Local Revenue Scrum Continues

As The Courthouse Journal goes to press, legislative committees are considering a wide variety of local government revenue options. Early next week WSAC will send out a summary of bills with potential revenue consequences for counties. Individual counties continue to pursue optional sales taxes, utility taxes, and state tax credits or distributions. Cities are proposing sales tax options, utility tax options, use of the unused state school levy, and use of unused county tax capacity. A number of taxing entities are looking for mechanisms that permit property tax lid lifts to work for more than one year.

Few legislators are willing to discuss statewide imposition of taxes to fund local government. Almost every legislator supporting local option taxes insists that these options will require a vote of the people. The revenue discussion will continue to operate in a vacuum until legislative budget proposals are on the table.

In addition to proposals to increase local revenues, businesses continue to push for tax exemptions, arguing that they need a break. Many of these exemptions will mean further revenue losses for local government.

Preliminary February State Economic Forecast Remains Glum

Chang Mook Sohn, the Executive Director of the State Economic and Revenue Forecast Council, released his preliminary economic forecast this week. The new forecast is the basis for the revenue estimate used by the Legislature to build a budget. Dr. Sohn’s forecast for the national economy is more optimistic than his November estimate. The bad news for state budget writers is that his latest prediction for the state economy shows a slightly more rapid and dramatic slow down. The next step in the forecast process is a meeting of the Governor’s Council of Economic Advisors. These experts on the regional economy advise Dr. Sohn, the Governor, and state budget writers on the economy. The official revenue forecast update is scheduled for February 19. Senate Ways and Means Chair Lisa Brown hopes to release a budget proposal on February 25.
Property Tax Exemption for Multiple-Unit Dwellings

ESB 5872 passed the floor of the Senate on February 5. The bill allows cities to limit the multifamily housing property tax exemption to dwelling units that meet the local low-income or moderate-income occupancy requirements if the units are condominiums or townhouses. New, rehabilitated, or converted multifamily housing projects in targeted residential areas are eligible for a 10-year property tax exemption program. The program’s purpose is to increase multifamily housing in urban centers. The property tax exemption applies to the new housing construction and the increased value of the building due to rehabilitation made after the application for the tax exemption. The exemption does not apply to the land or the non-housing-related improvements. If the property is removed from multifamily housing use before 10 years, then back taxes are recovered based on the difference between the taxes paid and taxes that would have been paid had the property not been put to multifamily use.

The property tax exemption program is limited to cities with a population of at least 50,000 and to the largest city or town within a county planning under the Growth Management Act (GMA). A targeted residential area must be located within an urban center, lack sufficient available, desirable, and convenient residential housing to meet public demand, and increase permanent residents in the area or achieve the planning goals of the GMA. The city is authorized to establish standards and guidelines for approving tax exemption applications by developers.

Support for Public Health Funding Erodes

As legislators continue to take more proposed cuts to human services and other areas off the table, the budget writing task becomes more difficult. This week WSAC staff and public health officials began hearing from legislators that there would be no effort to preserve state assistance for local public health. Most legislators argue that new bio-terrorism funding from the federal government will make up for lost state funds. Health officials are concerned that the new funds are for specified purposes and come with the requirement for increased levels of services. One local public health official observed that cutting the basic local public health assistance and adding the bio-terrorism funds is like “removing the foundation from a building while you are trying to add a third floor.”

Local Tax Limitation Initiative on Hold for Now

Sponsors of the proposed initiative to limit local general fund revenue growth to one percent a year have said that they will place the measure on hold. Controversies about the leadership of the sponsoring organization have contributed to the decision. Meanwhile, the Legislature is considering bills requiring increased disclosure by initiative campaigns, fiscal impact statements on initiatives, and changes in ballot titles.

Tax Increment Finance Clean-Up Moves Ahead

A measure modifying the tax increment finance legislation enacted last session was amended and reported from the House Trade and Economic Development Committee this week. Substitute HB 2592 clarifies that fire districts may veto establishment of a tax increment area, allows for sale of revenue bonds to finance improvements, and eliminates the sunset date. The prime sponsor is Rep. Jeff Gombosky (D-Spokane County).

Assessors: HB 2650 Heard in House Finance

King County Assessor Scott Noble came to Olympia on Thursday to testify on HB 2650. This bill modifies voter approval provisions for tax levies exceeding the district levy limit and would allow property taxing districts to ask voters to approve a lid lift which sets the rate for the first two levies after approval. Scott testified against HB 2650, stating that the bill is actually contrary to the wishes of the voters, and it uses a rate-based approach, whereas the Washington State property tax system is a budget-based system. Scott stated that he opposes the modification of RCW 84.55.050; however, if it is modified, he asked that the language be very clear and that the word "rate" only pertain to a specific proposal.

County Treasurers: SB 6466

The Treasurers’ Association cleanup bill passed the Senate on Wednesday and has been assigned to the House Local Government and Housing Committee.
(Continued from page 2)

Those treasurers who have members on that House committee should call and ask for favorable action.

The Ports’ Association bill, HB 2467, concerning distribution of taxes, is on the floor of the House awaiting passage.

HB 2571
HB 2571, which authorizes port districts with their own treasurer to pay claims by check or warrant, passed out of the House Local Government and Housing Committee yesterday to the House Rules Committee. The Senate companion bill, SB 6559, is in the Senate Rules Committee.

SHB 2169
SHB 2169, which authorizes a fire district with an annual operating budget of under five million dollars to issue its own warrants with permission of the county treasurer, passed the House and has been sent to the Senate State and Local Government Committee.

HB 2784
HB 2784, which reduces delinquent property tax penalties, and HB 2785, which reduces delinquent property tax interest and penalties, have both been scheduled for a hearing in the House Finance Committee, Monday, February 11, at 1:30 p.m. Treasurers’ Legislative Chair Rose Bowman, Lewis County, did a quick survey of the treasurers, and numbers so far indicate a $15 million revenue loss on HB 2785.

Property Tax/Current Use Program: HB 2898
HB 2898 restricts the use of additional taxes, interest or penalties received under the current use program to park maintenance, upkeep, or acquisition; it is in the House Appropriations Committee.
Committee and ask that clerks should contact the Senate Rules Committee. County SB 6458 Floor Calendar. Call your senators and SB 6417 Senate. Calls are in order. Senate Rules Committee and go to the entire needs one more “pull” to leave the Sen- SB 6402 tor. $120.00 to $220.00. The fee is not sub- SHB 2406 tory arbitration of civil suits “shall” be WACO Priority. sex offender website, is in SB 6458, jury fees (WACO priority), is in the Senate Rules Committee. County clerks should contact the Senate Rules Committee and ask that SB 6458 be “pulled.” HB 2405 and SB 6473, DNA databank, are in their respective committees at this writing. The all-felon databank is a WACO Priority. SHB 2406, sex offender website, is in the Senate Rules Committee. HB 2407, regional jails (WACO), was moved out of committee to the House Rules Committee. HB 2754, mandatory arbitration, moved out of the House Judiciary Committee on Thursday. It requires that in counties with populations over 150,000, mandatory arbitration of civil suits “shall” be required and increases the fee for requesting mandatory arbitration from $120.00 to $220.00. The fee is not subject to division.

