

the Courthouse Journal

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Washington Association of County Officials
Washington State Association of Counties

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Cause for Celebration!

As the sun sets on the final days of the legislative session, we can count **HB 2519** among our blessings. As amended and passed by the Senate 45-0 on Thursday afternoon, counties with populations less than 90,000 can now take law enforcement property tax levies to the voters and ask that they approve up to 50 cents per thousand dollars of assessed valuation to support county programs. Pacific County officials were instrumental in mustering support among counties and legislators in support of the proposal that was sponsored by Representative Brian Hatfield. Senator Mark Doumit sponsored the companion measure on the Senate side. **HB 2519** must now have concurrence from the House and will then travel to the Governor's desk. Many thanks for all the county officials for their support. Special thanks go to Sheriffs Didion, McCroskey and Whelan for

their lobbying efforts for WACO yesterday and to the bills' sponsors for their support of local government.

SB 6588 is a form of "legislative reincarnation." It no longer has a name of its own but breathes again as a technical fix to **SSB 5168**, which passed the House this week. All of the nonsubstantive fixes to the collection of legal financial obligations of county clerks in last session's **SB 5990**, were revived in the House Judiciary Committee and amended into **SSB 5168**, another bill dealing with lowering the interest on the same obligations. **SSB 5168** now allows the court to waive or reduce interest; clarifies provisions for completion of the sentence; and, allows the clerk to set payments and access employment security records to verify employment and see wage assignments.

State Senate Passes Modified Blanket Primary Bill – Hearing Held in House

Tuesday evening, the State Senate passed **ESB 6453**, enacting a qualifying primary by a vote of 28-20. This bill, endorsed by the Secretary of State, advances the top two vote-getters in the primary to the general election ballot, regardless of party affiliation. This morning (Friday), the House State Government Committee heard testimony on **ESB 6453**, as well as **HB 3212**, a new version of the Modified Montana Primary. The Democratic, Republican and Libertarian parties weighed in heavily against **ESB 6453** and in unified support of **HB 3212**. Over a dozen county auditors were present at the hearing. Legislative co-chairs Pat McCarthy, Pierce County, and Kim Wyman, Thurston County testified, as well as Karen Flynn, Kitsap County and Greg

Kimsey, Clark County. See the auditors' press release on page 4 for further information on the auditors' views of the proposals before the legislature. Time was short and many of those who had signed up to testify were not called forward. Chair Kathy Haigh announced that the hearing would continue on Monday morning at 8:00 a.m. County commissioners present to testify as to the enormous fiscal consequences of the Modified Montana Primary compared with the other proposal were Mike Shelton, Island County and Chris Endresen, Kitsap County, who did not get a chance to speak to the committee before adjournment. The bills and reports can be viewed on www.wa.leg.gov.

Budget, Finance and Taxes

The Courthouse Journal

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We welcome your suggestions and contributions. The weekly deadline is noon Wednesday.

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ESHB 1869 Dies in Senate Ways & Means

Representative Jim McIntire's bill that would create a citizen commission to develop a schedule for review of tax preferences such as exemptions, exclusions, deductions, credits, deferrals, and preferential rates appears to have died in Senate Ways & Means this week. The bill, very much like the Assessor priority bill asking for review of property tax exemptions, would have required the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Committee (JLARC) to conduct actual reviews of tax preferences.

The Assessors' House bill (**SHB 3063**) passed the House Finance Committee with a do pass recommendation, but died in House Rules. The Senate version, **SB 6468**, failed to even get a hearing in the Senate Government Operations and Elections Committee.

Assessor Priority Bills Both Move Forward

Congratulations to all the Assessors who worked so hard on the passage of **SSB 6216**, incidental use of timberland and **SSB 6581** changing the multi-parcel exemption for fire patrol. Both measures have passed the House & Senate Floors and are on their way to the Governor for signature. Many Assessors were instrumental in the passage of this legislation. Thanks to all who came to Olympia to testify, contacted your members at various times and offered general moral support. If anyone is interested in coming to Olympia for the bill signing with Governor Locke, please let WACO know.

