

SENATE BILL REPORT

SHB 2416

As Reported by Senate Committee On:
Government Operations, Tribal Relations & Elections, February 23, 2012

Title: An act relating to equitable allocation of auditor costs.

Brief Description: Concerning equitable allocation of auditor costs.

Sponsors: House Committee on Local Government (originally sponsored by Representative Takko).

Brief History: Passed House: 2/13/12, 96-2.

Committee Activity: Government Operations, Tribal Relations & Elections: 2/23/12 [DP, DNP].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS, TRIBAL RELATIONS & ELECTIONS

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Pridemore, Chair; Prentice, Vice Chair; Swecker, Ranking Minority Member; Chase and Nelson.

Minority Report: Do not pass.

Signed by Senator Benton.

Staff: Sharon Swanson (786-7447)

Background: County auditors collect fees for the provision of their official services. Examples of services for which county auditors collect a fee include:

- preparing and certifying copies;
- administering an oath or taking an affidavit;
- recording plats; and
- searching records.

Currently, the statutorily set fee for searching records is \$8 per hour.

Summary of Bill: County auditors must collect the amount set for searching records per hour, up to the actual costs as established and conspicuously posted by the auditor.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

The actual cost may include employee costs such as salary and benefits but may not include general and administrative overhead costs. If the auditor has not determined the actual per hour costs for searching records, the fee is \$8 per hour.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: The rate that county auditors can charge has not been adjusted since 1985. The actual hourly cost of searching records is substantially higher than the currently set \$8.00 per hour. This bill will change the amount charged to reflect the actual cost and allow local governments to recover the costs of providing this service to private and commercial customers.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Jerry Pettit, Kittitas County Auditor; Monty Cobb, WA Assn. of County Officials.