Sentencing Provisions: HB 2711 and HB 2712, which each substantially reduce the duties of the Department of Corrections, are set for hearing next week. HB 2711 will be heard in the House Criminal Justice and Corrections Committee on Wednesday, February 13, at 8:00 a.m. HB 2712 is set for Thursday, February 14 at 8:00 a.m.

HB 2655 and SB 6421, waiving filing fees and service fees for certain protection orders, brings state statute in line with federal law and guarantees $2 million in federal funding to the State of Washington. It is estimated counties could “lose” $200,000 in fees, but the benefits far surpass that.

SB 6700, limiting publication of personal information of law enforcement-related and court-related employees, was heard in the Senate Judiciary Committee on Thursday. SB 6700 is certainly well-intended and is directed at an instance where law enforcement names and addresses were posted on a website. Senator Bill Finkbeiner, sponsor of SB 6700, recommended removing government offices from the bill, which would place additional requirements on offices that “sell, trade, give, publish, distribute or otherwise release the residential and other information of law enforcement and court personnel, and categorize them as law enforcement related without their express permission to do so.” It also provides a cause of action to employees who have been damaged by the improper release of information.

E-911 Bills in Senate and House Rules Committees
Both the Senate and House versions of the E-911 wireless legislation are now in their respective Rules Committees, the last stop before floor action. Please continue to contact senators and representatives urging their support of 2SSB 6034 and HB 2595. This legislation is a WSAC priority and is necessary to improve E-911 funding and service.

The Senate Ways and Means Committee passed 2SSB 6034 without amendments by a 13-8 vote on February 4. The House Finance Committee unanimously passed HB 2595 without amendments on February 7.

2SSB 6034 and HB 2595 would establish the same excise tax on wireless phones as currently exists on wireline phones—50 cents per month for the county and 20 cents for the state. This “tax parity” will help stabilize E-911 revenue and ensure E-911 service for emergency calls made from wireless phones.

Currently, when people in Washington state call 911 from a wireless phone, no location information or call-back number is displayed to the E-911 call center. The lack of information delays emergency services, and in some cases emergency responders are unable to provide assistance because the caller simply cannot be located. The new revenue from this bill will help counties implement the call-back and location features.

The current legislation simply extends to wireless phones the concept of Enhanced 911, which voters overwhelming adopted by Referendum 42 in 1991. In Washington state, 36% of 911 calls currently come from wireless phones, and this percentage continues to grow. Many people now use a wireless phone as their only telephone and have disconnected the wireline phone at their home or office. For this reason, achieving tax parity between wireline and wireless phones is essential to the continued stable funding of the E-911 system. The bill is especially important for small counties, which depend on assistance from the state portion of the E-911 tax for the ongoing operation of wireline

Online Legislative Information
If you’re interested in finding out what’s going on in the legislature, the following online resources are available to track bills, research fiscal notes, and listen to hearings.

Legislative Information. To track legislation and review Washington laws, go to www.leg.wa.gov. The site also contains point-of-contact information for your representatives and senators.

Fiscal Notes. For published information on the fiscal impacts of a bill, check out the Office of Financial Management’s Fiscal Notes site. You can access that site by going to www.ofm.wa.gov/fns/.

TVW. To listen to a public hearing, log onto www.tvw.org. TVW’s site also offers live television broadcasts of some of the hearings.

(Continued on page 5)
Risk Management Bills Still Alive

Several bills that make minor inroads into risk management and liability issues are still alive in both the House and Senate.

A package of bills proposed by Governor Gary Locke and Attorney General Christine Gregoire focuses primarily on state risk management activities, but one of the proposals extends some liability protections to local government.

HB 2354 and SB 6429, commonly known as the “I’m Sorry Bill,” provide that benevolent gestures made to accident victims and their families are not admissible in court as evidence of negligence. For example, if someone is harmed while under care of a state or county agency, the agency may offer assistance and make “I’m sorry” types of statements without those actions or statements being admitted as evidence that the agency was negligent in its initial relationship with the victim.

HB 2354 and SB 6429 are in the House and Senate Rules Committees and seem to have widespread support.

Homeland Security Bills Survive First Cutoff

As of Thursday, February 7, several anti-terrorism bills remain alive. Among these are:

- HB 2319, revising provisions for emergency management. This bill removes the current prohibition on local planning for nuclear attack, but does not require such planning. It also updates definitions and state agency responsibilities to encompass chemical, biological, and radiological destructive operations.

  - HB 2385, adding members to the state Emergency Management Council (EMC). The bill adds four at-large members to the EMC. Members are appointed by the governor.

  - HB 2416, authorizing additional investigative tools to deter terrorism. The bill increases law enforcement authority to use wiretapping.

  - HB 6654, providing $2 million in grants to county emergency management programs.

  - HB 2853, requiring the state Emergency Management Council to identify critical infrastructure in the state.

  - HB 2879, identifying specific terrorism crimes, penalties and remedies. This bill defines “terrorism in the first degree” and makes it an alternate means of committing aggravated first-degree murder. It also adds terrorism crimes to criminal profiteering law.

Criminal Justice Round-up

The following are several criminal justice bills that are still alive and of interest to WSAC members. As of this writing, both the House and Senate Judiciary Committees were continuing to pass bills out of committee. Further updates will be included in the next Courthouse Journal.

- SB 6361 and HB 2338 relate to drug offender sentencing. These bills shorten prison sentences for some drug offenders and direct the cost savings to treatment programs and county drug courts.

- SB 2541 and SB 6393 clarify that cities may contract with any county for jail services.

- SHCR 4412 establishes a joint select committee on local jail facilities needs and funding alternatives.

President Proposes Federal Grants for “First Responders”

As part of his homeland security funding package, President Bush has proposed spending $3.5 billion in fiscal year 2003 to enhance response capabilities of police, firefighters and emergency medical personnel—America’s First Responders. If adopted by Congress, the president’s proposal would mean a greater than 10-fold increase in federal resources for these services.

The funding plan includes: $105 million for emergency preparedness and response planning; $2 billion for first-responder equipment; $1.1 billion for specialized training; and $245 million for response exercises.

Bush’s initiative would be administered by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). In Washington State the funds likely would be distributed to local governments through the state Emergency Management Division.

Siting Juvenile and Work-Release Facilities

HB 2168 expands the siting process for both juvenile facilities such as group homes and Department of Corrections (DOC) work-release facilities. The bill does not follow the same processes established in last year’s SB 6151 dealing with sexually violent predators. It is expected to move out of the House Criminal Justice and Corrections Committee. Both juvenile and DOC facilities have existing statutory procedures in place. The new legislation incorporates the idea of “fair share” into the existing laws. “Fair share” was the term used along with equitable distribution to ensure that public facilities of less-than-desirable nature were spread throughout the state and community and not centralized in one county, city, or community. Before either kind of facility is sited, DSHS and DOC, along with the potentially affected counties or cities, must consider existing facilities and hold public hearings in the community. Counties and cities are required to ensure that their essential public facilities processes allow for the siting of these facilities. They are not allowed to impose any additional operating or facility criteria beyond the terms of the act. WSAC and the Association of Washington Cities (AWC) have also agreed to language that time limits any conditional use permit, special use permit, or other development application process necessary for siting to 120 days. This is an alternative to pre-emption of conditional use and special permitting requirements. This language is still under discussion with DSHS.
**Overview**

The Transportation Committees have until February 12 to act on bills before their respective committees. This week the Senate Transportation Committee passed **SB 6350**, allowing use of county road funds for state highway improvements. Current law does not allow a county to use county road funds for the purposes of state highways (RCW 36.75.035). **SB 6350** would remove this provision from the Act. This bill is a request by Skagit County.

