

the Courthouse Journal

W A C O U N T I E S . O R G

February 29, 2008
Issue No. 8

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*Washington Association of County Officials
Washington State Association of Counties*

Five Washington Counties Scholarships in the amount of \$3000 each are due to be awarded in early May to dependent children of county employees. All applications must be postmarked no later than April 1 to qualify for consideration. The application and instructions are attached to this Courthouse Journal and are available on-line at www.wacounties.org.

Relief for Storm Ridden Counties

The Legislature appears poised to send some direct assistance to the eleven western Washington counties devastated by the storms of historical dimension in December but in the wake of all the destruction, local governments are challenged with functioning with "business as usual," rebuilding and moving forward all at the same time.

Lewis County officials are in just that predicament. Last year the county adopted a resolution creating a county public facility district with the goal in mind of building a regional center using, among other sources, a 0.333 percent credit against the state sales and use tax to fund the project. Statute dictates that construction must commence before January 1, 2009. Since the flooding, the environmental analysis and permitting process are expected to take much longer putting the start of construction in jeopardy.

Senator Dan Swecker, R-20, and Representative Gary Alexander, R-20, are the respective sponsors of **SB 6905** and **HB 3151**, bills to extend the start-of-construction date. The proposal is critical to Lewis County. The WACO Legislative Committee voted Thursday to give full support to both bills. WACO also supports an amendment to **SB 6905**, being proposed by Senator Brian Hatfield, D-19, and graciously agreed to by Senator Swecker which answers the question that is the minds of those eleven counties, "What about next time?"

The proposed amendment will allow counties to submit to the voters to pass a 1/10th of 1% local option sales tax for the purposes of regional or countywide emergency management and disaster preparedness. Grays Harbor County Sheriff Mike Whelan came forward this week with the idea after searching for a solution to the recent experience in his county. He said, "Our citizens needed blankets, cots, shelters with cooking facilities, they needed their sanitary needs attended to, and for the most part this was not available when needed the most. In most rural communities emergency management and disaster preparedness are not adequately funded. There simply is not the money to operate emergency management at a reasonable level and to equip and maintain emergency shelters."

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Whelan also recounted, "All of our major roadways were completely blocked and impassable as a result of the storm. For several days the only viable shelter we had in Grays Harbor County was at the fairgrounds in Elma. After a few days other shelters were set up but those were either without power or were set up as power was restored. When we needed the shelters the most, right after the storm and for several days following this storm, we did not have them because of a lack of power."

The amendment to **SB 6905** authorizing the voter option would allow counties to do the following:

- Establish plans on a countywide basis for the installation of emergency shelters.
- Provide funding for equipping those shelters to include sleeping facilities, cooking facilities, and the manpower and material necessary to operate those shelters on a round the clock basis.
- Provide resources to help identify and care for those with special needs.
- Provide resources necessary to establish emergency power which is a critical need for any emergency shelter.

The concept of the amendment also emerged as **HB 3378** sponsored by Representatives Kessler, O'Brien, Blake and Takko, but was doomed on arrival since it was introduced after the cutoff dates.

County official are urged to contact their legislators and urge passage of both **SB 6905** with the amendment and **HB 3151** without amendment.

Senate Takes Its Turn on Supplemental Budget

On Tuesday, February 26, the Senate unveiled its supplemental budget. Like the House, the Senate left the 2007-2009 biennial budget largely intact. Also like the House, counties had few gains and losses.

The Senate also maintained a similar amount of reserves - \$754 million. However, there were significant policy differences between the proposed House and Senate budgets. For example, the Senate budget does not include a 1% teacher salary increase. The Senate refuses to delay all-day kindergarten. In addition, the Senate is funding a working families' tax refund based on the federal earned income credit. They decreased the amount of funding for housing by \$40 million. On the bright side for counties, the Senate increased mental health funding by \$12 million and legislation to reduce revenues in the Senate budget has few effects on county budgets.

The Senate passed its budget on February 28 and now the budget moves to final negotiations with the three corners – House, Senate, and Governor. Rumors are that the Governor wants at least \$100 million more left in reserves. Cuts in programs or new initiatives will be required to make that happen, and consequently, the term "budget battle" appropriately describes the process for the last days of the Legislature.

