**NEWS ADVISORY**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**SUBJECT**: Statement on the Passing of Danny Vega

**Statement on Danny Vega’s Passing**

The Seattle Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender (LGBT) Commission joins its voice to the profound sadness and shock felt by all of Seattle over the tragic and senseless death of Danny Vega.

Danny Vega, a 58-year-old gay man, was a South Seattle hairdresser and prominent member of the City’s Filipino community. He was well-known in Seattle’s LGBTQ community, including for his participation in the Miss FCS Gay and Miss Asian Gay pageants, and is warmly remembered for his affable nature and creativity.

On the evening of November 15, 2011, Mr. Vega was brutally robbed and beaten by three teens in Seattle’s Rainier Valley neighborhood. He was taken to Harborview Medical Center with life-threatening injuries and passed away on November 27, surrounded by family and friends. Reports have suggested that Mr. Vega may have been targeted due to his sexual orientation. The Homicide and Assault Unit of the Seattle Police Department is actively investigating the crime and whether the attack was motivated by Mr. Vega’s sexual orientation, national origin, or other personal characteristics.

No person should ever fear for his or her safety in the City of Seattle, nor be put in danger because of his or her identity, sexual orientation, or race. Violence in any form, whatever the motivation, is anathema to the values we hold dear in Seattle. Mr. Vega’s tragic death reminds us that the fears for personal safety felt by many, especially those in the LGBTQ community, are based in the ugly reality of prejudice and hatred. We send our condolences to Mr. Vega’s family, friends, and community in this difficult time and will continue working with Mayor McGinn, the Seattle City Council, the Seattle Police Department, and members of the public to promote tolerance and compassion for all and to put a stop to hate crimes.

The Seattle Office for Civil Rights, the Seattle Human Rights Commission, the Seattle Women’s Commission, and SEqual, City of Seattle LGBTQ Employees for Equality, stand alongside the Seattle LGBT Commission in expressing sorrow over Mr. Vega’s tragic passing and in condemning this attack.

We ask that anyone with information about Mr. Vega’s killers call police at (206) 233-5000 to assist with the investigation. Anonymous calls are welcome. Any new information could be vital.

*The Seattle Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender (LGBT) Commission advises the Mayor, City Council, and departments about sexual minority issues, recommends policies and legislation, brings the LGBTQ communities and the larger Seattle community together through long-ranged projects, and ensures that City departments fairly and equitably address LGBTQ concerns as individuals and as a protected class. For more information about the Commission, visit http://www.seattle.gov/LGBT.*

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