The Association of Washington Cities is advocating for additional taxing authority to address their local transportation needs. **HB 2700** and **SB 6649** authorize cities to impose street utility fees, allow both counties and cities to increase their vehicle license fee for transportation purposes up to $50, and increase the local option gas tax for both cities and counties from 10% to 20%. Cities located in a county that have not imposed a local option gas tax by July 1, 2004, may levy the tax within the city boundary. The House Transportation Committee considered this bill last week.

The Senate and House leadership along with the Governor have been meeting on regional transportation bills and discussing elements of a statewide package. We are told that a package could be presented to legislative members as early as sometime in the next ten days. WSAC is actively supporting an additional penny direct distribution in the statewide transportation package. In the regional package, WSAC is actively advocating for a measure that would allow a single-county option for any county in the state, local project determination, local share of funding, and a mandated linkage to the statewide package with null and void language.

Please contact Jackie White, WSAC staff member, for more information.
Drug Sentencing Reform Bill Heard Before the House Appropriations Committee

HB 2338, the House version of the drug sentencing reform bill, was heard before the House Appropriations Committee on February 4. A similar group of supporters testified in favor of the proposed legislation as in the policy committee. Among those who testified were the Washington Association of Prosecuting Attorneys, several individual county prosecutors, the Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs, treatment professionals, human services advocates, the Superior Court Judges’ Association, drug court professionals, local government, and drug court graduates. The most compelling testimony came from the two drug court graduates who provided heartfelt evidence of the success of drug courts.

The primary sponsor, Representative Ruth Kagi, indicated that she would propose an amendment to the bill that caps the amount of funds available for treatment at no more than $7.5 million. This is the amount estimated to cover the needs of persons choosing drug courts instead of criminal trials for the next several years. Unfortunately, it is still a drop in the bucket for overall drug and alcohol treatment needs. The Senate version of the bill, SB 6361, remains in the Senate Judiciary Committee but is expected to move out to the Senate Ways and Means Committee.

Week Five has few Human Services’ Hearings

The Senate Human Services & Corrections Committee will not be meeting at all during the week of February 11–17. The Senate Ways and Means Committee will be meeting both February 11 and 12 at 1:30 to take action on bills that have come from the policy committees. The agendas will not be known until shortly before the hearings but will certainly include a number of human services bills.

In the House, the House Children and Family Services Committee is meeting on February 12 at 9:00 to examine some of the issues surrounding the abandonment of newborn infants. The House Health Care Committee will meet on February 14 at 8:00 for a work session on state payments for long-term care services. The House Juvenile Justice and Family Law Committee will meet on February 15 at 8:00 for a work session on hard-to-place youth under the jurisdiction of the Department of Social and Health Services’ (DSHS) Juvenile Rehabilitation Administration and the Children’s Administration. It is quite likely that these youth will be the subject of continued discussion over the interim both in the Legislature and DSHS.

The House Appropriations Committee is scheduled for one final meeting on February 11 at 1:30 to vote on policy bills with fiscal impacts from the House committees. The agenda will be announced Monday morning.

Updated Bill on Community Residential Facilities for Sex Predators Moves out of Committee

SB 6594, relating to the recommendations of the Joint Select Committee on Equitable Distribution, moved out of the policy committee February 7. The Senate Human Services and Corrections Committee adopted several amendments. They include a process to allow local input into public safety issues even when the county and/or city have been pre-empted. There is also an amendment to the public hearing process encouraging public input regarding “risk potential activities or facilities” to ensure the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) is aware of community concerns.

Unfortunately, no resolution was reached on local government’s inability to exceed minimum standards if they agree to plan for a facility to be sited in their area. At this time, the bill simply voids any regulations that are more restrictive than those already addressed last year in ESSB 6151. However, it no longer contains language deeming the local government to be out of compliance with the Growth Management Act. The final change was to add additional terms to the definition of “all other laws” within the pre-emption section to include such statute as the State Environmental Policy Act, the Shorelines Management Act, and the state hydraulics code. The bill is now before the Senate Ways and Means Committee.

The House version, HB 2598, has not moved as yet.

Local Public Health Officials Present Annual Awards for Excellence in Public Health

The Washington State Association of Local Public Health Officials (WSALPHO) presented its annual Awards for Excellence in Public Health on February 7, 2002, during its quarterly meeting in Olympia. The annual awards are given by WSALPHO in four categories that represent significant contributions to public health in Washington.

The Spokane Regional Health District received an Award for Excellence in Public Health in the category of work specifically related to the core functions of public health and the Public Health Improvement Plan. The health district’s Violence Assessment Program received the award. In order to focus attention, intervention, and the development of public policy regarding interpersonal violence, the Assessment/Epidemiology Center of the Spokane Regional Health District undertook the assessment of interpersonal violence in Spokane. The assessment process involved large and diverse portions of the community. The outcome of the assessment was the publication of The Fabric of Fear: Interpersonal Violence in Spokane County. The text has quickly become the reference and resource for policy discussions and grant applications. The assessment of interpersonal violence in Spokane serves to broaden and deepen the collective understanding, and it is helping to unify approaches to addressing violence.

The Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department (TPCHD) received an Award for Excellence in Public Health in the category of innovative and effective programs for its Telemedicine Direct Observed Therapy Program. Patients’ failure to adhere to therapy for tuberculosis (TB) is a significant public health challenge and is due to a variety of factors: treatment length, side effects, the pill burden, cultural barriers, and other social issues such as substance abuse and homelessness. The result is that only two-thirds to one-half of self-administered TB programs are successful around the world according to a Cen-

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...compliance with prescribed treatment. Advisory panels strongly recommend using directly observed therapy (DOT), which is to send a professional to watch as a client takes the pills to insure patient compliance with prescribed treatment.

DOT requires a substantial commitment of personnel time and resources, but is the recommended standard of care. In 1998, working with Infections Limited, the Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department selected a few DOT clients to try new technology. Participants who met specific criteria were given Via TV units (8X8, Inc, Santa Clara, California), which established a two-way video-phone link through a modem between the client’s home and the health department. Staff at the TPCHD called clients at pre-arranged times and established video linkage. Clients identified themselves, displayed the daily dosage of TB medication, and then swallowed the pills in full view of the camera. Staff kept appropriate data on both standard DOT visits and the video DOT so the two approaches could be compared. Comparing the two types of therapy showed that there was no real difference in compliance (97.5% for standard DOT versus 95% for video DOT). However, nearly 9,000 miles of travel was avoided with the video technology, and 288 hours of travel time was saved. Most importantly on a client viewpoint is that clients felt the video DOT was more convenient and less intrusive than standard DOT.

