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ENGROSSED HOUSE BILL 2951

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State of Washington

54th Legislature

1996 Regular Session

By Representatives Carrell, B. Thomas, Chandler, Pennington, Smith, Campbell, Dyer, Mulliken, Pelesky, L. Thomas, Cooke, Thompson, Lisk, Foreman, Huff, Benton, Cairnes, Van Luven, Blanton, D. Schmidt, Radcliff, Brumsickle, Talcott, Backlund, Casada, Sherstad, Boldt, Hymes, Lambert, Beeksma, Delvin, Stevens, Johnson, Sterk, Carlson, Schoesler, Sheahan, Honeyford, Buck, Robertson, McMahan, D. Sommers, Silver, Skinner, Fuhrman, McMorris, Mastin, Koster, Hargrove, Ballasiotes and Sheldon

Read first time 02/09/96. Referred to Committee on .

1 AN ACT Relating to reducing property taxes while preserving fair  
2 market value as the proper basis of property taxation; amending RCW  
3 84.55.012, 84.55.005, 84.55.010, 84.40.045, 84.56.050, 84.48.010,  
4 35.61.210, 70.44.060, and 84.08.115; reenacting and amending RCW  
5 84.56.020; adding new sections to chapter 84.55 RCW; adding a new  
6 section to chapter 84.36 RCW; and creating a new section.

7 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

8 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** A new section is added to chapter 84.55 RCW  
9 to read as follows:

10 (1) As used in this section, "full levy" means the levy amount that  
11 would be allowed otherwise under this chapter without regard to RCW  
12 84.55.012 or this section.

13 (2) The state levy for collection in 1997 shall be reduced by five  
14 percent of the full levy for that year. The tax reduction provided in  
15 this section is in addition to any other tax reduction legislation that  
16 may be enacted by the legislature.

17 (3) Levies collected before 1997 shall not be used as a base for  
18 calculating limits for state levies for collection after 1997.

1       **Sec. 2.** RCW 84.55.012 and 1995 2nd sp.s. c 13 s 2 are each amended  
2 to read as follows:

3       (1) The state property tax levy for collection in 1996 shall be  
4 reduced by 4.7187 percent of the levy amount that would otherwise be  
5 allowed under this chapter without regard to this section or any other  
6 tax reduction legislation enacted in 1995.

7       (2) The tax reduction provided in this section is in addition to  
8 any other tax reduction legislation that may be enacted by the  
9 legislature.

10       ~~((3) State levies for collection after 1996 shall be set at the  
11 amount that would be allowed otherwise under this chapter if the state  
12 levy for collection in 1996 had been set without the reduction under  
13 subsection (1) of this section.))~~

14       **Sec. 3.** RCW 84.55.005 and 1994 c 301 s 49 are each amended to read  
15 as follows:

16       As used in this chapter(~~(, the term)~~):

17       (1) "Regular property taxes" has the meaning given it in RCW  
18 84.04.140, and also includes amounts received in lieu of regular  
19 property taxes.

20       (2) "Inflation" means the percentage change in the United States  
21 consumer price index for the calendar year during which the taxes are  
22 payable, as forecast by the economic and revenue forecast council in  
23 the official forecast adopted in September of the year before the taxes  
24 are payable.

25       NEW SECTION. **Sec. 4.** A new section is added to chapter 84.55 RCW  
26 to read as follows:

27       Except as provided in this chapter, the levy for districts other  
28 than junior districts, as defined in RCW 84.52.043, in any year shall  
29 be set so that the regular property taxes payable in the following year  
30 shall not exceed the lesser of one hundred six percent or one hundred  
31 percent plus inflation, multiplied by the amount of regular property  
32 taxes lawfully levied for the state in the highest of the three most  
33 recent years in which such taxes were levied for such district, plus an  
34 additional dollar amount calculated by multiplying the increase in  
35 assessed value in that district resulting from new construction,  
36 improvements to property, and any increase in the assessed value of

1 state-assessed property by the regular property tax levy rate of the  
2 state for the preceding year.