Legislative Committee Schedules and Agendas:

<http://www.leg.wa.gov/wsladm/calendar.cfm>

Bill Information: www.leg.wa.gov

Tax Breaks Expected to Pass

Although hundreds of bills were introduced to provide tax breaks to businesses, consumers, and other stakeholders, the final cut in both House and Senate budgets were limited to less than twenty that have little impact on county budgets. Bills assumed in both budgets include:

HB 2543/SB 6799 – Implements the Streamlined Sales Tax Agreement rules for sourcing florist sales.

HB 1404/SB 6375 – Sales tax exemption for trail grooming services (\$2,000 local impact)

HB 2650 – Authorizes the Governor to enter into a cigarette tax compact with the Yakama Nation (no local impact)

HB 2542 - Cigarette taxes enforcement bill (no local impact)

HB 3275/SB 6844 – Provides B&O tax exemption for grocery distribution co-ops (no local impact)

HB 1621/SB 5780 – Provides a real estate excise tax exemption for manufactured/mobile home parks sold to qualified tenant organizations (local impact minimal)

Bills assumed in Senate budget only:

SB 6828 – Extends aerospace manufacturing and design tax incentives to other aerospace industry services (\$125,000 local impact mostly in Snohomish and Spokane counties)

SB 6323 – Increases cap for B&O tax credit for jobs in rural counties to \$9 million (no local impact)

SB 6297 – Increases state funding of county elected prosecutor salaries (\$923,000 gain to counties)

SB 6218 - Reduces state excise tax on historic vessels (no local impact)

SB 6468 – B&O and sales tax exemptions for honey beekeepers (\$4,000 local impact)

SB 5256 – Excludes veterans disability income for purposes of senior and disabled persons property tax deferral/exemption program (\$100,000 local loss, \$2.5 million tax shift)

SB 6196 – Makes technical changes to definitions in Local Infrastructure Finance Tool (no local impact)

SB 6216 – Authorizes the Governor to enter into a cigarette tax compact with the Shoalwater Tribe (no local impact)

SB 6389 – Provides leasehold and property tax exemptions for military housing transferred to private parties (minimal statewide impact; affects Spokane County)

SB 6423 - Changes the B&O tax credit for motion picture industry investments (no local impact)

SB 6638 – leasehold exemption for Northwest Folklife (no statewide impact; only King County)

SB 6641 – Clarifies that the six-year property tax lid lift is temporary unless stated otherwise in the ballot title (no local impact)

SB 6663 – DOR clean up bill (no local impact)

SB 6806 – Provides leasehold and property tax exemptions for anaerobic digester production (\$1,000 local impact)

SB 6905 – Extends the date to begin construction on a public facilities district project in national disaster counties (no local impact)

SB 6912 – Increases the senior and disabled persons property tax deferral/exemption program income threshold by \$5,000 (\$2.5 million loss; \$25 million tax shift)

SB 6949 – Transfers administration of new Low Income Property Tax Deferral program to DOR

SB 6626 – Extends the sales tax deferral on construction projects in community empowerment zones to corporate headquarters)

SB 6809 – Provides a sales tax remittance to persons qualifying for the federal earned income tax credit (no local impact)

SB 6866 – Provides a B&O tax credit tot polysilicon manufacturers located in Walla Walla County (no local impact)

Bills assumed in House budget only:

HB 2460 – Makes technical changes to leasehold excise tax exemption for amphitheater property (no local impact)

HB 1211 – Provides a sales and use tax exemption for solar hot water heaters (minimal local impact)

HB 2678 – Provides a preferential B&O tax rate to timber manufacturing using recycled paper (no local impact)

HB 1129 – Provides B&O tax exemption for zoos (no local impact)

HB 2544 – Provides a B&O tax exemption for temporary medical housing (no local impact)

HB 3283 – Waives B&O tax penalties for military personnel overseas (no local impact)

HB 3362 – Provides B&O tax credit to businesses that purchase energy efficient equipment (no local impact)

