
Local Government Committee

HB 1013

Brief Description: Authorizing regular meetings of county legislative authorities to be held at alternate locations within the county.

Sponsors: Representatives Appleton, Johnson, Hansen and Takko.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Authorizes county legislative authorities to hold regular meetings at alternate locations within the county if doing so would support greater citizen engagement in local government.
- Specifies that the authority to hold regular meetings at alternate locations within the county may be exercised only on an infrequent and irregular basis.
- Establishes specific notification requirements for regular meetings held at alternate locations within the county.

Hearing Date: 1/13/15

Staff: Ethan Moreno (786-7386).

Background:

Washington counties provide regional services to all residents within their jurisdiction, including administering elections and furnishing judicial services, and a broader array of services to residents in unincorporated areas.

County legislative authorities are required to hold regular meetings at the county seat to transact any business required or permitted by law. Although the term "regular meeting" is not defined in statutory provisions governing counties, the Municipal Research and Services Center defines "regular meeting" as one that is held according to a schedule, adopted as appropriate, by the applicable public governing body.

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.

Contrary to the geographic limitations on regular meetings, county legislative authorities may hold special meetings (meetings that are not held according to an adopted schedule) at any location within the county if the agenda item or items are of unique interest or concern to the citizens of the area of the county in which the special meeting is to be held.

Summary of Bill:

County legislative authorities are authorized to hold regular meetings at alternate locations outside of the county seat, but within the county, if the legislative authority determines that holding a meeting at an alternate location would be in the interest of supporting greater citizen engagement in local government. This alternate location option may be exercised only on an infrequent and irregular basis.

At least 20 days before holding a regular meeting outside of the county seat, the county legislative authority must give notice of the meeting. At a minimum, the notice must be: (1) posted on the county's website; (2) published in a newspaper of general circulation in the county; and (3) sent via electronic mail (e-mail) to residents of the county who have chosen to receive notice by e-mail.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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