
HOUSE BILL 2258

State of Washington **69th Legislature** **2026 Regular Session**

By Representatives Parshley, Farivar, Reed, Zahn, Kloba, Scott, Doglio, and Fosse

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1 AN ACT Relating to authorizing cities and counties the ability to
2 levy a household excise tax for the operation, maintenance, and
3 capital needs of animal control and shelter systems owned,
4 contracted, or operated by a city, county, or animal service provider
5 organization; adding a new chapter to Title 82 RCW; creating a new
6 section; and providing an effective date.

7 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

8 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** (1) The legislature finds that an
9 increasing number of city and county-owned or contracted and operated
10 animal control and shelter systems in the state of Washington, as in
11 the nation, are finding that revenue from general funds and licensing
12 fees alone are insufficient to maintain animal control and shelter
13 systems that meet essential and community needs, resulting in service
14 reductions or elimination or impacts to other essential public
15 services.

16 (2) Therefore, it is the intent of the legislature to authorize
17 cities and counties to levy a household excise tax to assist in the
18 funding of animal control and shelter systems throughout the state.

19 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** (1) A city governing authority may by
20 ordinance or resolution impose a household excise tax for the

1 operation, maintenance, and capital needs of animal control and
2 shelter systems located within the city's jurisdiction and owned,
3 contracted, or operated by a city, county, or animal service provider
4 organization.

5 (2) A county governing authority may by ordinance or resolution
6 impose a household excise tax within the unincorporated areas of the
7 county for the operation, maintenance, and capital needs of animal
8 control and shelter systems that serve the unincorporated areas and
9 are owned, contracted, or operated by a city, county, or animal
10 service provider organization.

11 (3) A city or county governing authority may refer the ordinance
12 or resolution to the voters of the city or the unincorporated area of
13 a county before imposing the tax in this section.

14 (4) Any referendum petition to repeal a city or county ordinance
15 imposing the tax or altering the rate of the tax authorized in this
16 section must be filed with a filing officer, as identified in the
17 ordinance, within seven days of passage of the ordinance. Within 10
18 days, the filing officer must confer with the petitioner concerning
19 form and style of the petition, issue an identification number for
20 the petition, and write a ballot title for the measure. The ballot
21 title must be posed as a question so that an affirmative answer to
22 the question and an affirmative vote on the measure results in the
23 tax or tax rate increase being imposed and a negative answer to the
24 question and a negative vote on the measure results in the tax or tax
25 rate increase not being imposed. The petitioner must be notified of
26 the identification number and ballot title within this 10-day period.
27 After this notification, the petitioner must have 30 days in which to
28 secure on petition forms the signatures of not less than 15 percent
29 of the registered voters of the county for county measures, or not
30 less than 15 percent of the registered voters of the city for city
31 measures, and to file the signed petitions with the filing officer.
32 Each petition form must contain the ballot title and the full text of
33 the measure to be referred. The filing officer must verify the
34 sufficiency of the signatures on the petitions. If sufficient valid
35 signatures are properly submitted, the filing officer must submit the
36 referendum measure to the county or city voters at a general or
37 special election held on one of the dates provided in RCW 29A.04.321
38 as determined by the county legislative authority or city governing
39 authority, which election must not take place later than 120 days
40 after the signed petition has been filed with the filing officer.

1 (5) The tax must be levied and collected on every dwelling unit
2 or each parcel containing nonresidential property within the city or
3 in an unincorporated area of a county in an amount not to exceed
4 \$2.50 per household unit per month for the first five years of
5 enactment.

6 (6) After the first year of enactment, the city or county
7 governing authority may, by ordinance or resolution, annually
8 increase the maximum monthly rate if the governing authority finds
9 that an increase in revenue is necessary to maintain adequate funding
10 for the operation, maintenance, and capital needs of animal control
11 and shelter systems owned, contracted, or operated by a city, county,
12 or animal service provider organization. The increase is limited to
13 the lesser of the following:

14 (a) Two percent; or

15 (b) The percentage change in the implicit price deflator for
16 personal consumption expenditures for the United States as published
17 by the bureau of economic analysis of the federal department of
18 commerce published for the most recent 12-month period.

19 (7) Revenue from the tax imposed in this section must be used for
20 the operation, maintenance, and capital needs, including the payment
21 of bonds, of animal control and shelter systems owned, contracted, or
22 operated by a city, county, or animal service provider organization.

23 (8) For purposes of this section, the following definitions
24 apply:

25 (a) "Dwelling unit" means a residence containing living, cooking,
26 sleeping, and sanitary facilities.

27 (b) "Parcel" means any contiguous quantity of land in the
28 possession of, owned by, or recorded as the property of the same
29 claimant, person, or company.

30 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** Section 2 of this act constitutes a new
31 chapter in Title 82 RCW.

32 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 4.** This act takes effect January 1, 2027.

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