The Southwest Washington Health District (SWWHD) received the third Award for Excellence in Public Health in the category for work that represents a significant contribution to public health. The award was given in recognition of the extensive community partnership that was developed in investigating the E. coli outbreak at Battle Ground Lake, determining how to resolve the problem and steps to reduce the risk, if not prevent, another occurrence of disease. In the summer of 1999, SWWHD was alerted to a waterborne illness outbreak at Battle Ground Lake, a popular swimming area in Battle Ground, Washington. After an exhaustive investigation, 36 people were found to have contacted E.coli O157:H7 from the water within the designated swimming area. The health district then closed the lake for all purposes. The likely source was a leaky diaper from an ill child spreading the E. coli organism throughout the swimming area. Twenty months later, SWWHD and the Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission reopened the lake to swimming. The reopening of the lake was the culmination of a successful plan, which involved local, state, and federal officials from public health, animal health, political office, university scientists, and the Battle Ground community. Further, these efforts and the lessons learned positioned the SWWHD as a leader in effective efforts to decrease infectious disease risks in natural recreational waters.

The fourth and final award was jointly presented to Sen. Jim Kastama, Rep. Laura Ruderman, the Puget Sound Affiliate of the Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation, and the American Cancer Society for their leadership in securing passage last session of 2SHB 1058, the Breast and Cervical Cancer Treatment Act of 2001. The category for this award was the community contribution award for individuals or organizations outside of public health making a significant contribution to the health of a community’s or entire state’s residents. Several years ago, Washington began receiving federal funding for a breast and cervical cancer-screening program for low-income women. Early access to screening and early detection of breast and cervical cancer have a significant impact on the outcome of the cancer. The problem was funding for treatment. What we had was a program that enabled low-income women to receive screening and early detection, however, we did not have treatment funding available for those women in whom cancer was detected and who were uninsured. The Susan G. Komen Foundation and the American Cancer Society worked closely with Sen. Kastama and Rep. Ruderman to address this problem. The federal government had treatment funding available, but it required a state match. The Susan G. Komen Foundation offered $400,000 toward treatment, and the state legislature provided the rest of the match needed to access the federal dollars for treatment. This is a wonderful example of a public/private partnership that contributes to better health outcomes.

**Public Health Bills**

**HB 2518**, which would grant the same civil fine authority to health districts currently available to county health departments, has moved out of the House Local Government Committee to the House Rules Committee.

**HB 2308**, relating to recycling and waste reduction, has moved out of the House Agriculture and Ecology Committee to the House Appropriations Committee. Both public health officials and solid waste managers are interested in this bill.

**HB 2325**, relating to the donation of food, has passed out of the House Agriculture and Ecology Committee and is now in the House Rules Committee. It still contains language that WSAC and WSALPHO object to. Staff has submitted a proposed amendment that would address county concerns.

**HB 6588**, relating to food service rules, has passed out of the Senate Agriculture and International Trade Committee still containing the language that preempts local government. It was moved to the Senate Rules Committee, but there is now a fiscal note attached, so it may go back to the Senate Ways and Means Committee. We will continue to work to eliminate local government preemption.

**SB 6328**, relating to temporary harvest labor camps, is supported by the Washington State Association of Local Public Health Officials. This bill would allow the tent camps to remain open for a longer period of time than 21 days if the harvest season was longer. From a public health perspective, this is a good bill for both the orchard owners and the workers.

With cutoff in the policy committees this week, we will see some bills fall by the wayside.
GMA Timeline Bill Adopted by the Senate
Extending the deadlines for local growth management plans has been a high priority of both WSAC and the Association of Washington Cities (AWC) for the last two sessions. The current statutes now require all GMA planning jurisdictions to review and update, if necessary, local GMA plans and development regulations by September 2002. A bill that was introduced last session, SB 5841, would establish new deadlines beginning in 2003 for critical area ordinances, and 2004 for comprehensive plans over a four-year period. The Senate passed SB 5841 late last session, but the House did not take action. This session, the Senate placed the bill directly on the floor calendar with the intention of passing it quickly to the House without amendments. This week the Senate passed this bill without amendments, 33-13 with three excused. Please note that this bill is only a vehicle at this point and will need to be amended in the House in order to achieve the goal of both WSAC and AWC. The Realtors Association and the environmental groups are actively advocating for amendments to the bill that would impose more mandates on local governments.

WSAC and AWC’s preferred bill, HB 2676, staggers the timeline for counties and their cities from 2004 thru 2007 and requires the plans to be updated every 10 years thereafter. The House Local Government and Housing Committee passed HB 2676 with amendments that neither Association will support. The bill now has more sanctions if a jurisdiction is out of compliance with the law and includes additional “best available science language.”

HB 2498, a bill that removes the requirement to comply with the buildable lands provisions unless the State funds at least $2.5 million, was also passed by the House Local Government and Housing Committee without amendments.

Please contact WSAC staff member Jackie White for questions or comments.

Several Bills Seek to Amend GMA Requirements
As the cutoff date loomed, several bills amending Growth Management Act (GMA) requirements remained before House and Senate committees. Some of these bills were passed out of their original committees, surviving at least the first set of obstacles to passage. Others may not be so lucky.

One bill that was passed out of the Senate State and Local Government Committee and sent to the Senate Rules Committee was SB 6405, which would allow GMA comprehensive plans to be amended more frequently. Under current law, comprehensive plans may only be reviewed and amended once a year. This bill would allow a city or county to establish, if it wanted to, a procedure for reviewing and amending its comprehensive plans once every six months. New GMA requirements usually make more work for counties and do not come with any additional financial assistance from the state. However, the changes in this bill are permissive, not mandatory, and this bill gives counties and cities needed flexibility in dealing with change in their regions.

HB 2498 also survived the cutoff, making it out of the House Local Government and Housing Committee and moving to the House Rules Committee. HB 2498, and its companion SB 6410 (which did not survive the cutoff), both address industrial land banks. HB 2498 says that those counties previously authorized to establish two planned locations for major industrial activity outside urban growth areas are allowed to continue to do so until 2007, so long as additional conditions are met: that counties and cities must agree on cost and revenue sharing; that land bank plans must consider future alternatives within the urban growth area and annexation of land outside the urban growth area; and that the size is capped at 10% of the total gross floor area of the buildings in the industrial land bank. WSAC has been supportive of similar legislation in the past.

A group of bills increasing concurrency requirements remained before the House Local Government & Housing Committee and did not survive the cutoff deadline. Under current law, the GMA requires levels of services that are concurrent with new development or have plans for concurrency within six years. HB 2580 would require concurrency for law enforcement services, which would be coordinated with the relevant local law enforcement agencies. HB 2581 calls for concurrency of fire protection services. Additionally, HB 2519 would require concurrency planning for parks in GMA plans and development regulations. Concurrency requirements for police, fire, and parks would create more planning work for counties without giving them new resources to provide those services. Although in theory concurrency might be a good idea, in practice it has not worked, and should not be increased without fixing its problems first.

Several other bills also affect GMA planning. SHB 2697 adds economic development as a required element of GMA planning, focusing on goals of promoting the retention and expansion of business opportunities. An amended version of this bill also adds a parks and recreation element, and a null and void clause that would kick in if not funded one year in advance. This bill passed out of the House Local Government and Housing Committee, surviving cutoff.

