
HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 4426

State of Washington 54th Legislature 1996 Regular Session

By Representative D. Schmidt

Read first time 3-6-96.

1 WHEREAS, Counties were originally created as political and
2 administrative subdivisions of the state; and

3 WHEREAS, Counties provide services to all citizens within a county
4 on behalf of the state; and

5 WHEREAS, Recent enactments, including the Growth Management Act,
6 chapter 36.70A RCW, and the Local Service Agreement Act, chapter 36.115
7 RCW, have reenforced the role of counties as providers of regional
8 services within their boundaries and on a multicounty basis; and

9 WHEREAS, The process initiated by the Local Service Agreement Act
10 for determining how regional services should be delivered and funded in
11 the state's eight largest counties is underway; and

12 WHEREAS, The Local Service Agreement Act requires counties, cities,
13 and certain special districts to reach agreement on service delivery by
14 January 1, 1997, or they must submit reports to the legislature if they
15 are unable to reach agreement; and

16 WHEREAS, The Legislature requires either additional information to
17 evaluate the agreements, or reports in terms of the need to provide
18 services in the most efficient and cost-effective manner on the local
19 level, or both; and

20 WHEREAS, The Legislature recognizes that the Growth Management Act,
21 especially its provisions on urban growth areas and resulting

1 annexations and incorporations, may be undermining the long-term
2 financial ability of counties to continue providing regional services
3 on behalf of the state; and

4 WHEREAS, Devolution of federal responsibility to state government
5 will significantly affect counties as the state's primary agent on the
6 local level; and

7 WHEREAS, The Legislature recognizes that it is necessary for county
8 governments to be in a financial position to provide the services
9 required of them by the state and its citizens;

10 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, By the House of Representatives of
11 the State of Washington, the Senate concurring, That a Commission on
12 County Services and Resources, hereinafter referred to as the
13 Commission, be established to evaluate the current ability of county
14 government to maintain its status as both a regional service provider
15 and as an agent of the state; and

16 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That:

17 The Commission shall make a report to the Speaker of the House of
18 Representatives, the President of the Senate, and the Governor, no
19 later than December 31, 1996, that contains an analysis of and
20 recommendations on the following items:

21 (1) Services that county governments are required to provide under
22 state or federal law and current costs of those services in each
23 county;

24 (2) Services other than those in subsection (1) above currently
25 provided by one or more county governments and their respective costs
26 in the counties offering them;

27 (3) Services that county governments are authorized to provide
28 under state law but are not currently offered;

29 (4) Services that might be consolidated and offered on a regional
30 basis for greater efficiency, and their potential funding sources;

31 (5) Federal, state, and local revenues currently received by
32 counties, including taxes and fees;

33 (6) Identification of those county revenues that may be used at the
34 discretion of the county legislative authority, and those revenues that
35 are dedicated to specific uses;

36 (7) The effect of annexations and incorporations on the county tax
37 base;

38 (8) The relationship between the county tax base and the state's
39 tax base;

1 (9) As information becomes available, issues raised during the
2 process mandated by the Local Service Agreement Act, as well as
3 solutions developed through the process, that are likely to require
4 legislative action; and

5 (10) Other matters as the Commission may deem necessary; and

6 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That:

7 The Commission shall consist of voting members appointed as
8 follows:

9 (1) Four members of the Legislature, two appointed by the Speaker
10 of the House of Representatives, two appointed by the President of the
11 Senate, one from each caucus of the respective houses;

12 (2) Two members from the Office of Financial Management and the
13 Department of Community, Trade, and Economic Development;

14 (3) Four members from the Washington State Association of Counties,
15 appointed jointly by the Speaker of the House of Representatives and
16 the President of the Senate;

17 (4) Two members from the Association of Washington Cities,
18 appointed jointly by the Speaker of the House of Representatives and
19 the President of the Senate;

20 (5) One member from the Washington State Association of Sewer and
21 Water Districts, appointed jointly by the Speaker of the House of
22 Representatives and the President of the Senate;

23 (6) One member from the Washington State Fire Commissioners
24 Association, appointed jointly by the Speaker of the House of
25 Representatives and the President of the Senate; and

26 (7) The Lieutenant Governor, who shall serve as chair of the
27 Commission; and

28 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That staffing for the Commission shall be
29 provided by the finance committees of the House of Representatives and
30 the Senate, the Office of Financial Management, the Department of
31 Revenue, and the Washington State Association of Counties, with other
32 state agencies and local governments providing assistance as needed.

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