

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## SHB 1647

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As Reported By Senate Committee On:  
State & Local Government, March 24, 1999

**Title:** An act relating to recording documents.

**Brief Description:** Amending recording statutes.

**Sponsors:** House Committee on Local Government (originally sponsored by Representatives Mulliken, Dunshee and Scott).

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:** State & Local Government: 3/22/99, 3/24/99 [DPA].

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON STATE & LOCAL GOVERNMENT

**Majority Report:** Do pass as amended.

Signed by Senators Patterson, Chair; Gardner, Vice Chair; Hale, Haugen, Horn, Kline and McCaslin.

**Staff:** Eugene Green (786-7405)

**Background:** The county auditor records deeds and other written instruments. The auditor is also required to charge fees for service and to act as clerk for the board of county commissioners. The county auditor is authorized to copy, preserve, and index documents filed with the county.

Many of the statutes regarding the process in which documents are filed with an auditor refer to processes and practices that are no longer considered appropriate.

**Summary of Amended Bill:** Numerous outdated and archaic language references are changed, processes are streamlined, and some processes applicable to the document standardization process for recorded documents are clarified. Substantive changes to existing statutes include the following:

- auditors are authorized to keep a separate tax lien index listing from the general index provided by the county commissioners;
- the recording statutes are updated to add the definition of "legible and capable of being imaged," which means documents must be suitable to produce a readable image, effectively updating for technology;
- the definition of an abbreviated legal description used when recording is expanded to include quarter/quarter sections;
- the document for a recording must use courier font type, and must be sufficiently clear enough to image the document, and only bar codes or address labels may be affixed to the pages;
- certain documents are exempt from recording format requirements;

- the county auditor is authorized to charge "appropriate recording fees" to record the liens on real estate replacing the 50 cent charge; and
- the auditor's authority to accept nonstandard recording documents is added under certain circumstances for a \$50 fee.

An August 1, 1999, effective date is specified.

**Amended Bill Compared to Substitute Bill:** The striking amendment eliminates the requirement that the text of all pages of the document to be recorded must be in courier font or equivalent size.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Not requested.

**Effective Date:** The bill takes effect August 1, 1999.

**Testimony For:** This bill has been two years in the making. County officials worked with representatives of all the various kinds of financial institutions and we have agreement.

**Testimony Against:** None.

**Testified:** PRO: Bob Terwilliger, Snohomish County Auditor, County Auditor Assn.; Barbara Sandahl, WA Assn. of County Officials.