SB 6057 is the Senate companion to SHB 2697, but it is more broad, including language on housing and job retention. SB 6057 is before the Senate Economic Development and Telecommunications Committee. HB 1395 encourages rural counties that are GMA jurisdictions to include business expansion in the rural elements of their GMA plans. This includes expansion of new small-scale businesses on existing business sites, if those existing sites are compatible in size and scale with land use and development patterns in the rural element. This bill passed the House on Wednesday. SSB 5107, allowing rural counties to develop alternative methods of meeting GMA goals, was also reported from the Senate State and Local Government Committee. It passed the Senate last year and died in the House.

Stormwater Bill Fades as Cutoff Looms
While HB 2076 sat in the House Agriculture and Ecology Committee by the cutoff on Friday, counties avoided having to change their stormwater fee systems. Although this bill is dead, the topic may survive in various other bills before the House and Senate.

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Environment, Land Use and Resources

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This bill was first seen last session when the Association of Washington Business (AWB) developed a senate bill and companion house bill that would change how counties charge surface water management fees, eliminating stormwater fees based on runoff characteristics. HB 2076 is back again this session. Some counties use stormwater fees to pay for activities required by the Department of Ecology. Many counties that assess stormwater fees based on runoff characteristics use credit programs to provide fee reductions or exemptions for landowners that mitigate stormwater on their own property.

Those opposing stormwater fees based on runoff characteristics have several concerns: the perceived inequity for landowners with a high percentage of impervious surface versus those with less impervious surface, and the perceived inequity between rates among different counties. Other issues raised allege lack of an appeal process for landowners and lack of accountability among counties for what the stormwater fees they collect pay for.

Counties are concerned that any changes could subject their stormwater fee systems to challenges in court. Their current systems were found to be legal in the 1985 Washington Supreme Court case Teter v Clark, but if changes are made to the stormwater fee laws, those changes could make fee systems vulnerable.

AWB proposed a striking amendment to HB 2076 that retains the use of runoff characteristics, but adds other characteristics to consider and requires an administrative appeal process. Counties offered in return a new striker amendment that focused on requiring counties to have administrative appeals processes and allows counties to offer landowners discounts (several already offer credits) and grants to achieve the program requirements.

Shorelines Bills Start to Move
Two pieces of legislation on shoreline management have moved from committee as of Thursday. Substitute HB 2305 would exempt ongoing agricultural activities from the scope of the shorelines rules.

Substitute SB 6767 would raise the dollar threshold for what constitutes development requiring a “substantial development permit” and would require an adjustment to the threshold for inflation every five years. The threshold would be raised to $12,500. The current dollar amount is $2,500.

Water Reform Legislation—Sinking, or Still Afloat?
It is hard to tell. Pieces of draft legislation rise to public view from time to time, resulting in cries from interests on all sides that the solutions proposed are worse medicine than the malady. Still, the Joint Executive-Legislative group continues to meet and work toward developing water legislation. Members of the Joint Executive-Legislative group continue to indicate that all four topics will be addressed—instream flow, municipal rights, relinquishment, and infrastructure funding—or none at all. It is reported that the strongest consensus is for a funding package, but there remains no agreement on how to raise the needed $1 billion or more.
Changing the Date of the Primary Election

A striking amendment has been prepared for HB 1230, combining the agreed-upon language for changing the date of the primary election. As it now stands, the date for the primary would be moved back to the second Tuesday in June. The bill is scheduled for executive session in the House State Government Committee on Friday, February 8, at 1:30 p.m.

Vacancies in Public Office

SB 6529, modifying the time period for holding elections to fill vacancies, has been pulled to the green sheet in the Senate Rules Committee. For those auditors with members on the Rules Committee: the bill needs one more pull, so please call your Senators and ask that the bill be placed on the Senate floor calendar.

Fiscal Impact Statements for Voters

Island County Auditor Suzanne Sinclair, and Grays Harbor County Elections Supervisor Ron Pursley, testified before the House State Government Committee on Thursday concerning HB 2823—providing information on fiscal impacts of initiatives, and HB 2747—requiring fiscal impact statements for ballot measures. The striking amendment offered to HB 2823 requires that a fiscal impact statement must be included on ballots describing any projected increases or decreases in revenues, costs, expenditures, or indebtedness that state and local governments will experience if voters approve the initiative. In addition, if the fiscal impact statement identifies a combined financial impact of at least $25 million, a notice of probable impacts of up to 75 words must also be placed on the ballot beneath the ballot title that would state “NOTICE TO VOTERS OF PROBABLE IMPACTS OF INITIATIVE.” Suzanne and Ron pointed out that HB 2823 would most likely increase the size of the ballot, thereby increasing the cost of printing the ballots. The preferable bill, HB 2747, provides that fiscal impact statements for any initiative or referendum be included in the state voters’ pamphlet along with statements from both sides written in response to the fiscal impact statement.

Secretary of State Request Bills

SB 6325, modifying the administration of elections, is in the Senate Rules Committee. SB 6322, updating vote recording and reporting, was passed out of the Senate State and Local Government Committee and has been sent to the Senate Ways and Means Committee. SB 6321, allowing candidates to file electronically, is in the Senate Rules Committee. HB 2332, directing a statewide voter registration database, passed out of the House State Government Committee and resides in the House Appropriations Committee. HB 2333 and its companion bill, SB 6320, regulating voter registration applications, are both in their respective Rules Committees.
**General Government and Miscellaneous**

**SB 6550 Proposes to Protect Historical County Seats**

**SB 6550**, an act relating to removal of county seats, would prevent any county seat from being moved if it had a county courthouse that was listed on either the state or national historical registers of historic places. Senator Jim Honeyford (13th District) introduced the bill in an effort to make sure the Benton County seat was not moved from Prosser. Honeyford’s district currently includes Prosser, but under the new redistricting plan it will move from the 13th Legislative District to the 8th Legislative District, where the population center is Kennewick and Richland. There have been previous efforts to do this: In 1984, 56% of the voters voted to move the county seat to Kennewick, but the issue failed since the law requires a 60% majority.

The bill would apply to 14 counties: Benton, Clallam, Columbia, Douglas, Franklin, Garfield, Grant, Jefferson, Pacific, Pacific, San Juan, Snohomish, Spokane and Thurston.

The bill was heard last week in committee and the concerns were that if a courthouse were destroyed by a fire or disaster it would have to be rebuilt on the same property, even if that was not the best site.

**HJR 4221 Limits New Counties and Provides for Counties to Merge**

Since the start of this legislative session, several legislators have suggested counties that do not have enough revenue to meet certain minimum levels of funding should simply be merged into an adjoining county. However, the constitution has very limited language on just how to merge or create new counties. Representative Hans Dunshee (39th District) has sponsored a House Joint Resolution which would amend the constitution to limit the creation of new counties to at least 20,000 population, and any annexation to another county must leave the original county with a population of at least 20,000.

There are provisions for dissolution of a county if a county has filed for bankruptcy or against which it has been filed. There is also a provision for annexing a county or portion of a county if a petition of 10% or more of the voters in the county proposed to be annexed. The petition process is only initiated by a resolution of the county legislative authority.

There are provisions for the state legislature to establish legislation to ensure continuity of state and local governmental operations in periods of emergency resulting from a petition for dissolution or for a county declaring financial bankruptcy.

While it is questionable whether a county may declare bankruptcy, this legislation supports a growing concern by legislators that some counties may not have enough financial resources to continue providing local government services. If that occurs, it is the state’s responsibility to provide those services.