Finance Moves Indian Tribe Exemption

SHB 1322 exempts property owned by a federally recognized Indian tribe and used for essential government services from property tax. The bill had a hearing in House Finance Thursday,

March 4 and passed out of Committee with a do pass recommendation. The vote was 8 yea, 1 nay. The bill defines essential government services to mean tribal administration, public facilities, fire, police, public health, education, sewer, water, environmental and land use, transportation, and utility services.

The companion bill in the Senate, **SB 6349**, failed to move out of Ways & Means on Monday, March 1.

Tax Increment Finance Improvements Move to Rules

House Finance Committee Chair Jim McIntire (D-King County) this week moved E3SSB 5364 to Rules to allow for continued discussions on tax increment finance improvements with Senator Zarelli (R-Clark County). There are efforts being made to bridge the differences between the McIntire version and the Zarelli version and perhaps include provisions important to Rep. Sharon Tomiko Santos (D-King County). The measure is referenced in the Budget and, therefore, exempt from the traditional cutoff rules.

Treasury Management Bill passes

The county treasury management bill, **SHB 2878** (Treasurers/WACO priority), passed the Senate Wednesday afternoon, 46-0. One amendment was adopted that was originally a technical change in another bill, but should cause no controversy when the bill goes back to the House for concurrence.

NOTE: Legislative Committee schedules and agendas can be found at <http://www.leg.wa.gov/wsladm/calendar.cfm>

Task Force on Local Programs Test Information Collection Tool

The Emergency Management Council's Task Force on Local Programs is testing a data collection instrument that will be used to gather information from local and tribal governments regarding their emergency management programs. The Task Force is attempting to look at emergency management as a statewide system. While the survey asks questions regarding local emergency management programs, the results will be used to paint a picture of the health of the statewide emergency management system in Washington.

Thank you to those counties, cities and tribes who have volunteered to test the draft survey:

- City of Kent
- City of Renton
- City of Wenatchee
- City and County of Spokane
- Mason County
- Pend Oreille County
- Stevens County
- Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation
- Port Gamble S'Klallam Tribe
- Suquamish Tribe

These jurisdictions are completing the survey and providing valuable feedback that will be used in the instrument's final edit. Beginning in early March, the Task Force will be visiting each of the nine homeland security regions to introduce the finalized data collection tool to the state.

If you have questions regarding the Task Force on Local Programs, or would like to know when the Task Force will be in your community, please visit www.EMCTaskforce.org or telephone Nicole Simpkinson, Project Director, at (360) 753-1886.

Roundup of Civil Liability Bills

Even after the official death last Friday of the omnibus tort reform bill (ESSB 5728) in House Judiciary

Committee, supporters have continued to work for a possible resurrection. As the session enters its final week, such a recovery appears to be highly unlikely.

Nevertheless, two liability bills supported by WSAC remain viable. **HB 2485**, which lowers the interest rate on tort judgments, and **ESHB 2779**, related to employment reference checks, are in the Senate Rules Committee, and have votes to pass if they can be brought to the floor. County officials who support these bills should continue to contact legislators by telephone and email and ask them to bring these bills to the floor and pass them as amended by the Senate committees.

In addition, **SSB 5732** which limits liability for county Area Agencies on Aging, is on the House floor calendar. Please contact House members and ask them to pass this bill.

Sex Crimes Bill A Multi-Million-Dollar Unfunded Mandate

In its current form, **SHB 2400** would add significantly to county costs for prosecuting, defending and jailing certain first-time sex offenders. The bill is on the House floor. WSAC is asking for an amendment that would make the bill null and void unless the Legislature funds the expected increase in county costs. County officials are encouraged to reiterate this message to legislators, both in the House and Senate.

The bill amends the Special Sex Offender Sentencing Alternative (SSOSA), which is an alternative to prison that combines a shorter sentence with treatment for first-time offenders who meet a variety of other eligibility criteria.

SHB 2400 would increase the minimum jail term from 0-6 months to a standard 12 months for all SSOSA participants. The bill also would lead to fewer plea agreements and more trials, which would drive up costs for prosecution, defense, and other court-related activities. The local government fiscal note estimates a statewide impact of \$1.5 million in 2005, \$4.96 million in 2005-'07, and \$6.5 million in 2007-'09.