3 **Sec. 5.** RCW 84.55.010 and 1979 ex.s. c 218 s 2 are each amended to  
4 read as follows:

5 Except as provided in this chapter, the levy for a junior taxing  
6 district, as defined in RCW 84.52.043, in any year shall be set so that  
7 the regular property taxes payable in the following year shall not  
8 exceed one hundred six percent of the amount of regular property taxes  
9 lawfully levied for such district in the highest of the three most  
10 recent years in which such taxes were levied for such district plus an  
11 additional dollar amount calculated by multiplying the increase in  
12 assessed value in that district resulting from new construction,  
13 improvements to property, and any increase in the assessed value of  
14 state-assessed property by the regular property tax levy rate of that  
15 district for the preceding year.

16 **Sec. 6.** RCW 84.40.045 and 1994 c 301 s 36 are each amended to read  
17 as follows:

18 (1) The assessor shall give notice of any change in the true and  
19 fair value of real property for the tract or lot of land and any  
20 improvements thereon no later than thirty days after appraisal:  
21 PROVIDED, That no such notice shall be mailed during the period from  
22 January 15 to February 15 of each year: PROVIDED FURTHER, That no  
23 notice need be sent with respect to changes in valuation of forest land  
24 made pursuant to chapter 84.33 RCW.

25 (2) The notice shall contain a statement of both the prior and the  
26 new true and fair value and the ratio of the assessed value to the true  
27 and fair value on which the assessment of the property is based,  
28 stating separately land and improvement values, and a brief statement  
29 of the procedure for appeal to the board of equalization and the time,  
30 date, and place of the meetings of the board.

31 (3) The notice shall be mailed by the assessor to the taxpayer. If  
32 any taxpayer, as shown by the tax rolls, holds solely a security  
33 interest in the real property which is the subject of the notice,  
34 pursuant to a mortgage, contract of sale, or deed of trust, such  
35 taxpayer shall ~~((, upon written request of the assessor,))~~ supply,  
36 within thirty days of ~~((receipt of such request))~~ entering into the  
37 security agreement, to the assessor the name and address of the person

1 making payments pursuant to the mortgage, contract of sale, or deed of  
2 trust(~~(, and thereafter such person shall also receive a copy of the~~  
3 ~~notice provided for in this section)~~). Within thirty days of receipt  
4 of the notice, such taxpayer shall transmit a copy of the notice to the  
5 person making payments under the security agreement. The copy shall  
6 clearly state that it is not a bill and is for informational purposes  
7 only. Willful failure to comply with (~~such request~~) this subsection  
8 within the time limitation provided for herein shall make such taxpayer  
9 subject to a maximum civil penalty of five thousand dollars. The  
10 penalties provided for herein shall be recoverable in an action by the  
11 county prosecutor, and when recovered shall be deposited in the county  
12 current expense fund. (~~The assessor shall make the request provided~~  
13 ~~for by this section during the month of January.~~)

14 **Sec. 7.** RCW 84.56.050 and 1991 c 245 s 17 are each amended to read  
15 as follows:

16 (1) On receiving the tax rolls the treasurer shall post all real  
17 and personal property taxes from the rolls to the treasurer's tax roll,  
18 and shall carry forward to the current tax rolls a memorandum of all  
19 delinquent taxes on each and every description of property, and enter  
20 the same on the property upon which the taxes are delinquent showing  
21 the amounts for each year.

22 (2) The treasurer shall notify each taxpayer in the county, at the  
23 expense of the county, of the amount of the real and personal  
24 property(~~(, and the current and delinquent amount of tax due on the~~  
25 same; and the treasurer shall have printed on the notice the name of  
26 each tax and the levy made on the same)) taxes due and payable. The  
27 notice mailed to the taxpayer shall at a minimum contain the following  
28 information and this information must be separately stated on the  
29 notice:

30 (a) The name and address of the taxpayer;

31 (b) The name, address, and telephone number of the county issuing  
32 the notice;

33 (c) The parcel number as noted in the county records;

34 (d) The year for which the assessment is being made;

35 (e) The assessed valuation for the identified parcel's land and  
36 improvement value as reported by the county assessor's office;

37 (f) Except when multiple parcels are included on the same tax bill,  
38 current billing information containing the name of each taxing

1 jurisdiction levying a tax on the identified parcel, the amount of that  
2 jurisdiction's levy rate, or the total amount due for each taxing  
3 jurisdiction;

4 (g) The total taxes due and payable from the taxpayer, including  
5 any delinquent taxes and any interest or penalties due; and

6 (h) A notice of the payment due dates and possible delinquency  
7 penalties and interest.