**Death Investigations**

**HB 2919** will be the vehicle to pass the substance of **HB 2795**, which relates to state toxicology laboratory reports. In committee action expected today, **HB 2919** will be amended to a single sentence that directs requests for test results on impaired drivers and on deceased persons in death investigations to the agency that submitted the samples for testing. This improved version clarifies that the laboratory cannot release test results and also avoids any discussion of the public disclosure statutes, which is always troublesome. Kitsap County Coroner Greg Sandstrom testified for the proposal late Thursday evening in the House State Government Committee. The proposal is a priority bill of WACO and the Forensic Investigations Council. All of the last-minute changes are the result of compromise of all the interested parties, and the bill number that accomplishes the intent is of little consequence. **HB 2919** should be passed to the House Rules Committee today. Representative Mark Miloscia should be commended for his sponsorship and willingness to accommodate everyone concerned. Sheriffs, coroners, medical examiners and prosecutors are encouraged to contact their House Rules members and ask them to “pull” **HB 2919** to the House floor for a vote.

**SB 6745**, creating a $1 surcharge on birth and death certificates to develop a web-based death registration system in the Department of Health, was heard in the Senate State and Local Government Committee. The surcharge is being pushed by the Funeral Directors’ Association and would expire in July of 2006. The Department of Health urged the committee to wait until more work could be done with the Washington Association of Coroners and Medical Examiners and the Forensic Investigations Council. The progress of the **SB 6745** will be reported in future newsletters.

**New MRSC Web Page Additions**

**Request for Proposals (RFP):** MRSC has added a new set of file libraries on our website for sample RFPs. The link to the RFP files is listed under the Sample Documents section of MRSC home page (at the end of the right-hand column). Because our search system can search various file formats, some of the RFPs are in Word, some in PDF, and some in HTML.

**Law Enforcement Services:** A series of Web pages on Law Enforcement Services was developed to provide basic reference sources for Washington local governments. It provides sample documents, links to publications, and links to law enforcement programs. The URL is http://www.mrsc.org/pubsafe/le/le-main.htm.

**Best Practices:** MRSC new Best Practices in Local Government webpage contains a collection of links to information sources on best practices in local government programs and management. It also contains links to several local government awards programs, which are an excellent source for best practices information. The URL is http://www.mrsc.org/cityorg/bestpractices.htm.

**Save the Date! WSAC Spring District Meetings on the Way**

The WSAC Spring District Meetings are just around the corner. The Western District is meeting at Rosario Resort in San Juan County on April 11 and 12. The Eastern District is meeting on April 25 and 26 at Sun Mountain Lodge in Okanogan County.

Great agendas are being planned by Western District President Betty Sue Morris and Eastern District President Joan Frey. Mark the dates now. Due to
the travel distance to each location, most
commissioners and councilmembers will
want to arrive on Wednesday evening.
The meetings will convene at 8:30
Thursday morning and close mid-
morning on Friday. Registrations for the
two meetings will be sent on February
15.

Auditors: HB 2060 Adds a
$10 Surcharge to Recording
Fees
After being passed out of House Local
Government and Housing, HB 2060,
which requires county auditors to charge
a $10 surcharge on recording fees of real
property documents but not to assign-
ments of previously recorded deeds of
trust, was heard Thursday evening in
House Finance Committee. The bill
would allow county auditors to retain up
to 5% of collected funds for administra-
tion. Sixty percent of the remaining
funds would be retained by the county
and must be used by the county and its
cities for low-income housing projects.
The remaining 40% of the revenue
would be deposited monthly with the
State Treasurer in the Washington Hous-
ing Trust Account. Island County Audi-
tor Suzanne Sinclair did a great job testi-
fying on behalf of the county auditors.
While empathizing with the need for low
income housing funds, Suzanne made it
clear that the use of the recording fee as
vehicle to generate those funds was less
than ideal. Historically, the recording
fee is a "use" based fee. To promote
uniformity, Suzanne asked that the $10
surcharge apply to all recorded docu-
ments instead of only real property
documents.

HB 2297 would allow the county auditor
and his or her deputy to perform clerical
or ministerial duties for any other county
officer, and would allow other county
officers or their deputy to perform duties
for the office of county auditor. This bill
is a Clark County priority and was voted
out of House Local Government and
Housing Committee last week and is in
the Rules Committee. Companion bill
SB 6405 is in the Senate Rules Commit-
tee.

HB 2453, Veterans Recording Exem-
p tion, is in the House State Government
Committee and is scheduled for Execu-
tive Session at 1:30 p.m. on Friday.
Suzanne Sinclair met with Rep. Bush on
Thursday and he will be proposing two
amendments to the bill. The first would
make the provisions of the bill “from
this day forward,” and the second would
require those veterans interested in hav-
ing their records private to fill out a form
requesting this service.

WSACA’s (Washington State Associa-
tion of County Auditor’s) legislative pri-
ority bill HB 2556, increasing recording
fees, was passed out of the House Local
Government and Housing Committee on
February 6.

SB 6494, the two-year vehicle license
bill, is still in Senate Transportation.

Changes in 2002 Directory
of County Officials in Wash-
ington State
Pg 15/Garfield Co
Auditor e-mail address is now:
ddeal@co.garfield.wa.us.

Pg 16/Grant Co
Clerk e-mail address is now:
kkunes@grantcounty-wa.com.

Also, Clerk’s phone # extension is
changed to X 401.

Pg 30/Okanogan Co
Sheriff’s office has new address: 123 –
5th Ave N, Room 200, Okanogan WA
98840, telephone: (509) 422-7200 ext
7525 and fax (509) 422-7236.

Pg 41/Stevens Co     New Treasurer is
Sue Harnasch (D).

Pg 48/Yakima Co    New Acting
Prosecutor is Ron Zirkle.

Pg 59/Bd of Co Commissioners/
Council Clerks   Our apologies,
Pierce Co Clerk of the Board is not in-
cluded. Please add Pierce County Clerk
of the Board Gerri Rainwater with phone
(253) 798-7579 and fax (253) 798-7509.

Pg 73/Public Health Officials    Kit-
sap-Bremerton is listed incorrectly. It
should read: Bremerton-Kitsap County
Health District, Scott Lindquist, MD,
MPH, Health Officer and Director. Ad-
dress is the same, phone is (360) 337-
5287, fax is (360) 337-5298.

Pg 78/Parks/Recreation & Fair Dept.
Skagit County Parks Director is Robert
W. Vaux.
Sheriff Wiester Announces Retirement: Grant County Sheriff Bill Wiester is retiring after over 31 years of law enforcement service. Upon his resignation, May 31, Sheriff Wiester will have served 12 years as Grant County Sheriff (a record). He also served with the Lewis County Sheriff’s office. Sheriff Wiester is known for putting up the first tent jail in the state to help ease jail overcrowding, and was the first to feed military rations to inmates, drastically reducing cost of meals. A 100-bed work release facility has a vegetable garden and nursery on the site, also decreasing meal costs, and the inmates there are involved in a working inmate program. The Wiester name has been prominent in sheriff’s offices since the 1950s. Sheriff Wiester’s uncle, Robert, was sheriff of Wahkiakum County for one term in the 50s. His father, Bill Sr., was a five-term sheriff in Lewis County in the 60s, 70s, and 80s, and Bill became the sheriff of Grant County in 1990. Wiester is a Vietnam veteran, serving with the 82nd Airborne Infantry, and received the Purple Heart and two Bronze Stars.