The court fiscal note adds an additional \$1.38 million in 2005-'07 and \$984,000 in 2007-'09.

The underlying bill, **HB 2400**, would have virtually eliminated SSOSA and shifted the cost to state prison, although it still would have significantly increased local prosecution, defense and court costs due to increased demand for trials.

County Auditors Release Statement on Primary Legislation

County Auditors from around the state met in Olympia Wednesday and released the following statement regarding pending legislation that will determine how the state's new primary election system will be conducted.

The Washington State Association of County Auditors believes that the most important considerations in selecting a new primary for our state are:

- Ensuring adequate opportunity to thoroughly educate voters and inform them of what to expect when they show up to vote in September;
- Making sure that in establishing a new primary system, voters are not disenfranchised by additional requirements or complicated instructions that result in ballots – or portions of ballots – being invalidated; and
- Guarding against costly and complicated processes that could lead to decreased participation and/or increased distrust in the electoral process.

After reviewing the existing proposals currently before the House of Representatives, the position of the Auditors' Association is that, at this time, only two of the proposals adequately meet this criteria – the Modified Blanket (also referred to as the Qualifying or Top Two) Primary and the Open/Private Choice Primary (also referred to as the Montana Primary).

Auditors expressed great concerns with the Modified Montana proposal – a hybrid of the Montana and Arizona models, which was proposed and debated on the Senate floor yesterday. As written, that proposal would require that the primary be conducted entirely by mail and would require as many as four different ballot formats presented to voters at the time of voting. Such a system would be costly and confusing and would likely result in decreased voter turnout.

The Association, which represents

the chief election official from each county, reiterated its commitment to work with legislative leaders to develop a primary system that meets the criteria noted above.

“What's most important is that we adopt a primary that can be administered with integrity and that provides the greatest opportunity for all voters to participate,” said Suzanne Sinclair, Island County Auditor and President of the Association. “We remain committed to assisting the legislature in accomplishing that.”

Secretary of State Holds Press Conference

Secretary of State Sam Reed held a press conference today (Friday), calling for support for the modified blanket primary, and urged legislators to act quickly to pass **ESB 6453**. The Senate has passed the bill and a House vote is still pending. He was joined by several county auditors, the State Grange, Senators Roach, Hale and Hargrove, Representatives Jarrett and Kessler, a representative of Lt. Governor Brad Owen, Commissioner of Public Lands Doug Sutherland, and several others. Attached to this copy of the Courthouse Journal is the Secretary of State's press release.

Environment, Land Use and Resources

Electronic Waste Recycling Bill Still Moving

ESHB 2488 has passed the Senate on a vote of 48-0. The Senate amended the original house bill which passed 94-0. The current bill is a study bill which directs the Department of Ecology, in consultation with the solid waste advisory committee (SWAC), to conduct research and develop recommendations for implementing and financing an electronic product collection, recycling, and reuse program. DOE and the SWAC shall consult with stakeholders. The study shall identify and evaluate existing projects and encourage new pilot projects for covered electronic product collection, recycling, and reuse that allow for new information to be obtained. The evaluation will consider: a) urban versus rural recycling challenges and issue; b) the involvement of covered electronic manufacturers; c) difference methods of financing the collection, reuse, and recycling programs for covered electronic products; d) the impact of the approach on local governments, nonprofit organizations, waste haulers, and other stakeholders; e) how to address historic and orphan waste; and the effect of landfill bans on collection and recovery of covered electronic products.

The Senate amendments removed the intent language and most of the definitions; adds a second report in December of 2005; defines "covered electronic products" as only referring to personal computers, monitors and televisions sold to consumers for personal use; adds subsections that clarify that the report and recommendations are to also address the need and develop recommendations for electronic waste collection, reuse, and recycling services, and financing options for charities, school districts, government agencies, and small businesses; and special consideration is to be given to the costs incurred by charitable organizations receiving unwanted electronic products and possible pilot projects and other waste collection systems that could be developed to address these products and cost related to disposal.

There is general support for the bill by the stakeholders and it is rumored that the House will go along with the Senate amendments.