8 (3) The county treasurer shall be the sole collector of all  
9 delinquent taxes and all other taxes due and collectible on the tax  
10 rolls of the county(~~(: PROVIDED, That the term "taxpayer" as used in~~  
11 this section shall mean any person charged, or whose property is  
12 charged, with property tax; and)).

13 (4) The person to be notified under this section is that person  
14 whose name appears on the tax roll ((herein mentioned: PROVIDED,  
15 FURTHER, That)). If no name ((se)) appears on the tax roll the person  
16 to be notified is that person shown by the treasurer's tax rolls or  
17 duplicate tax receipts of any preceding year as the payer of the tax  
18 last paid on the property in question. If any taxpayer, as shown by  
19 the tax rolls, holds solely a security interest in the real property  
20 that is the subject of the notice, the person making payments under the  
21 security agreement, as identified under RCW 84.40.045, shall also  
22 receive a copy of the notice provided for in this section.

23 **Sec. 8.** RCW 84.48.010 and 1988 c 222 s 20 are each amended to read  
24 as follows:

25 Prior to July 15th, the county legislative authority shall form a  
26 board for the equalization of the assessment of the property of the  
27 county. The members of said board shall receive a per diem amount as  
28 set by the county legislative authority for each day of actual  
29 attendance of the meeting of the board of equalization to be paid out  
30 of the current expense fund of the county: PROVIDED, That when the  
31 county legislative authority constitute the board they shall only  
32 receive their compensation as members of the county legislative  
33 authority. The board of equalization shall meet in open session for  
34 this purpose annually on the 15th day of July and, having each taken an  
35 oath fairly and impartially to perform their duties as members of such  
36 board, they shall examine and compare the returns of the assessment of  
37 the property of the county and proceed to equalize the same, so that  
38 each tract or lot of real property and each article or class of

1 personal property shall be entered on the assessment list at its true  
2 and fair value, according to the measure of value used by the county  
3 assessor in such assessment year, which is presumed to be correct  
4 pursuant to RCW 84.40.0301, and subject to the following rules:

5 First. They shall raise the valuation of each tract or lot or item  
6 of real property which is returned below its true and fair value to  
7 such price or sum as to be the true and fair value thereof, after at  
8 least five days' notice shall have been given in writing to the owner  
9 or agent. The board shall not raise the valuation of any property that  
10 is the subject of a petition filed under RCW 84.40.038 by the owner or  
11 person responsible for payment of taxes.

12 Second. They shall reduce the valuation of each tract or lot or  
13 item which is returned above its true and fair value to such price or  
14 sum as to be the true and fair value thereof.

15 Third. They shall raise the valuation of each class of personal  
16 property which is returned below its true and fair value to such price  
17 or sum as to be the true and fair value thereof, and they shall raise  
18 the aggregate value of the personal property of each individual  
19 whenever the aggregate value is less than the true valuation of the  
20 taxable personal property possessed by such individual, to such sum or  
21 amount as to be the true value thereof, after at least five days'  
22 notice shall have been given in writing to the owner or agent thereof.  
23 The board shall not raise the valuation of any property that is the  
24 subject of a petition filed under RCW 84.40.038 by the owner or person  
25 responsible for payment of taxes.

26 Fourth. They shall reduce the valuation of each class of personal  
27 property enumerated on the detail and assessment list of the current  
28 year, which is returned above its true and fair value, to such price or  
29 sum as to be the true and fair value thereof; and they shall reduce the  
30 aggregate valuation of the personal property of such individual who has  
31 been assessed at too large a sum to such sum or amount as was the true  
32 and fair value of the personal property.

33 Fifth. The board may review all claims for either real or personal  
34 property tax exemption as determined by the county assessor, and shall  
35 consider any taxpayer appeals from the decision of the assessor thereon  
36 to determine (1) if the taxpayer is entitled to an exemption, and (2)  
37 if so, the amount thereof.

