

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1566

As Reported by House Committee On:

Local Government

Title: An act relating to the retention of original claims by county auditors.

Brief Description: Modifying record retention provisions for county auditors.

Sponsors: Representative Alexander.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Local Government: 2/13/03, 2/26/03 [DP].

Brief Summary of Bill

- Allows county auditors to retain original claims electronically.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 11 members: Representatives Romero, Chair; Upthegrove, Vice Chair; Schindler, Ranking Minority Member; Jarrett, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Ahern, Berkey, Clibborn, Edwards, Ericksen, Mielke and Moeller.

Staff: Anne Warwick (786-7291).
Amy Wood (786-7127).

Background:

"Official public records" include original claims, receipts, and other documents necessary to isolate and prove the validity of every transaction relating to the receipt, use, and disposition of all public property and public income. The retention period for official public records is six years. The Budgeting, Accounting, and Reporting System's manual states that the original copy of all claims should be filed in the office of the auditing officer of the municipality. Supporting documentation must be retained and either attached to the claims or canceled by the auditing officer to prevent reuse. Districts that do not issue their own warrants send either original claims or other supporting documentation (listing of approved claims) to the county auditor. The county auditor

audits all claims, demands, and accounts chargeable to the county and pays all approved claims through warrants drawn from the county treasurer.

Summary of Bill:

The bill provides county auditors with the option of retaining electronic copies of original claims, bills, and specified associated records in a format sufficient for the conduct of official business. The term "claims" does not include claims for damages filed against counties.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not Requested.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Testimony For: Under current law the county auditor is required to maintain a paper copy of all original claims. The State Auditor's Office has stated that either an electronic copy or an original paper copy of all claims is sufficient and can be audited by the state. Maintaining the claims electronically is helpful to county officials in warranting claims. Storage and access issues will be relieved by allowing electronic copies to be retained.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Representative Alexander, prime sponsor; and Karen Flynn, Kitsap County Auditor.