ESHB 3054 – Tire Recycling Bill – Senate Changes to a Study Bill

The Senate Highways and Transportation Committee amended **ESHB 3054** from a bill that reinstates the \$1.00 fee on the sale of tires for purposes of encouraging the proper disposal of waste tires and increasing tire recycling to a study bill. The study bill directs the Department of Ecology to convene the Used Tire Management Council (consisting of stakeholders including county government) to present a report to the Legislature by December 1, 2004. The report must include a) the sources of used tires in Washington State; b) how many used tires are accounted for and an estimate of used tires that are unaccounted for; c) the locations of used tire piles that are in need of cleanup, including legacy piles existing for many years; d) the approximate cost of cleaning up the used tire piles; e) the ultimate destination currently of used vehicle tires generated in the state; f) a recommendation of how to maximize the counting and ultimate of used tires; g) recommendations on how to discourage and eliminate the monetary gain by individuals to collect used tires and store them for profit; h) recommendations on the best ways to cost-effectively maximize the reuse, recycling, or processing of used tires in lieu of land-filling; i) recommendations on priorities for cleanup of existing used tire piles; j) recommendations on how to fund the cleanup of used tire piles; k) recommendations on whether there is a need to regulate individuals or firms that collect, transport, process, or land-fill used tires, and if regulations are recommended, the type of regulations proposed; and l) information and recommendations regarding pyrolysis treatment.

State Land Acquisition Bills Move Forward

The land acquisition bills remain in play as of Friday morning. **HB 2275** and **SB 6082** amend the Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program (WWRP) in significant ways and are shifting targets in the House and Senate. The WWRP, established 10 years ago in the Capital Budget, has typically dedicated \$40 to \$50 million a biennium for land acquisition for habitat and for recreational purposes.

Both bills will allow counties to join state agencies in applying for habitat conservation funds. Whether a new fund category for riparian protection (open to state and local agencies) is created is one of the issues in contention. The proposed new fund category for farmland preservation has been dropped from both bills. The bills also increase opportunities for local input into WWRP acquisitions, requiring for instance, consistency with local comprehensive plans, and require state agency payment in lieu of taxes and noxious weed payments on WWRP acquisitions. In discussion is a new provision that would increase the voice of counties with 70% or more public land in promoting or discouraging specific land purchases.

SB 6242 directs the Inter Agency Committee on Outdoor Recreation to inventory state agency land purchases for habitat and develop a strategic plan for habitat acquisition and disposal, taking into account existing state, federal and local lands and land dedicated to habitat purposes that is owned by non-profit organizations. It is on the House Floor awaiting action.

Governor Locke Signs Executive Order to Establish Biodiversity Council

Governor Locke this week signed an Executive Order to create a comprehensive state strategy to protect Washington's biological heritage. Washington is one of the most biologically rich states in the country. It is the permanent or temporary home to 140 mammal species, 470 freshwater and saltwater fish species, 341 species of

birds, 150 other vertebrate species, 3,100 vascular plant species and more than 20,000 invertebrate species. The state contains most of the major ecosystems found in the Western U.S.

“We risk losing much of this biological heritage unless we design a strategy now for its protection, not just for ourselves, but for the generations to come,” Locke said. “If we don’t step up, we will also face more and more endangered species listings and more economic and social disruption. Doing nothing is not an option.”

The council will consist of 23 members who represent a broad cross section of the state, including agriculture, ranching, forestry, business, conservation organizations, and local and tribal governments. The governor directed that the Washington Biodiversity Council coordinate the development of the comprehensive biodiversity strategy with the work of the Governor’s Sustainable Washington Advisory Panel.

The executive order also directs the council to perform several additional tasks, including the design of a stewardship incentive program that is based on a voluntary, non-regulatory approach, and the development of a strong public education program. The council is to issue a report and its recommendations to the governor and Legislature by Dec. 31, 2007.

“Natural areas, healthy forests, and clean waterways that we manage are important parts of Washington’s biodiversity,” said Doug Sutherland, state commissioner of public lands. “We are excited about working with the governor on this project that protects Washington’s environment and economic health.”

Last fall, the Washington Biodiversity Conservation Strategy Report was issued by a committee co-chaired by Clallam County Commissioner Steve Tharinger. A key recommendation in the report was the creation of a state biodiversity council through an executive order.