38 The clerk of the board shall keep an accurate journal or record of  
39 the proceedings and orders of said board showing the facts and evidence

1 upon which their action is based, and the said record shall be  
2 published the same as other proceedings of county legislative  
3 authority, and shall make a true record of the changes of the  
4 descriptions and assessed values ordered by the county board of  
5 equalization. The assessor shall correct the real and personal  
6 assessment rolls in accordance with the changes made by the said county  
7 board of equalization, and the assessor shall make duplicate abstracts  
8 of such corrected values, one copy of which shall be retained in the  
9 office, and one copy forwarded to the department of revenue on or  
10 before the eighteenth day of August next following the meeting of the  
11 county board of equalization.

12 The county board of equalization shall meet on the 15th day of July  
13 and may continue in session and adjourn from time to time during a  
14 period not to exceed four weeks, but shall remain in session not less  
15 than three days: PROVIDED, That the county board of equalization with  
16 the approval of the county legislative authority may convene at any  
17 time when petitions filed exceed twenty-five, or ten percent of the  
18 number of appeals filed in the preceding year, whichever is greater.

19 No taxes, except special taxes, shall be extended upon the tax  
20 rolls until the property valuations are equalized by the department of  
21 revenue for the purpose of raising the state revenue.

22 County legislative authorities as such shall at no time have any  
23 authority to change the valuation of the property of any person or to  
24 release or commute in whole or in part the taxes due on the property of  
25 any person.

26 **Sec. 9.** RCW 84.56.020 and 1991 c 245 s 16 and 1991 c 52 s 1 are  
27 each reenacted and amended to read as follows:

28 (1) The county treasurer shall be the receiver and collector of all  
29 taxes extended upon the tax rolls of the county, whether levied for  
30 state, county, school, bridge, road, municipal or other purposes, and  
31 also of all fines, forfeitures or penalties received by any person or  
32 officer for the use of his or her county.

33 (2) All taxes upon real and personal property made payable by the  
34 provisions of this title shall be due and payable to the county  
35 treasurer ((on or before the thirtieth day of April and shall be  
36 delinquent after that date: PROVIDED, That)) as follows:

37 (a) One-half of the taxes shall be due and payable on or before the  
38 thirtieth day of April and shall be delinquent after that date.

1        (b) The remaining one-half of the taxes plus any applicable  
2 interest and penalties shall be due and payable on or before the  
3 thirty-first day of October and shall be delinquent after that date.

4        (c) If, however, the total amount of taxes due on real and personal  
5 property by one person is less than thirty dollars, the total amount  
6 must be paid on or before the thirtieth day of April and shall be  
7 delinquent after that date.

8        (3) Each tax statement shall include a notice that checks for  
9 payment of taxes due under this title may be made payable to "Treasurer  
10 of . . . . County" or other appropriate office, but tax statements  
11 shall not include any suggestion that checks may be made payable to the  
12 name of the individual holding the office of treasurer nor any other  
13 individual( (PROVIDED FURTHER, That when the total amount of tax or  
14 special assessments on personal property or on any lot, block or tract  
15 of real property payable by one person is thirty dollars or more, and  
16 if one half of such tax be paid on or before the thirtieth day of  
17 April, the remainder of such tax shall be due and payable on or before  
18 the thirty first day of October following and shall be delinquent after  
19 that date: PROVIDED FURTHER, That when the total amount of tax or  
20 special assessments on any lot, block or tract of real property payable  
21 by one person is thirty dollars or more, and if one half of such tax be  
22 paid after the thirtieth day of April but before the thirty first day  
23 of October, together with the applicable interest and penalty on the  
24 full amount of such tax, the remainder of such tax shall be due and  
25 payable on or before the thirty first day of October following and  
26 shall be delinquent after that date)).

27        ~~((2))~~ (4) Delinquent taxes under this section are subject to  
28 interest at the rate of twelve percent per annum computed on a monthly  
29 basis from the date of delinquency until paid. Interest shall be  
30 calculated at the rate in effect at the time of payment of the tax,  
31 regardless of when the taxes were first delinquent. In addition,  
32 delinquent taxes under this section are subject to penalties as  
33 follows:

34        (a) A penalty of three percent shall be assessed on the amount of  
35 tax delinquent on June 1st of the year in which the tax is due.

36        (b) An additional penalty of eight percent shall be assessed on the  
37 total amount of tax delinquent on December 1st of the year in which the  
38 tax is due.

