

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1184

As Passed House:

March 3, 2005

Title: An act relating to training for newly elected county officers.

Brief Description: Providing training for new county officers.

Sponsors: By Representatives Flannigan, Hinkle, Takko and Shabro.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Local Government: 1/27/05, 2/10/05 [DP].

Floor Activity:

Passed House: 3/3/05, 97-0.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Allows public funds to be used for the reimbursement of expenses paid by newly elected county officers for training and education that is pertinent to undertaking the duties of the office.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 7 members: Representatives Simpson, Chair; Clibborn, Vice Chair; Schindler, Ranking Minority Member; Ahern, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; B. Sullivan, Takko and Woods.

Staff: Thamas Osborn (786-7129).

Background:

State law contains numerous statutes pertaining to the duties, responsibilities, salaries, insurance coverage, and compensation for an elected county officer, but which become effective only subsequent to the official assumption of the office. Existing law does not address the issue of funding the reimbursement of expenses incurred by newly elected county officers for training and education pertinent to undertaking their official duties, but which are incurred prior to taking office.

Summary of Bill:

The expenses incurred by newly elected county officers in obtaining training and education pertinent to undertaking the duties of the office, but incurred before officially assuming office, may be reimbursed from public funds. The expenses subject to such reimbursement may include the actual cost of the training/education, as well as the reasonable costs of travel, housing, and meals. County funds may be used for reimbursing such expenses in the event there are no state funds available for this purpose.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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

Testimony For: Prior to taking office, newly elected county officials need to receive formal training related to their official duties. Such training involves expenses such as travel, food, and lodging, as well as the cost of the training/education itself. It is only fair that officials be fully reimbursed for all such expenses directly related to the receipt of such training. Under current law, newly elected officials are not entitled to reimbursement for expenses incurred prior to taking office. This is unfair and the bill will remedy this problem.

Testimony Against: None.

Persons Testifying: (In support) Representative Dennis Flannigan, Prime Sponsor; Bill Vogler, Washington State Association of Counties; and Debbie Wilke, Washington Association of County Officials.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.