The full report of the committee is available at:
<http://www.iac.wa.gov/Documents/IAC/>

[Special Projects/Biodiversity/BiodiversityStrategyReport.pdf](#).

Ecology Opens Applications for Coastal Zone Management Grants

The Department of Ecology is accepting applications for Coastal Zone Management grants.

Projects for comprehensive local shoreline master programs within the 15 coastal counties will receive first consideration.

To be considered, applications must be postmarked or hand delivered by 4:30 p.m. Tuesday, March 16, 2004. For more information, click on www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/sea/grants/czm.

Three Human Services Budget Provisos Need Support

There are three budget provisos in the human services area that need support by WSAC members and county human services departments. They are:

1. **Mental Health:** Amend the House budget proviso on downsizing to require using the current census number of 642 including the PALS beds and add it to the Senate version of the budget.
2. **Washington Medicaid Integration Partnership:** While appreciative of the existing provisos delaying implementation of the Medicaid Integration Project, adopt the proposed Snohomish County alternative proviso for the Washington Medicaid Integration Project which allows the integration of the primary medical care, hospital care, pharmaceutical drugs and durable medical equipment services to go into effect as originally planned, but delays integrating human services such as mental health, substance abuse, developmental disabilities, and long-term care for 3-5 years with intermediate benchmark dates. It also creates an Implementation Steering Committee including local government, the tribes, NorthSound Mental Health Administration, the Area Agency on Aging, clients or their advocates, services providers and DSHS representatives to guide the planning and implementation of an integrated health care service network.
3. **Development Disabilities:** Amend the existing proviso in both budgets regarding \$1 million in funding which gives priority to employment programs for recent high school graduates to read:

“Funding is provided solely for employment opportunities and assistance needed after high school graduation for

young adults with developmental disabilities who are not currently on the waiver and who were born between September 1, 1981 and August 30, 1983.”

Please contact your representatives and senators and educate them on the value of these amended provisos in the final version of the budget. If you have any questions, please contact WSAC staff, Jean Wessman.

Bills Still Alive of Importance to Human Services

The final cutoffs from the fiscal and policy committees of both houses have now passed. There are a number of bills of interest in the human services area that are still alive and pending passage from the full house or senate.

These include: **SHB 2329** relating to mental health treatment for minors which has had some concern expressed regarding the Senate amendment and work is being done to further amend this bill to make it satisfactory to all the stakeholders; **ESHB 2460**, relating to providing bare bones health insurance for small employers which authorizes plans to exclude mental health and substance abuse treatment; **HB 2663**, which requires the use of respectful language in statutes dealing with persons with disabilities; **E2SSB 5216**, relating to allowing one mental health professional to complete competency evaluations in local jails; **SB 5869**, authorizing non-profit corporations to either self-insure or join together to form joint purchasing arrangements for health insurance much like local governments; **2SSB 6017** establishing time limits for persons on General Assistance-Unemployable; **SSB 6105** requiring mental health evaluations for youth found guilty of certain animal cruelty offenses; **SB 6213**, tweaking the mental health advance directives bill from last year; **E2SSB 6274**, regarding the conditions for competency restorations for persons who have inflicted “serious harm”; **E2SSB 6358**, relating to communication between jails, treatment providers, and DOC for those under DOC supervision and/or court-order

treatment; **SSB 6442** creating the developmental disabilities trust fund and authorizing the lease of excess state property at Yakima Village, Rainier, and Lakeland Village, requiring the profits from the lease to be expended for employment and day programs; and **SSB 6615**, requiring the state Department of Labor and Industries to set up a “preferred employee” program encouraging employment of persons with developmental disabilities.

Final cutoff for most of these bills to pass out of the opposite house is Friday, March 5 at 5:00 PM.

Mental Health Parity Appears Dead in Senate Ways and Means

(Excerpted from the Seattle Weekly, March 3, 2004)

The Chair of the Senate Ways and Means Committee, Sen. Joe Zarelli (R-Ridgefield) decided **HB 1828**, mental health parity, did not warrant a hearing in his committee so it was not passed to the full Senate and died. According to members of both the Republican and Democratic Senate caucuses, the bill would have passed if it had made it to the floor and Governor Locke would have signed it, his office said.