1       (~~(3)~~) Subsection (2) of this section notwithstanding, no interest  
2 or penalties may be assessed for the period April 30, 1991, through  
3 December 31, 1991, on delinquent 1991 taxes which are imposed on  
4 personal residences owned by military personnel who participated in the  
5 situation known as "Operation Desert Shield," "Operation Desert Storm,"  
6 or any following operation from August 2, 1990, to a date specified by  
7 an agency of the federal government as the end of such operations.

8       ~~(4))~~ (5) For purposes of this chapter, "interest" means both  
9 interest and penalties.

10       (~~(5))~~ (6) All collections of interest on delinquent taxes shall  
11 be credited to the county current expense fund; but the cost of  
12 foreclosure and sale of real property, and the fees and costs of  
13 distraint and sale of personal property, for delinquent taxes, shall,  
14 when collected, be credited to the operation and maintenance fund of  
15 the county treasurer prosecuting the foreclosure or distraint or sale;  
16 and shall be used by the county treasurer as a revolving fund to defray  
17 the cost of further foreclosure, distraint and sale for delinquent  
18 taxes without regard to budget limitations.

19       (7) As used in this section, "tax" includes special assessments.

20       **Sec. 10.** RCW 35.61.210 and 1990 c 234 s 3 are each amended to read  
21 as follows:

22       The board of park commissioners may levy or cause to be levied a  
23 general tax on all the property located in said park district each year  
24 not to exceed fifty cents per thousand dollars of assessed value of the  
25 property in such park district. In addition, the board of park  
26 commissioners may levy or cause to be levied a general tax on all  
27 property located in said park district each year not to exceed twenty-  
28 five cents per thousand dollars of assessed valuation. Although park  
29 districts are authorized to impose two separate regular property tax  
30 levies, the levies shall be considered to be a single levy for purposes  
31 of the (~~(one hundred six percent)~~) limitation provided for in chapter  
32 84.55 RCW.

33       The board is hereby authorized to levy a general tax in excess of  
34 its regular property tax levy or levies when authorized so to do at a  
35 special election conducted in accordance with and subject to all the  
36 requirements of the Constitution and laws of the state now in force or  
37 hereafter enacted governing the limitation of tax levies. The board is  
38 hereby authorized to call a special election for the purpose of

1 submitting to the qualified voters of the park district a proposition  
2 to levy a tax in excess of the seventy-five cents per thousand dollars  
3 of assessed value herein specifically authorized. The manner of  
4 submitting any such proposition, of certifying the same, and of giving  
5 or publishing notice thereof, shall be as provided by law for the  
6 submission of propositions by cities or towns.

7 The board shall include in its general tax levy for each year a  
8 sufficient sum to pay the interest on all outstanding bonds and may  
9 include a sufficient amount to create a sinking fund for the redemption  
10 of all outstanding bonds. The levy shall be certified to the proper  
11 county officials for collection the same as other general taxes and  
12 when collected, the general tax shall be placed in a separate fund in  
13 the office of the county treasurer to be known as the "metropolitan  
14 park district fund" and paid out on warrants.

15 **Sec. 11.** RCW 70.44.060 and 1990 c 234 s 2 are each amended to read  
16 as follows:

17 All public hospital districts organized under the provisions of  
18 this chapter shall have power:

19 (1) To make a survey of existing hospital and other health care  
20 facilities within and without such district.

21 (2) To construct, condemn and purchase, purchase, acquire, lease,  
22 add to, maintain, operate, develop and regulate, sell and convey all  
23 lands, property, property rights, equipment, hospital and other health  
24 care facilities and systems for the maintenance of hospitals,  
25 buildings, structures, and any and all other facilities, and to  
26 exercise the right of eminent domain to effectuate the foregoing  
27 purposes or for the acquisition and damaging of the same or property of  
28 any kind appurtenant thereto, and such right of eminent domain shall be  
29 exercised and instituted pursuant to a resolution of the commission and  
30 conducted in the same manner and by the same procedure as in or may be  
31 provided by law for the exercise of the power of eminent domain by  
32 incorporated cities and towns of the state of Washington in the  
33 acquisition of property rights: PROVIDED, That no public hospital  
34 district shall have the right of eminent domain and the power of  
35 condemnation against any health care facility.

