

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## HB 1576

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As of April 1, 2013

**Title:** An act relating to creating greater efficiency in the offices of county assessors by allowing notification via electronic means.

**Brief Description:** Creating greater efficiency in the offices of county assessors by allowing notification via electronic means.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Springer, Kochmar, McCoy, Habib, Upthegrove, Fitzgibbon, Ryu, Maxwell, Riccelli and Moscoso.

**Brief History:** Passed House: 3/04/13, 98-0.

**Committee Activity:** Governmental Operations: 3/28/13.

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENTAL OPERATIONS

**Staff:** Sam Thompson (786-7413)

**Background:** County assessors must mail taxpayers notices regarding tax assessments and other tax administrative information.

**Summary of Bill:** When an assessor is required to send any assessment, notice, or other information to persons by regular mail, the assessor may instead provide the information electronically, if the person entitled to receive the information authorizes the assessor to do so. If the information is subject to confidentiality restrictions, the assessor must use methods to protect it from unauthorized disclosure, unless the taxpayer provides a waiver, which will continue until revoked by the taxpayer.

Electronic notice continues until revoked by the taxpayer. Electronic transmittal may be by electronic mail or other means reasonably calculated to apprise the person of the information provided. Information is deemed to be mailed and received on the date the assessor electronically sends it or electronically notifies the person that it is available for access.

Information compiled or possessed by the assessor to provide tax notices, including but not limited to taxpayer email addresses and passwords, is not subject to disclosure under the state Public Records Act.

**Appropriation:** None.

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*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.*

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

**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: This bill, an efficiency measure, will enable assessors to save costs on postage. The King County Assessor's Office currently mails several hundred thousand notices annually; many of these notices could be sent by email, upon request of taxpayers. Concerns about undeliverability of notices due to changes in taxpayer email addresses could be addressed by requiring taxpayers to agree to receive notices by postal mail if email is undeliverable.

**Persons Testifying:** PRO: Representative Springer, prime sponsor; Lloyd Hara, King County Assessor.