HB 3051 – Transfers state sales tax on \$1 billion tolled transportation projects and Spokane north-south freeway to the construction budget of those projects (no local impact)

HB 2847 – Provides a sales tax exemption for property purchased to implement weatherization of homes of low income persons (\$100,000 local impact)

HB 2585 – Sales tax exemption for newspaper supplements tax (minimal local impact)

Budget, Finance and Taxes

County Treasurers' Cleanup Bill

The Treasurers'/WACO request bill, **SHB 2986**, cleaning up various statutes with regard to collecting taxes, refunding of taxes and archaic language, was heard in the Senate Government Operations and Elections Committee on Thursday, February 28. Speaking in favor of the bill were prime sponsor, Representative Dean Takko, and Lewis County Treasurer Rose Bowman, Treasurers' Association Legislative Chair. It passed out of committee with a striking amendment that the treasurers had asked for, which would require that tax bills be sent to each property owner and the person to be notified is the owner named of record as existing on the tax roll. The requirement that a work group be convened to examine ways to provide detailed property tax information to all taxpayers was removed. That had been an amendment added on the House side.

Inheritance/Tax Exemption

SSB 6851, allowing a surviving spouse to receive an exemption from the real estate excise tax without the required documents if he/she shows a certified copy of the death certificate and signs an affidavit affirming that he/she is the sole and rightful heir to the property, was passed to House Rules by the House Finance Committee this week. A committee amendment was added to also allow a surviving domestic partner to obtain a REET exemption on community property transfers. However, the laws on domestic partnership have not changed substantially enough for this to work without probating the will and there is not enough time left in the legislative session to take care of this issue.

What Left?

Gradually the smoke clears and you almost reach a point in session where you can see what is left after all the rhetoric and hearings. And, sometimes you wonder where it all went.

To date, there have been no serious challenges mounted to the Current Use act. It survives intact. A few runs were made, but nothing that really grabbed support.

What was a hot topic was something for Veterans in the form of a property tax exemption. **SB 5256**, veterans disability payments, does this and in the correct manner. In the 2007 Session, what amounted to a "double dip" exemption was presented. It would have raised both the Dollar Exemption Amount and allowed Disability Income payments to be deducted from the calculation. This bill corrects the deficiency and simply exempts their Disability Income from the calculations.

SB 6641, multi-year LID Lifts, also corrects a deficiency that existed in the prior law. It clearly and concisely states when a multi-year LID lift is permanent and when it is not in the ballot title. You will no longer have to deal with "assumption by omission" under the prior **SB 5498** statute. But, with any change in the law, you will have those multi-year LID lift Levies adopted under **SB 5498** but before the adoption of **SB 6641** to deal with and track through the system.

Cautious optimism is also in order with support for **SB 6949** with changes to the deferral program. You may recall the deferral program being adopted in our most recent "Special Session." This allowed people with income up to \$57,000 to defer up to 50% of their property tax payments if they qualified. While acceptance of the program was mixed at best, what was agreed was that it was going to be very expensive and time consuming for county assessors and treasurers to administer. Hats off to Senator Lisa Brown who introduced **SB 6949**. This properly puts the entire bill under the auspices

of the Washington State Department of Revenue. We will look forward to speedy adoption of this bill. This would allow taxpayers a “one stop shop” for their deferral and should work much better from a practical standpoint for the taxpayer. For the assessors per se, [HB 2609](#), digital imagery, and [HB 2611](#), annual revaluations, have mixed results. An amendment is waiting in the wings on [HB 2609](#) which will fully correct a prior amendment that was tacked on. All we need is a vote in Senate Executive Session to get that done. [HB 2611](#) has had great support from both the House and Senate members, and that has been much appreciated by the assessors. The downside is that providing funding for implementation has proved problematic. The bottom of the budget bag appears to be empty at this point, and our bill isn’t included. So, for those keeping score, there are the results. No serious raiding of the Property Tax Statutes to date, and with the clock ticking down toward close of business Friday, February 29 and another cut off calendar date time becomes finite. But, as that famous person whose name I currently forget once said, “Remember gentlemen, at the end of the day we hang together or we die separately.”