Voting is Cool: Yakima County Auditor Corky Mattingly recently reported that on their first Voting is Cool event at a local high school, 41 new 18-year olds registered. In addition, 54 17-year olds signed a birthday list so that the auditor can send them registration forms as they turn 18. The auditor’s staff also did a class presentation about how to vote, the elections process, who represents them in their district, and so forth.

Prosecutor Wants Full-time Coroner: Clallam County Prosecutor Chris Shea has suggested that commissioners consider creating a full-time coroner position through the charter process. Clallam County is the only county of its size that doesn’t have a coroner. That job falls under the prosecutor’s duties. In other coroner news, Stevens County will be electing a coroner this year because of a population increase (counties must have a population of over 40,000 to elect a coroner or the job stays with the prosecutor). Stevens County Prosecutor Jerry Wetele has served as the county coroner since 1980.

Sheriff Changes Parties: Benton County Sheriff Larry Taylor will be running as a Republican when he files for office this year. He ran as a Democrat in 1998. Taylor pushed for a bill in last year’s legislature that would have made the office nonpartisan, a position he would prefer. The bill passed the Senate, but died in the House.

Voters Try Computerized Voting: Voters in Snohomish, Pierce and Cowlitz counties tried the newest in election technology when they voted last Tuesday—computerized touch screens. The computerized voting is another move towards ridding elections of problems and keeps voters from incorrectly voting for more than one person in the same race (remember Florida?). The word is that the computer has a backup system that would save the votes, even if the computer malfunctioned.

**Coming Events**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>February 15</td>
<td>WSAC Legislative Steering Committee, Washington Counties Building, Olympia</td>
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<tr>
<td>March 1</td>
<td>WSAC Legislative Steering Committee, Washington Counties Building, Olympia</td>
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<td>March 1-5</td>
<td>NACo Legislative Conference, Washington Hilton &amp; Towers Hotel, Washington, DC</td>
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<tr>
<td>March 14</td>
<td>WCIF/WCIP Boards/Insurance Advisory Committee, (All Day Meeting), SeaTac</td>
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<tr>
<td>March 15</td>
<td>WSAC Legislative Steering Committee, Washington Counties Building, Olympia</td>
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<tr>
<td>March 20-22</td>
<td>ACHS, Tacoma, Pierce County</td>
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<tr>
<td>March 21</td>
<td>WA Counties Risk Pool Meeting</td>
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<td>April 4</td>
<td>Retro Pool Meeting, Best Inn/RV Park, Ellensburg</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 11-12</td>
<td>WSAC Western District Meeting, Rosario Resort, San Juan County</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 25-26</td>
<td>WSAC Eastern District Meeting, Sun Mountain Lodge, Winthrop</td>
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<td>May 22-24</td>
<td>WIR, Yellowstone County, Billings MT</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 15-17</td>
<td>ACHS, Spokane</td>
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<td>June 17</td>
<td>WSALPHO Meeting in conjunction with WSAC Summer Convention, Bellevue</td>
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<td>June 18</td>
<td>WCIF Board in conjunction with WSAC Summer Conference, 10:00 a.m. – noon, Bellevue</td>
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<tr>
<td>June 18-21</td>
<td>WSAC Summer Convention, Bellevue</td>
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<tr>
<td>July 12-16</td>
<td>NACo Annual Conference, New Orleans Parish, New Orleans, LA</td>
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<tr>
<td>July 17-19</td>
<td>ACHS, Clark County</td>
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<tr>
<td>August 22</td>
<td>WCIP Board/Rate Setting Session, 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. SeaTac</td>
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<tr>
<td>September 12</td>
<td>WSALPHO Meeting, Spokane</td>
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<td>September 18-20</td>
<td>ACHS, Leavenworth</td>
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<td>September 19</td>
<td>WCIF/WCIP Boards/Insurance Advisory Committee (All Day Meeting), SeaTac</td>
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<tr>
<td>September 30—October 4</td>
<td>WACO/WSAC Annual Conference, WestCoast Wenatchee Hotel, Wenatchee</td>
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LEWIS COUNTY SOLID WASTE MANAGER. Salary: $43,606 - $44,973 per year. Job description and complete application packet available at: www.co.lewis.wa.us or you may contact: Lewis County Solid Waste, 1411 S. Tower, PO Box 180, Centralia, WA 98531. Office: (360) 740-1451 or FAX (360) 330-7805, email: clpartee@co.lewis.wa.us. Incomplete application packets will not be considered. Lewis County is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

METROPOLITAN KING COUNTY COUNCIL CHIEF OF STAFF. Closes: February 14, 2002. Salary: $92,705.00 – $115,776.00. The chief of staff works for the Chair of the Council, Council leadership, and all Councilmembers to strategically manage policy and political issues facing the Council and King County. The Chief of Staff is responsible for the overall management and administration of the clerk, governmental relations, communications and administrative functions of the legislative branch. The chief of staff is also responsible for monitoring the independent agencies of the council, consisting of King County Civic Television and the offices of the auditor, Board of Appeals, hearing examiner and ombudsman/tax advisor. This position reports to the council chair, but is responsive to all thirteen Councilmembers and provides support to their personal staff.

The chief of staff position requires extensive experience (a minimum of five years) working with and for elected officials in a visible, fast paced political environment. The ideal candidate will have knowledge of King County Government, regional and suburban cities governments and the major regional issues they are facing. Experience with policy and political strategies, accountability systems, business practices, performance measures, media, public relations, negotiations/mediations, supervision, drafting and reviewing legislation, extensive analytical skills and excellent written and oral communication skills. A Bachelor’s degree is required.

Please submit a letter of interest, King County Council application, and resume should be submitted to the attention of the Employment Committee of the Metropolitan King County Council no later than 4:30 p.m. on Thursday, February 14, 2002. Please call (206) 296-1688 to request a full job description and application.

HUMAN SERVICES COORDINATOR FOR SKAGIT COUNTY HUMAN SERVICES DEPARTMENT. Assures that developmental disabilities, mental health and chemical addiction treatment services are available to Skagit County residents. Plans and develops programs and services in the above areas via sub-contracted providers.

Oversees contract development, management and monitoring of sub-contracted providers as well as managing and monitoring state contracts. Assures that services are top quality, best practice. Provide information to the community regarding availability of services Salary Range: $3,729.86 to $3,997.00 per month. Visit our web site: www.skagitcounty.net Closes 4:30 pm 02-20-02.