The Washington Coalition for Insurance Parity however, was buoyed by how far the bill got this year. Earlier versions of the bill have failed to clear even one house.

Under Washington law, it is legal for insurers to provide two-tiered coverage, one for treatment of the body, another for mental health. Under this system, visits to a doctor or therapist can be limited to as few as six per year and co-payments often are ten times that of those for standard medical treatment. But thirty-eight other states have passed similar mental health parity legislation including Arkansas and Alabama.

The consensus of scientific opinion in the US is that mental illnesses are, in fact, physical ones. In 2002, a federal court judge in Washington, DC, ruled that bipolar disorder, “the second most common mental illness behind depression” meets the legal definition of

Public Health and Human Services (continued)

a physical illness. **HB 1828** stated in its intent section “that the costs of leaving mental disorders untreated or under-treated are significant and often include: decreased job productivity, loss of employment, increased disability costs, deteriorating school performance, increased use of other health services, treatment delays leading to more costly treatments, suicide, family breakdown and impoverishment, and institutionalization, whether in hospitals, juvenile detention, jails, or prisons.”

The experience of states with parity laws and of the federal government, which has insurance parity for federal employees, is that costs barely increase and that employers don’t yank insurance plans, according to the American Psychological Association.

In 2001 there was organized opposition to the bill from insurance companies and business groups. This year however, there was no organized opposition to **HB 1828**. Even large insurers like Group Health Cooperative and Premera Blue Cross were silent. There was however, apparently silent opposition in the Senate.

The Coalition will bring the bill back again next year. WSAC has taken a position supporting mental health parity.

Good Things

Skamania County Celebrates 150 Years

Skamania County celebrates its 150th Birthday on March 9, 2004. A public celebration will be held at the Columbia Gorge Interpretive Center Museum, in Stevenson, Washington from 4pm - 6pm. Citizens, former county officials, and many others have been invited to attend.

In 1854, Cascades, a portage near the present city of North Bonneville, was one of the first four settlements in

Washington Territory. In the old quartermaster's residence at Ft. Cascades, Skamania County first came into existence.

All those attending will be greeted with song, the firing of the historical cannon, refreshments and cake, plus receive a commemorative coin marking this special date. David Nacandri, Director of the Washington States Historical Society will be the guest speaker. Historical images and newsprint will be on display plus all entries to the essay contest, 'How I envision Skamania

County in 150 years'.

Skamania County encouraged grades K-6 students to participate in the contest. The winner will receive 150 silver dollars.

Courthouse Ramblings

Larry Shelley, Walla Walla County Assessor, is at home recovering from treatments for lung cancer. Be assured

that he is in good spirits, is making progress and would love to hear from you if you get a chance. Get well wishes

can be sent to Larry at: 210 Glen Erin Drive, Walla Walla, WA. 99362.

Scholarships Countdown!

County elected officials and employees who have students in their families take note!

The Washington Counties' Scholarship Fund is offering five \$2,500 awards to children of county employees who will be enrolled full-time during the 2004/2005 school year in a baccalaureate program, associate degree program or vocational/technical certification program.

Complete information and applications are available on the Counties' webpage - http://www.wacounties.org/ScholarshipProgram/Scholarship_Program.htm or call the WACO office at (360) 753-7319 or the WSAC office at (360) 753-1886. Detailed information on requirements and the application process are provided directly on the Scholarship Application.

All kids striving for a good education could use a boost! Money gets tighter every year and they will need every bit of help they can get – so, remind them to apply now, because applications must be postmarked **no later than April 5, 2004.**

Good luck to all!

