
HOUSE BILL 1315

State of Washington

55th Legislature

1997 Regular Session

By Representatives D. Sommers, Sterk, Benson, Sheahan, Crouse,
Schoesler and Mastin

Read first time 01/22/97. Referred to Committee on Government
Administration.

1 AN ACT Relating to the appointment of county assessors; amending
2 RCW 36.16.030; and adding a new section to chapter 36.21 RCW.

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

4 **Sec. 1.** RCW 36.16.030 and 1996 c 108 s 1 are each amended to read
5 as follows:

6 (1) Except as provided elsewhere in this section, in every county
7 there shall be elected from among the qualified voters of the county a
8 county assessor, a county auditor, a county clerk, a county coroner,
9 three county commissioners, a county prosecuting attorney, a county
10 sheriff and a county treasurer, except that in each county with a
11 population of less than forty thousand no coroner shall be elected and
12 the prosecuting attorney shall be ex officio coroner. Whenever the
13 population of a county increases to forty thousand or more, the
14 prosecuting attorney shall continue as ex officio coroner until a
15 coroner is elected, at the next general election at which the office of
16 prosecuting attorney normally would be elected, and assumes office as
17 provided in RCW 29.04.170. In any county where the population has once
18 attained forty thousand people and a current coroner is in office and
19 a subsequent census indicates less than forty thousand people, the

1 county legislative authority may maintain the office of coroner by
2 resolution or ordinance. If the county legislative authority has not
3 passed a resolution or enacted an ordinance to maintain the office of
4 coroner, the elected coroner shall remain in office for the remainder
5 of the term for which he or she was elected, but no coroner shall be
6 elected at the next election at which that office would otherwise be
7 filled and the prosecuting attorney shall be the ex officio coroner.
8 In a county with a population of two hundred fifty thousand or more,
9 the county legislative authority may replace the office of coroner with
10 a medical examiner system and appoint a medical examiner as specified
11 in RCW 36.24.190.

12 (2) A noncharter county may have five county commissioners as
13 provided in RCW 36.32.010 and 36.32.055 through 36.32.0558.

14 (3) In a county with a population of two hundred thousand or more,
15 the county legislative authority may appoint a county assessor as
16 specified in section 2 of this act.

17 NEW SECTION. Sec. 2. A new section is added to chapter 36.21 RCW
18 to read as follows:

19 In a county with a population of two hundred thousand or more, the
20 county legislative authority may, upon majority vote at an election
21 called by the county legislative authority, adopt a system under which
22 a county assessor may be appointed. The county legislative authority
23 must adopt a resolution or ordinance that appoints a county assessor at
24 least thirty days before the first day of filing for the primary
25 election for county offices. If a county adopts such a resolution or
26 ordinance, the resolution or ordinance must be referred to the voters
27 for confirmation or rejection at the next date for a special election
28 that is more than forty-five days from the date the resolution or
29 ordinance was adopted. If the resolution or ordinance is approved by
30 majority vote, an election is not to be held for the position of county
31 assessor unless a resolution or ordinance reinstating an election is
32 approved by the voters.

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