

SENATE BILL REPORT

SHB 2878

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Government Operations & Elections, February 20, 2004

Title: An act relating to making changes to county treasurer statutes.

Brief Description: Making changes to county treasurer statutes.

Sponsors: House Committee on Local Government (originally sponsored by Representatives Romero, Alexander and Hunt).

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Government Operations & Elections: 2/20/04 [DP].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS & ELECTIONS

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Roach, Chair; Berkey, Horn, Kastama and McCaslin.

Staff: Mac Nicholson (786-7445)

Background: The coroner must forward any unclaimed money or other property found upon a dead body to the county treasurer within 30 days. The treasurer may then sell the property (not the money) within 30 days upon reasonable public notice and place the proceeds to the credit of the county.

The county treasurer is authorized, for investment purposes, to combine the money of local governments that invest their money with the county. Amounts necessary to reimburse the treasurer's office for actual expenses incurred and the initial costs of establishing a county investment pool may be deducted.

A special permit must be issued for the movement of any mobile home or park model trailer that is assessed for purposes of property taxes. The permit is not valid until the county treasurer endorses that all property taxes which are a lien or are delinquent on the mobile home or park model trailer have been satisfied. The endorsement by the county treasurer is not required when the home or trailer is being moved between retail and sales outlets or when being moved to a disposal site by a landlord with a signed affidavit of destruction filed with the county assessor.

Summary of Bill: The coroner or medical examiner must deliver any unclaimed money found upon a dead body to the county treasurer within 30 days. Within 180 days of a death investigation, unclaimed personal property with no resale value may be disposed of by the coroner or medical examiner and all other unclaimed property must be forwarded to the applicable county agency to be sold at the next county surplus sale. Proceeds from the sale are forwarded to the county treasurer.

Investment pool fees must be used to run the pool and are used by the county treasurer as a revolving fund to defray the administrative cost without regard to budget limitations.

The county treasurer can remove from the tax rolls any outstanding taxes on a mobile home or park model trailer when the owner of the mobile home, or a property owner with an abandoned mobile home or trailer on it, files an affidavit of destruction with the county assessor.

It is clarified that the penalty for failure or refusal to list personal property is distributed in the same manner as other property tax interest and penalties. Language relating to tax liens on personal property is amended to clear up ambiguities arising from use of the word "priority." With regards to lien foreclosures, a county treasurer is responsible for paying only those water-sewer district liens that are "recorded," and any unclaimed excess proceeds are converted to the current expense fund if not claimed in three years.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Testimony For: This is just a technical bill that clarifies county treasurer responsibilities.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: PRO: Ron Strabbing, WA State Association of County Treasurers.