

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5732

As Passed Senate, March 10, 2007

Title: An act relating to restrictions on the county treasurer regarding receipting current year taxes.

Brief Description: Revising restrictions on the county treasurer regarding receipting current year taxes.

Sponsors: Senators Fraser, Swecker, Fairley, Haugen and Clements.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Government Operations & Elections: 2/20/07 [DP, w/oRec].
Passed Senate: 3/10/07, 47-0.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS & ELECTIONS

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Fairley, Chair; Oemig, Vice Chair; Roach, Ranking Minority Member; Kline, Pridemore and Swecker.

Minority Report: That it be referred without recommendation.

Signed by Senator Benton.

Staff: Sharon Swanson (786-7447)

Background: County treasurers operate under the authority of various state statutes relating to the receipt, processing, and disbursement of funds. County treasurers are the custodians of the county's money and the administrator of the county's financial transactions. In addition to his or her duties relating to county functions, the county treasurers provide financial services to special purpose districts and other units of local government, including receipt, disbursement, investment, and accounting of the funds of each of these entities. County treasurers are responsible for the collection of various taxes (including legal proceedings to collect past due amounts) and other miscellaneous duties, such as conducting bond sales and sales of surplus county property. Among a county treasurer's duties in collecting taxes is the establishment of the county's tax rolls. The treasurer's establishment of the yearly tax rolls is the prerequisite to the treasurer having the authority to levy and receive taxes. However, state law currently prohibits the treasurer from receiving tax payments or issuing tax receipts prior to the fifteenth day of February in the year the taxes are due, even if the tax rolls for that year are legally established prior to this date.

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.

Summary of Bill: A county treasurer may accept tax payments and issue receipts for such payments once he or she has completed the tax roll for the current year's collection and provided the requisite notification of the completion of the tax roll. A treasurer has the option of providing such notification either electronically, by posting a notice in the office, or through other written communication.

A county treasurer is no longer subject to the requirement that he or she not receive tax payments or issue tax receipts prior to the fifteenth day of February in the year the taxes are due.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: Currently, county treasurers are prohibited from receiving tax payments or issuing tax receipts prior to the fifteenth day of February in the year the taxes are due, even if the tax rolls for that year are legally established prior to that date. Removing this restriction will improve customer service and improve cash flow to the districts. Often the tax rolls are completed in early January and many people budget for their taxes. It will be much easier to have the flexibility to receive tax payments as soon as the treasurer is ready to receive them.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Robin Hunt, Thurston County Treasurer.