Calendar of Events

<i>Meeting</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Information</i>
2004			
WA State Association of County Auditors Recording Conference	Sun Mountain	March 16 - 18	(360) 753-7319
Association of County Human Services Meetings	Pierce County	March 17 - 19	(360) 753-1886
WA Counties Insurance Pool Board Meeting	Red Lion Yakima Gateway, Yakima	March 18	(360) 586-0466
WA Counties Insurance Fund Board Meeting	Red Lion Yakima Gateway, Yakima	March 18	(360) 586-0466
Insurance Advisory Committee Full Membership Meeting	CANCELLED	March 18	(360) 586-0466
WA State Property Records Education Partners (PREP) Meeting	Sun Mountain Lodge, Winthrop	March 19	(360) 753-7319
WA County Administrative Association Annual Conference	Leavenworth	March 24 - 26	(360) 397-2232
WA State Association of Counties - Eastern District Meeting	Campbell's Resort, Chelan	April 8 - 9	(360) 753-1886
ACE Committee (Payroll & HR)	Yakima Convention Center	April 14	(360) 586-0466
WA Counties Risk Pool Risk Managers Roundtable	Icicle Inn, Leavenworth	April 14	(360) 586-7447
WA Counties Risk Pool Spring Board Meeting	Icicle Inn, Leavenworth	April 15	(360) 586-7447
WA Association of Prosecuting Attorneys Spring Training Program	WestCoast Ridpath Hotel, Spokane	April 21-23	(360) 753-2175
WA State Association of Counties Western District Meeting	Heathman Lodge, Vancouver	April 22 - 23	(360) 753-1886
Association of County Human Services Meetings	Chelan County	May 19 - 21	(360) 753-1886
WA Association of Prosecuting Attorneys/ Support Enforcement Project Annual Training Symposium	Best Western Lakeway Inn, Bellingham	May 3 - 7	(360) 753-3953
WA State Association of Police Chiefs Spring Conference	Yakima Convention Center, Yakima	May 24 - 27	(360) 486-2380
WA Association of Prosecuting Attorneys District Court Training Program	Icicle Inn, Leavenworth	June 3-4	(360) 753-2175
WA State Association of County Assessors Annual Conference	Hallmark Inn, Moses Lake	June 14-16	(360) 753-7319
WA State Association of County Auditors' Annual Conference	Lakeway Inn, Bellingham	June 16 - 18	(360) 753-7319
WA Association of Prosecuting Attorneys Summer Training Program	Campbell's Lodge, Lake Chelan	June 23-25	(360) 753-2175
National Sheriffs' Association	Seattle	June 26 - 30	www.sheriffs.org
County Clerk's Association 2004 Summer Conference	North Bonneville Hot Springs Resort, Skamania	June 22 - 25	(360) 753-7319
County Treasurer's Association 2004 Summer Conference	Heathman Lodge, Vancouver	June 22 - 25	(360) 753-7319

Calendar of Events (continued)

WA State Association of Counties 98 th Annual Summer Convention	Pierce County, Sheraton, Tacoma	June 22 - 25	(360) 753-1886
IACREOT 33 rd Annual Conference	San Antonio, TX	July 15-24	
NACo Annual Conference	Maricopa County, Phoenix, AZ	July 16 - 20	www.naco.org
Association of County Human Services Meetings	Kittitas County	July 21 - 23	(360) 753-1886
WA Counties Risk Pool Annual Board Meeting	Shilo Inn, Ocean Shores	July 22	(360) 586-7447
WA Counties Risk Pool Summer Conference	Shilo Inn, Ocean Shores	July 20 - 22	(360) 586-7447
WA Counties Insurance Pool Rate Setting Meeting	Wyndham Gardens, SeaTac	August 19	(360) 586-0466
Association of County Human Services Meetings	Grays Harbor County	September 15 - 17	(360) 753-1886
WA Counties Insurance Pool Board Meeting	Radisson Hotel, SeaTac	September 16	(360) 586-0466
WA Counties Insurance Fund	Radisson Hotel, SeaTac	September 16	(360) 586-0466
Insurance Advisory Committee	Radisson Hotel, SeaTac	September 16	(360) 586-0466
County & Regional Planning Directors/City Planning Directors Joint Conference	Campbell's Resort, Chelan	September 14 - 17	www.geocities.com/wsacrpdc
WACO/WSAC Joint Fall Conference	Spokane	October 4 - 8	(360) 753-7319
ACE Committee (Payroll & HR)	Yakima Convention Center	October 13	(360) 586-0466
WA Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs Fall Conference	Shilo Inn, Ocean Shores	November 15 - 18	(360) 486-2380
Association of County Human Services Meetings	Spokane County	November 17 - 19	(360) 753-1886
WA Counties Insurance Fund 2005 Budget Meeting	Red Lion at Columbia Center, Kennewick	November 18	(360) 586-0466
WA Association of Prosecuting Attorneys Winter Meeting & Banquet	Crowne Plaza Hotel, Seattle	December 9-10	(360) 753-2175
2005			
NACo Legislative Conference	Marriot Wardman Park Hotel, Washington, DC	March 3 - 4	www.naco.org
WA Association of Prosecuting Attorneys Support Staff Training Program	WestCoast Ridpath Hotel, Spokane	May 11-13	(360) 753-2175
WA State Association of Police Chiefs Spring Conference	WestCoast Wenatchee Center Hotel, Wenatchee	May 23 - 26	(360) 486-2380
WSAC 99 th Annual Summer Convention	WestCoast Hotel at Columbia Center, Kennewick	June 13 - 16	(360) 753-1886
WA Association of Prosecuting Attorneys Summer Conference & Training Program	Campbell's Lodge, Lake Chelan	June 22 - 24	(360) 753-2175
IACREOT 34th Annual Conference	New York, NY	June 28-July 8	

