

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1309

As Reported by House Committee On:
Finance

Title: An act relating to the dates of certification of levies.

Brief Description: Concerning the dates of certification of levies.

Sponsors: Representatives Eslick, Ramel, Paul and Lekanoff.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Finance: 1/26/21, 2/4/21 [DPS].

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Changes the date for county legislative authorities and taxing districts to certify the levy amount to the county assessor.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 17 members: Representatives Frame, Chair; Berg, Vice Chair; Walen, Vice Chair; Orcutt, Ranking Minority Member; Dufault, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Chase, Chopp, Harris-Talley, Morgan, Orwall, Ramel, Springer, Stokesbary, Thai, Vick, Wylie and Young.

Staff: Tracey O'Brien (786-7152).

Background:

Washington's property tax system is a "budget-based" property tax. Although subject to several restrictions, this means that counties and other taxing districts, as part of their annual budget process, must first establish the total dollar amount of property tax revenue they

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wish to generate for the upcoming year. The county legislative authority and taxing districts within the county must certify to the county assessor the amount of taxes to be levied upon the property for county purposes by November 30. Once the total dollar amount is established, the county assessor calculates the levy rate based on the total assessed value of all properties in the county or taxing district.

Summary of Substitute Bill:

The due date for a county legislative authority to certify the levy amount to the county assessor is changed to December 15. The due date for taxing districts to certify the levy amount to the county assessor is changed to the first Monday in December.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill:

The substitute bill aligns the changes in the certification of levies deadlines with the certification deadlines contained in the statute that provides when a county treasurer sends out tax statements.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available. New fiscal note requested on February 4, 2021.

Effective Date of Substitute Bill: 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 solves a tax code problem that allows some time between the due date for junior taxing districts and the certification of levies by the county legislative authority. A recent Attorney General Opinion disallows a previous work flow solution that allowed a county commission appointee to certify. This change applies to noncharter counties and was developed in consultation with county assessors. It is a quick technical fix that will make the process function as intended.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Representative Ramel; Trisha Logue, Skagit County; and Steven Drew, Washington State Association of County Assessors.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.