ASSISTANT PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR. Kitsap County Public Works - Road Division. $64,105.60 - $81,806.40/annually (2001 Salary Rate). Plans, organizes, and manages the activities of the Road Division of the Public Works Department including the administration and management of the functions of Engineering Services, Transportation/Traffic Operations/Maintenance, and Road Operations/Maintenance, to achieve goals within budgeted funds and available personnel. Oversees the development of divisional workloads and staff assignments, reviews progress and makes recommendations, directs changes in priorities and schedules as needed to assure work is performed in a timely and efficient manner according to appropriate guidelines, procedures, and legal regulations. Provides leadership and direction in the development of short and long-range plans, goals, and objectives for assigned operations. Makes recommendations regarding the development of capital improvement projects and priorities in annual and long-range capital improvement programs. Administers contracts associated with improvements to road and transportation facilities. Provides division and County representation on various committees and special interest and community groups. May serves as the County Engineer. Bachelor’s degree in civil engineering or closely related field, and five years of progressively responsible professional/administrative experience in planning, design, operation and construction of public works facilities, including two years of supervisory or management responsibilities; or any equivalent combination of experience and education which provides the applicant with the desired skills, knowledge and ability required to perform the work. Registration as a professional Civil Engineer in the State of Washington is desirable. (Required if designated as County Engineer). For additional information and application materials, please visit our website @ www.kitsapgov.com or contact the Kitsap County Personnel Department, (360) 337-7185, ext. 0. All application materials must be received by 4:30 pm on March 1, 2002.

ASOTIN COUNTY, FAMILY AQUATICS CENTER PROJECT MANAGER. The purpose of this position is to provide professional level project development and management oversight from site selection through construction and full project commission. Minimum of five years demonstrated experience with responsible charge in managing public sector large-scale (multi-million and multiple-contract) building and public works projects. B.S. degree in Construction Management, Mechanical Engineering or Civil Engineering preferred. Licensed in the State of WA as an Engineer-in-Training or Professional Engineer preferred. ICBO Certification suggested. This is a county position that is covered by an individual employment contract for a specified term not to exceed three years. Annual compensation range is $43,300—$56,300. To obtain an Asotin County job application package including complete job description contact: Human Resources, Asotin County Courthouse Annex, 135 Second Street, Asotin, WA 99402, (509) 243-2060. Job description can also be viewed on the County’s website at www.co.asotin.wa.us. Closing date: February 21, 2002, 5:00 pm Asotin County is a Drug Free Workplace, an Equal Employment Opportunity Employer and complies with ADA.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, PORT OF EDMONDS, WA

The Port of Edmonds is accepting applications for the position of Executive Director. The Port of Edmonds is a municipal corporation with the Executive Director reporting to an elected board of five commissioners. The Port activities include a 1,200 slip marina and rental properties with gross operating revenues of approximately 4 million dollars and a staff of 24 employees. The Executive Director is responsible for all aspects of operations, budgeting, capital improvements including construction management, and maintenance. This position requires handling multiple priorities and dealing with multiple constituencies of the Port district. The Executive Director must have the ability to communicate effectively with several audiences, including elected officials and the public, and take the initiative in making decisions and assuming responsibility for recommendations and actions that will have long-range impacts on the finances and operations of the Port. Successful applicants will have significant experience in upper level management and will be able to demonstrate competency in the requirements listed above. Minimum requirements for the position require a college degree and five years of (Continued on page 16)
management experience. The candidate must possess excellent verbal and written communication skills, demonstrated leadership abilities, and fiscal management capabilities including knowledge of public financing. We offer a competitive salary and benefits package. The deadline for applications is March 15th 2002. Submit resume in confidence to: Port of Edmonds, C/O Traner Smith & Co., CPA’s, 110 James St., Suite 106, Edmonds, WA 98020.

WHATCOM COUNTY HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES DEPARTMENT, in Bellingham, WA, is seeking a Program Coordinator for HIV Outreach and Education. This position plans, develops, implements, coordinates and evaluates Health and Human Services projects and programs in the area of HIV outreach and education. Plans and conducts educational programs and presents data and information at public meetings. Qualifications include requirement of a Bachelor’s degree in nursing or behavioral sciences AND three years of progressively responsible experience in providing public or community health services. Spanish language fluency is desirable. Hiring range is $18.84 - $20.74 / hour, DOQ. Whatcom County offers excellent employer-paid medical, dental & vision benefits for employee and family, generous vacation, sick & holiday leave. WA State Retirement system. Optional deferred comp & Flex 125 available. Application period closes 2/22/02. For required application packet contact Whatcom County Human Resources, 311 Grand Ave., Suite 107, Bellingham, WA, or call (360) 676-6802. For detailed job announcement visit our website at www.co.whatcom.wa.us or call the jobline at (360) 738-4550. Equal Opportunity Employer.
Bill Would Lock in Benton Seat

This story was published 2/2/2002

By Chris Mulick
Herald Staff Writer

OLYMPIA -- Sunnyside Sen. Jim Honeyford is pushing a bill that would prevent the seat of Benton County government from ever leaving Prosser.

If approved, Senate Bill 6550 would write a postscript to what has been a historic but dormant dispute between Prosser and Kennewick that began before the county was formed in 1905.

It's been more than 17 years since a controversial measure to make Kennewick the seat of county government was defeated. Most voters, 54 percent, supported the measure in 1984, but it needed 60 percent approval to pass.

Though officials initially expected the issue to reappear, the Legislature changed state law the following spring to prevent counties from staging more than one such vote every eight years. There's been nary a peep about it since.

"It's a dead issue around here," said Prosser Mayor Herb Schmidt. "I've heard nothing."

Honeyford introduced his bill just to be sure. It would prevent the county seat from being moved in any county with a courthouse that is listed on either the state or national registers of historic places.

Fourteen counties fall into that category, including Franklin, Grant and Columbia counties.

Honeyford this week told the Senate State and Local Government Committee that his appreciation for history moved him to propose the plan.

But the bill actually is more of a gesture to a town he'll no longer represent beginning next year. Once the Legislature approves a plan drawn up by the state's Redistricting Commission, Prosser will move from the Yakima Valley's 13th Legislative District to the 8th, which is dominated by Kennewick, Richland and West Richland.

"I'm concerned once they're in another district there will be a movement to move down the road," Honeyford said. "It would be devastating to the community."

It not only would deprive Prosser of the cultural value of being the county seat, but also would vacate the courthouse, shifting valuable jobs out of town.

Moving to Kennewick would appear attractive for obvious reasons. Closer to its population base, county government could consolidate its operations and realize greater efficiencies in dispensing services. Most new county facilities, including the jail and other offices, have opened in Kennewick in recent times.

In 1984 the measure to move the county seat to Kennewick would have headed off plans by commissioners to approve a $2.1 million remodeling project for the courthouse, the opening of which largely suppressed a similar dispute in 1926.

Then-Benton-Franklin Superior Court Judge Fred Staples led a controversial petition campaign to put the measure on the ballot, in part because he believed splitting the administration of services between Prosser and Kennewick to be against the law.

"I knew what we were doing was illegal as hell," Staples said Friday night from his winter home in Arizona. "I was just trying to make it legal."

He said he's not about to weigh in on whether the county seat should be moved today and said he wishes he hadn't been in the position to push for it before.

"I didn't want to do it at all," he said. "I knew damn well it would cause me a whole lot of trouble, and it did."

Current county Commissioner Max Benitz of Prosser sent written testimony to the Senate committee this week saying preserving the county seat offers a symbol of stability and that a historic courthouse shouldn't be abandoned so easily.

"This building plays a significant role in the history of the area and its people," he said.

Honeyford may have his work cut out for him to get the bill to Gov. Gary Locke's desk. Some legislators have raised concerns about what would happen should such small, rural towns become depopulated and whether the bill would encourage the continued use of old buildings that aren't suited to meet modern technological needs.