
SENATE BILL 5667

State of Washington

59th Legislature

2005 Regular Session

By Senators Roach, Mulliken, Johnson, Hewitt, Honeyford, Sheldon and Schmidt

Read first time 02/01/2005. Referred to Committee on Government Operations & Elections.

1 AN ACT Relating to county auditors; amending RCW 29A.04.216 and
2 36.16.030; and creating a new section.

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

4 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The uniform application of election laws,
5 rules, and procedures is of the paramount importance to the citizens of
6 this state. It is the intent of the legislature to make the position
7 of county auditor, and of the chief elections official, however named,
8 in all counties an elective office. This act therefore applies to all
9 counties, including without limitation counties operating under a home
10 rule charter.

11 **Sec. 2.** RCW 29A.04.216 and 2004 c 271 s 104 are each amended to
12 read as follows:

13 The county auditor, as chief elections officer, of each county
14 shall be ex officio the supervisor of all primaries and elections,
15 general or special, and it shall be the county auditor's duty to
16 provide places for holding such primaries and elections; to appoint the
17 precinct election officers and to provide for their compensation; to
18 provide the supplies and materials necessary for the conduct of

1 elections to the precinct election officers; and to publish and post
2 notices of calling such primaries and elections in the manner provided
3 by law. The notice of a primary held in an even-numbered year must
4 indicate that the office of precinct committee officer will be on the
5 ballot. The auditor shall also apportion to each city, town, or
6 district, and to the state of Washington in the odd-numbered year, its
7 share of the expense of such primaries and elections. This section
8 does not apply to general or special elections for any city, town, or
9 district that is not subject to RCW 29A.04.321 and 29A.04.330, but all
10 such elections must be held and conducted at the time, in the manner,
11 and by the officials (with such notice, requirements for filing for
12 office, and certifications by local officers) as provided and required
13 by the laws governing such elections.

14 **Sec. 3.** RCW 36.16.030 and 1996 c 108 s 1 are each amended to read
15 as follows:

16 Except as provided elsewhere in this section, in every county there
17 shall be elected from among the qualified voters of the county a county
18 assessor, a county auditor, a county clerk, a county coroner, three
19 county commissioners, a county prosecuting attorney, a county sheriff
20 and a county treasurer, except that in each county with a population of
21 less than forty thousand no coroner shall be elected and the
22 prosecuting attorney shall be ex officio coroner. Whenever the
23 population of a county increases to forty thousand or more, the
24 prosecuting attorney shall continue as ex officio coroner until a
25 coroner is elected, at the next general election at which the office of
26 prosecuting attorney normally would be elected, and assumes office as
27 provided in RCW ((~~29.04.170~~)) 29A.20.040. In any county where the
28 population has once attained forty thousand people and a current
29 coroner is in office and a subsequent census indicates less than forty
30 thousand people, the county legislative authority may maintain the
31 office of coroner by resolution or ordinance. If the county
32 legislative authority has not passed a resolution or enacted an
33 ordinance to maintain the office of coroner, the elected coroner shall
34 remain in office for the remainder of the term for which he or she was
35 elected, but no coroner shall be elected at the next election at which
36 that office would otherwise be filled and the prosecuting attorney
37 shall be the ex officio coroner. In a county with a population of two

1 hundred fifty thousand or more, the county legislative authority may
2 replace the office of coroner with a medical examiner system and
3 appoint a medical examiner as specified in RCW 36.24.190. A noncharter
4 county may have five county commissioners as provided in RCW 36.32.010
5 and 36.32.055 through 36.32.0558.

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