36 (3) To lease existing hospital and other health care facilities and  
37 equipment and/or other property used in connection therewith, including  
38 ambulances, and to pay such rental therefor as the commissioners shall

1 deem proper; to provide hospital and other health care services for  
2 residents of said district by facilities located outside the boundaries  
3 of said district, by contract or in any other manner said commissioners  
4 may deem expedient or necessary under the existing conditions; and said  
5 hospital district shall have the power to contract with other  
6 communities, corporations, or individuals for the services provided by  
7 said hospital district; and they may further receive in said hospitals  
8 and other health care facilities and furnish proper and adequate  
9 services to all persons not residents of said district at such  
10 reasonable and fair compensation as may be considered proper:  
11 PROVIDED, That it must at all times make adequate provision for the  
12 needs of the district and residents of said district shall have prior  
13 rights to the available hospital and other health care facilities of  
14 said district, at rates set by the district commissioners.

15 (4) For the purpose aforesaid, it shall be lawful for any district  
16 so organized to take, condemn and purchase, lease, or acquire, any and  
17 all property, and property rights, including state and county lands,  
18 for any of the purposes aforesaid, and any and all other facilities  
19 necessary or convenient, and in connection with the construction,  
20 maintenance, and operation of any such hospitals and other health care  
21 facilities, subject, however, to the applicable limitations provided in  
22 subsection (2) of this section.

23 (5) To contract indebtedness or borrow money for corporate purposes  
24 on the credit of the corporation or the revenues of the hospitals  
25 thereof, and the revenues of any other facilities or services that the  
26 district is or hereafter may be authorized by law to provide, and to  
27 issue and sell: (a) Revenue bonds, revenue warrants, or other revenue  
28 obligations therefor payable solely out of a special fund or funds into  
29 which the district may pledge such amount of the revenues of the  
30 hospitals thereof, and the revenues of any other facilities or services  
31 that the district is or hereafter may be authorized by law to provide,  
32 to pay the same as the commissioners of the district may determine,  
33 such revenue bonds, warrants, or other obligations to be issued and  
34 sold in the same manner and subject to the same provisions as provided  
35 for the issuance of revenue bonds, warrants, or other obligations by  
36 cities or towns under the Municipal Revenue Bond Act, chapter 35.41  
37 RCW, as may hereafter be amended; (b) general obligation bonds therefor  
38 in the manner and form as provided in RCW 70.44.110 and 70.44.130, as  
39 may hereafter be amended; or (c) interest-bearing warrants to be drawn

1 on a fund pending deposit in such fund of money sufficient to redeem  
2 such warrants and to be issued and paid in such manner and upon such  
3 terms and conditions as the board of commissioners may deem to be in  
4 the best interest of the district; and to assign or sell hospital  
5 accounts receivable, and accounts receivable for the use of other  
6 facilities or services that the district is or hereafter may be  
7 authorized by law to provide, for collection with or without recourse.  
8 General obligation bonds shall be issued and sold in accordance with  
9 chapter 39.46 RCW. Revenue bonds, revenue warrants, or other revenue  
10 obligations may be issued and sold in accordance with chapter 39.46  
11 RCW.

12 (6) To raise revenue by the levy of an annual tax on all taxable  
13 property within such public hospital district not to exceed fifty cents  
14 per thousand dollars of assessed value, and an additional annual tax on  
15 all taxable property within such public hospital district not to exceed  
16 twenty-five cents per thousand dollars of assessed value, or such  
17 further amount as has been or shall be authorized by a vote of the  
18 people. Although public hospital districts are authorized to impose  
19 two separate regular property tax levies, the levies shall be  
20 considered to be a single levy for purposes of the (~~one hundred six~~  
21 ~~percent~~) limitation provided for in chapter 84.55 RCW. Public  
22 hospital districts are authorized to levy such a general tax in excess  
23 of their regular property taxes when authorized so to do at a special  
24 election conducted in accordance with and subject to all of the  
25 requirements of the Constitution and the laws of the state of  
26 Washington now in force or hereafter enacted governing the limitation  
27 of tax levies. The said board of district commissioners is authorized  
28 and empowered to call a special election for the purpose of submitting  
29 to the qualified voters of the hospital district a proposition or  
30 propositions to levy taxes in excess of its regular property taxes.  
31 The superintendent shall prepare a proposed budget of the contemplated  
32 financial transactions for the ensuing year and file the same in the  
33 records of the commission on or before the first Monday in September.  
34 Notice of the filing of said proposed budget and the date and place of  
35 hearing on the same shall be published for at least two consecutive  
36 weeks in a newspaper printed and of general circulation in said county.  
37 On the first Monday in October the commission shall hold a public  
38 hearing on said proposed budget at which any taxpayer may appear and be  
39 heard against the whole or any part of the proposed budget. Upon the