Courts, Public Safety, Law & Justice

Clerks’ Collection Bill Moves

[SB 6193](#), a bill to allow the county clerks to withhold and deliver the funds of convicted offenders for payment of legal financial obligations, moved from the House Judiciary Committee to the House Rules Committee this week. Now [SB 6193](#) is at the same point where its companion met an impasse. County clerks now hope to clear all the earlier misconceptions that inmates would be relieved of savings accounts meant for their reentry into society. In fact, the tool is intended for use when an offender has experienced a windfall of substantial assets and is extremely delinquent in an effort to pay. Clerks are urged to contact both Rules members and their own House members.

Prosecutors Have Busy Week

[SB 6933](#), a bill to admit evidence of prior sex offenses, was heard in House Judiciary Committee this week and is scheduled for executive action February 28.

[SB 6488](#) and its companion [HB 2713](#) were both heard this week. [SB 6488](#) was amended to expand the database to include misdemeanors and gross misdemeanors with sexual motivation and creates a special allegation in limited jurisdiction courts to determine sexual motivation. The House Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness Committee passed [SB 6488](#) out of committee on Wednesday. The Senate Human Services and Corrections Committee heard [HB 2713](#) on Thursday.

Sheriffs’ Priority

[HB 1030](#), enhancing the sentence for attempting to elude a police vehicle, passed out of the Senate Judiciary Committee after being heard late last Friday. Rumor has it that the bill will pass this session after three prior attempts.

Tribal Law Enforcement

[HB 2476](#), commissioning tribal law enforcement officers to act as general authority peace officers in Washington State, was heard in Senate Judiciary Committee last Friday afternoon, as well. Yakima County Sheriff Ken Irwin and Thurston County Sheriff Dan Kimball represented the Washington State Sheriffs’ Association (WSSA) in opposing the bill. WSSA has asked that the bill be delayed until next session in order to have the Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs develop a model policy that will address the concerns of WSSA. WSSA President Bill Elfo has continued to negotiate with the prime sponsor, Representative John McCoy, and other members of the Legislature. The bill has passed out of the Judiciary Committee with an amendment proposed by Senator Mike Carrell. The amendment was not agreed to by WSSA.

Update for Coroners and Medical Examiners

There is still room available for those interested in the Medicolegal Death Investigations Training to be held in Kelso April 21-25, 2008. The training is based on a nationally recognized program for death investigators and is a requirement for

anyone wishing certification through the American Board of Medicolegal Death Investigators (ABMDI). Reimbursement is provided for coroner and medical examiner staff for travel, lodging and per diem. There is no registration fee for the course. An application is attached to this edition of *the Courthouse Journal*.

Human Remains

HB 2624 and the companion **SB 6521**, the bills dealing with skeletal human remains, have both been amended to leave the coroner/medical examiner authority and responsibility intact in RCW 68.50. A new section to the statute is added to deal with skeletal human remains. The House Appropriations Committee added a section that will require the state physical anthropologist to report every two years to the legislature on their caseload for review for budgetary purposes. **HB 2624** is null and void if not funded in the budget. The House budget funded the office of the physical anthropologist (\$1+ mil per year) but the Senate budget did not include funding. **SB 6521** has been referred to Ways and Means with no hearing set (has to pass W&M by Monday night) and **HB 2624** had executive action taken in the Senate Government Operations and Elections Committee on February 26, but has been referred to Ways and Means at the time of this writing.

The Uniform Anatomical Gift Act

HB 1637, the uniform anatomical gift act, was up for executive action in the Senate Health and Long Term Care Committee has been referred to the Senate Rules Committee. **SB 5657** was heard in the House Health Care and Wellness Committee on February 20 but has not been voted out of committee. The Forensic Investigations Council, coroners, medical examiners and prosecutors worked on the proposal during the interim and reached agreement with organ and tissue procurement interests on the current language.

Gang Legislation

SHB 2712, based on recommendations of the Gang Task Force, passed the House floor with a vote of 94-1. The bill establishes a local grant program in support of special enforcement emphasis targeting gang crime to be administered by the Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs (WASPC) and had a public hearing in the Senate Judiciary Committee on February 27. The House and Senate budget include funding for law enforcement grant programs that target gang violence and graffiti abatement efforts.

