

# HOUSE BILL REPORT

## SB 6182

---

**As Reported by House Committee On:**  
Local Government

**Title:** An act relating to noncollection of taxes by county treasurers.

**Brief Description:** Addressing noncollection of taxes by county treasurers.

**Sponsors:** Senators Takko and Angel.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:**

Local Government: 2/20/18, 2/21/18 [DP].

**Brief Summary of Bill**

- Provides that a county treasurer can no longer be held liable for solely neglecting to collect taxes, however, willful refusal to collect taxes remains punishable.

---

### HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT

**Majority Report:** Do pass. Signed by 5 members: Representatives Appleton, Chair; McBride, Vice Chair; Griffey, Ranking Minority Member; Gregerson and Peterson.

**Minority Report:** Do not pass. Signed by 1 member: Representative Taylor.

**Staff:** Yvonne Walker (786-7841).

**Background:**

A county treasurer (treasurer) is the custodian of county money and the administrator of the county's financial transactions. The treasurer may also serve as the *ex officio* treasurer for a special purpose district (district), for example, a flood control district, irrigation district, or public utility district, and may provide financial services to districts and other units of local government. Treasurers have many duties enumerated in statute, which include receiving and disbursing money, issuing receipts for money received, and maintaining financial records reflecting receipts and disbursements.

---

*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.*

On receipt of the certification of the tax rolls from the county auditor, the county treasurer is responsible for notifying each taxpayer of the amount of real and personal property, the name of each tax and levy on such property, and any delinquent amount of tax due. All taxes due on real and personal property are due and payable to the treasurer. To avoid interest and penalties, at least one-half of the amount due must be paid by April 30 and the balance is due by October 31. Delinquent tax payments are subject to interest and penalties.

By the first Monday of February of each year, treasurers must provide a year-end report to the county auditor. The annual report must reflect the amount of taxes collected and uncollected as of December 31 of the prior year.

A treasurer who willfully refuses or neglects to collect taxes assessed upon personal property or file a list of those taxes that remain uncollected and delinquent can be held liable for the whole amount due of the uncollected taxes. The amount due of any such uncollected taxes must be deducted from the treasurer's salary and applied to the funds for which they were levied.

---

**Summary of Bill:**

A treasurer can no longer be held liable for solely neglecting to collect taxes; however, willfully refusing to collect taxes remains punishable.

---

**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.

**Staff Summary of Public Testimony:**

(In support) This legislation drops the word "neglect" from collecting personal property taxes. Sometimes it can take a long time to chase down a person who owns personal property and the taxes that they owe. Treasurers should not be held personally liable if: (1) they neglect to collect a personal property tax; or (2) they make a decision for the county where they do not want to spend county resources in excess of the tax amount. This bill will put the treasurers on the same footing as all the other county officials.

(Opposed) None.

**Persons Testifying:** Senator Takko, prime sponsor; Meredith Green, Kitsap County and Washington Association of County Treasurers; and Monty Cobb, Washington Association of County Treasurers.

**Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.**