1 conclusion of said hearing, the commission shall, by resolution, adopt  
2 the budget as finally determined and fix the final amount of  
3 expenditures for the ensuing year. Taxes levied by the commission  
4 shall be certified to and collected by the proper county officer of the  
5 county in which such public hospital district is located in the same  
6 manner as is or may be provided by law for the certification and  
7 collection of port district taxes. The commission is authorized, prior  
8 to the receipt of taxes raised by levy, to borrow money or issue  
9 warrants of the district in anticipation of the revenue to be derived  
10 by such district from the levy of taxes for the purpose of such  
11 district, and such warrants shall be redeemed from the first money  
12 available from such taxes when collected, and such warrants shall not  
13 exceed the anticipated revenues of one year, and shall bear interest at  
14 a rate or rates as authorized by the commission.

15 (7) To enter into any contract with the United States government or  
16 any state, municipality, or other hospital district, or any department  
17 of those governing bodies, for carrying out any of the powers  
18 authorized by this chapter.

19 (8) To sue and be sued in any court of competent jurisdiction:  
20 PROVIDED, That all suits against the public hospital district shall be  
21 brought in the county in which the public hospital district is located.

22 (9) To pay actual necessary travel expenses and living expenses  
23 incurred while in travel status for (a) qualified physicians who are  
24 candidates for medical staff positions, and (b) other qualified persons  
25 who are candidates for superintendent or other managerial and technical  
26 positions, when the district finds that hospitals or other health care  
27 facilities owned and operated by it are not adequately staffed and  
28 determines that personal interviews with said candidates to be held in  
29 the district are necessary or desirable for the adequate staffing of  
30 said facilities.

31 (10) To make contracts, employ superintendents, attorneys, and  
32 other technical or professional assistants and all other employees; to  
33 make contracts with private or public institutions for employee  
34 retirement programs; to print and publish information or literature;  
35 and to do all other things necessary to carry out the provisions of  
36 this chapter.

37 **Sec. 12.** RCW 84.08.115 and 1991 c 218 s 2 are each amended to read  
38 as follows:

1 (1) The department shall prepare a clear and succinct explanation  
2 of the property tax system, including but not limited to:

3 (a) The standard of true and fair value as the basis of the  
4 property tax.

5 (b) How the assessed value for particular parcels is determined.

6 (c) The procedures and timing of the assessment process.

7 (d) How district levy rates are determined, including the ((~~one~~  
8 ~~hundred six percent~~)) limit under chapter 84.55 RCW.

9 (e) How the composite tax rate is determined.

10 (f) How the amount of tax is calculated.

11 (g) How a taxpayer may appeal an assessment, and what issues are  
12 appropriate as a basis of appeal.

13 (h) A summary of tax exemption and relief programs, along with the  
14 eligibility standards and application processes.

15 (2) Each county assessor shall provide copies of the explanation to  
16 taxpayers on request, free of charge. Each revaluation notice shall  
17 include information regarding the availability of the explanation.

18 NEW SECTION. Sec. 13. Sections 4, 5, 8, and 9 of this act are  
19 effective for taxes levied for collection in 1997 and thereafter.  
20 Sections 6 and 7 of this act are effective for taxes levied for  
21 collection in 1998 and thereafter.

22 NEW SECTION. Sec. 14. A new section is added to chapter 84.36 RCW  
23 to read as follows:

24 Farm and agricultural land and timber land that is included under  
25 the current use taxation in chapter 84.34 RCW, or the forest land  
26 valuation system in chapter 84.33 RCW, is exempt from taxation if  
27 chapter 76.09 or 36.70A RCW precludes or substantially limits either:

28 (1) The harvesting of timber on the land as a result of the land  
29 being included within a buffer area adjacent to a body of water or  
30 being part of, or included within a buffer area adjacent to, a wetland;  
31 or

32 (2) The production of horticultural or agricultural produce or crop  
33 as a result of the land being part of, or included within a buffer area  
34 adjacent to, a wetland.

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