Elections, Licensing & Recordings

WACO/Auditor Legislative Priorities – Special Elections and Voter Privacy

E2SSB 5271, modifying when a special election may be held, and **SSB 5566**, the voter privacy bill, were both heard by the House State Government and Tribal Affairs Committee, Wednesday.

Testifying in support of **E2SSB 5271** were Secretary of State Sam Reed; Yakima County Auditor Corky Mattingly and Chelan County Auditor Evelyn Arnold (Auditors' Association Legislative Committee Co-chairs); Bill Huennekens, King County Elections; Dan Steele, School Directors' Association; and Barbara Mertens, School Administrators' Association. Also signing in supporting the bill were the fire districts, hospital districts, cities, WACO and WSAC. The auditors have worked very hard with the stakeholders over the last year to come to an agreement on the language in this bill with much give and take on all sides. Only the Washington Education Association (WEA) testified in opposition to the legislation, and although they have been included in the discussions from the beginning, they were not willing to compromise.

Testifying in support of **SSB 5566**, protecting voter registration information, were Kitsap County Auditor Karen Flynn and Pierce County Auditor Pat McCarthy.

Representative Hunt, chair of the committee, refused to add either bill to Executive Session, so they are dead for the session. Vice Chair, Representative Appleton, voiced her strong disappointment that the bills were not passed out of committee so that the full House could vote on them.

Inactive Voters

HB 2473, eliminating the requirement that auditors send a ballot or an application to receive a ballot to inactive voters has been passed out of the Senate Government Operations and Elections Committee and resides in Senate Rules. Auditors: Please call Rules Committee members and ask that they pull the bill on to the floor calendar.

Voters' Pamphlet Information

2SHB 2807 requires the Secretary of State (SOS) and the county auditors to post an online voters' pamphlet for primary and general elections, with all measures and candidates, including judicial candidates. The bill now has a null and void clause, should funding not be provided for this legislation by June 30, 2008. 2SHB 2807 was passed out of the Senate Government Operations and Elections Committee to Rules.

Electronic Recording

EHB 2459, creating the uniform real property electronic recording act, is in Senate Rules. This bill is a SOS request bill and is supported by the Auditors' Association and WACO.

Elective Office

The SOS request bill SHB 1534 is now primarily a minor party candidate filing and ballot access bill. The most important change that may affect the auditors operations has to do with the deadline by which minor party and independent candidates must submit nominating petitions. The current deadline is the second Saturday in May. An amendment was passed to the bill as it was sent out of the Senate Government Operations and Elections Committee to Senate Rules, moving that deadline to the last Friday of the regular filing week in June.

Voter Registration and Information

A striking amendment by the Senate Higher Education Committee to SHB 2917, regarding voter registration and informational activities at institutions of higher education, removed language that county auditors would be assigned the specific duty of providing mail-in registration forms on campuses. Student governments and the Secretary of State will work together as part of the SOS College Civics Program.

Environment, Land Use & Resources

General Land Use/Permitting Bills

SSB 6609 - Limiting the charge for permits for specialty agricultural buildings. These bills establish statewide limit of \$75 on the amount that can be charged for specialty agricultural building permits. WSAC opposes a statewide preemption to establish a limit on the amount of a permit fee beyond the costs currently permitted by law.

EHB 3230 - Changing the public notification and hearing requirements for permits issued under the shoreline management act had a public hearing in Senate Water, Energy, and Telecommunications.

SB 6892 - Concerning the time limits of school impact fee expenditures. Increases the length a jurisdiction can hold impact fees prior to expenditure. This bill is now in House Rules.

HB 2110 - Allowing all fire protection facilities to use impact fees is in Senate Rules.

SHB 2575 - Forming a technical advisory group on fire sprinkler systems in private residences is in Senate Rules.

E2SHB 3186/SSB 6508 - Authorizing the creation of beach management district. Both bills are in Rules Committees.

