proposed legislation to Olympia. The Washington Association of Juvenile Court Administrators and Superior Court Judges Association currently oppose this legislation until assurances can be given that counties with less financial resources than King County would not be under extra financial obligation to implement this change.

In response to this concern, King County has proposed that its share of funding be capped, to avoid any unfairness in allocation. The funding aspect remains unresolved at this point, but the merits of the proposal are not disputed.

KCBA's Juvenile Justice Reform Task Force recommends adoption of this position by the Board of Trustees.