FINAL BILL REPORT
HB 3019

Brief Description: Clarifying the role of a chief financial officer in a charter county.

Sponsors: By Representatives Haigh, Alexander, Dunshee and B. Sullivan.

House Committee on Local Government
Senate Committee on Government Operations & Elections

Background:

The Washington Constitution (Constitution) allows for two forms of county government in this state: the commission form and the "home rule" charter form. The Constitution requires that all non-charter counties be governed by a board of county commissioners. A board of county commissioners shares administrative and some legislative functions with other independently elected county officials, including an auditor, clerk, treasurer, sheriff, assessor, and coroner.

Article XI, Section 4 of the Constitution was amended in 1948 to allow a county to adopt a "home rule" charter that allows the voters to create their own form of county government, subject to certain requirements. Within the limits prescribed by the Constitution, counties that adopt charters may appoint officers to perform the various governmental functions that are performed by elected officials in those counties that retain the commission form.

For the purposes of accounting and reporting on municipal corporations, each county auditor or chief financial officer is an ex officio deputy of the State Auditor. For the purposes of the ex officio duties, county auditors or chief financial officers are under the direction of the State Auditor and do not receive additional payment or compensation.

Summary:

The provision pertaining to the county auditor or chief financial officer as ex officio deputy state auditor is changed in two ways. First, the reference to "chief financial officer" is modified to refer to "financial officer." Second, county auditors or designated financial officers in charter counties are designated as ex officio deputy state auditors.

Votes on Final Passage:

   House   97   1
   Senate   49   0

Effective: June 7, 2006