Calendar of Events (continued)

NACo Annual Conference (City & County of Hawaii)	Honolulu, HI	July 15 - 19	www.naco.org
County & Regional Planning Directors/City Planning Directors Joint Conference	Campbell's Resort, Chelan	September 13 - 16	www.geocities.com/wsacrpdpd
WACO/WSAC Joint Fall Conference	Ocean Shores	October 3 - 7	(360) 753-7319
2006			
WA State Association of Counties 100 th Annual Summer Convention	Whatcom County, Bellingham	June / TBD	(360) 753-1886
IACREOT 35th Annual Conference	San Francisco, CA	July 2-7	
NACo Annual Conference	Denver, CO	July 21 - 26	www.naco.org
2007			
NACo Annual Conference (Sponsored by the counties in the Metropolitan Richmond Area)	Richmond, VA	TBD	www.naco.org
IACREOT 36th Annual Conference	Charlotte, NC	July 14-22	

Bipartisan Group Urges Passage of Modified Blanket Primary

NEWS RELEASE www.secstate.wa.gov

Issued: March 05, 2004

OLYMPIA...Secretary of State Sam Reed, the Grange, and a bipartisan group of County Auditors and legislators today urged quick passage of the modified blanket primary, the system already used in the state of Washington every other year.

"The primary debate has reached the 11th hour," said Secretary of State Sam Reed. "It presents legislators with an opportunity to show their constituents they truly represent the will of the people. The citizens of Washington have made it abundantly clear the modified blanket primary is the system they want. This vote is that simple."

In a modified blanket primary, the top two vote-getters advance to the general election regardless of party. In this style primary, people can vote for the person, not the party. Their political party affiliation is kept private and every vote counts.

"I have advocated this approach for years because it fits the political culture of Washington and eight out of ten citizens support it," said Reed. "And as the chief elections officer, I will only support a proposal that protects the integrity of the primary itself. Many don't."

Reed cautions against other proposals like the modified Montana system because they give the political parties more control over the primary and allow them to change the rules from year to year.

"That kind of variation could confuse voters, hurt turnout, and wreak havoc on the administration of the primary," warned Reed. "We've all witnessed the consequences of an election debacle. We have a proud record of elections administration in this state and I will fight to keep it."

Further, the Modified Montana proposal violates all four of Reed's fundamental principles for Washington's new primary. According to Reed, Washington's new system must:

- Allow citizens to vote for the person not the party;
- Protect the privacy of all voters in terms of their party preferences;
- Ensure that every vote counts; and
- Be administratively workable.

Efforts are underway up and down the West Coast to adopt a similar primary.

Voters in California have raised more than \$2 million in an effort to adopt a "top-two" primary by initiative.

As of August 2002, nearly 75 percent of Californians supported this kind of primary.

A number of key people led by the Oregon Progress Forum are proposing that state adopt a "top-two" primary. There is talk of running an initiative on the November ballot or introducing legislation in 2005.