Climate Change

ESSB 6580 - Local Solutions to Climate Change/GMA failed to pass in House Local Government on its first attempt but has been re-scheduled for Executive Session on Friday, February 29 at 4:30 p.m. Following attempts to make it a study only bill with a stakeholder work group, the underlying bill failed to garner enough votes. There are efforts to add the funding elements into a budget proviso which WSAC will monitor.

Housing

ESHB 1727 Planning to Ensure Sufficient Land and Densities to Accommodate Growth is in Senate Ways and Means. The bill requires consultation and cooperation between cities and counties in the adoption of rules and regulations in Urban Growth Areas. This bill still has language that WSAC OPPOSES and we have provided amendatory language. Specifically, WSAC opposes Section 4/Subsection 3 of this bill.

Annexation

SHB 2482 Relating to the signature validation process for petitions that seek annexation SHB 2482 has passed is now in Senate Rules.

HB 2483 Modifying assessed valuation requirements for the direct petition method of annexation. **HB 2483** has passed the House and is now in Senate Rules.

Natural Resources

Ruckelshaus Center Briefing: Participants of the Ruckelshaus Dispute Resolution Center made a presentation during a work session before the Senate Agricultural and Rural Economic Development Committee on February 25. The center is operated jointly by UW and WSU and named after former EPA Director and Washington insider, William D. Ruckelshaus. The center is tasked with acting as a neutral resource for collaborative problem solving in the region. 2007 legislation, embodied in **SB 5248**, authorized the center to examine the relationship between agriculture and local critical area ordinances. The goal of the statute is to attempt to preserve agricultural vitality while protecting critical environmental areas. The first of two progress reports were given by representatives of the Ruckelshaus Center and each of the four participating caucus members. Local Government caucus was represented by Eric Johnson of WSAC who began his presentation by emphasizing the inherent conflict embodied in various component goals of the state's Growth Management Act and the diverse treatment afforded each county in addressing the issue of agricultural buffers. Joining him were other participants, Bill Robinson of the Nature Conservancy representing the Environmental caucus, Dan Wood of the Washington Farm Bureau representing the Agricultural caucus and Marty Loesch of the Swinomish Tribe representing the Tribal caucus. The working group will render its final report and recommendations in September 2009, for submission to the 2010 Legislature.

Shellfish Protection Districts (**SB 6607** and **HB 2676**)

These bills which would freeze assessments for all dairy operators covered by SPDs were heard this week in both Senate and House committees. WSAC testified in opposition to the state preemption but the bills are moving with broad bipartisan support and may be further expanded to cover all of agriculture. All parties seem to agree that many issues regarding SPDs need to be addressed during the interim.

Other bills Supported or Monitored by WSAC Affecting Counties:

HB 2893 which expands membership on the Forest Practices Board to include a labor member representing a timber related union.

HB 2471 which funds and implements the State Geological Survey. Data from the survey could help county planning functions.

HB 2438 which extends a pilot project that allows the use of dogs to hunt cougars.

SB 5318 which requires the Department of Fish and Wildlife to participate in the cooperative programs of the Yellowstone to Yukon Initiative. Some NE Washington landowners have expressed concern over the Initiative, fearing possible new land use restrictions.

SB 6227 which authorizes the establishment of outer coast marine resource committees at the county level. Funding to start the program has been provided in the senate budget.

SB 6874 which provides funding for the Columbia River Settlement Account between the State and the Colville and Spokane Tribes whereby Lake Roosevelt will be drawn down to provide additional water to recharge the Odessa aquifer, instream flow for fish and new water for growing communities on the Columbia river.

SB 6348 which is a bill to study the adverse impacts of water rights transfers out of individual basins. The bill has been sought by Senator Bob Morton, who has expressed concern about the detrimental effects such transfers could have on his sprawling NE Washington district.

HB 6803 Preparing for and adapting to climate change. The bill establishes DOE research goals and deadlines for collection of data and requires a report to the legislature and governor in late 2008. The office of the state Climatologist is established. (One of four environmental priority bills.)

SB 6850 Climate Change impacts is also one of the environmental community priority bills. The bill failed to pass out of a house committee on its first try and another attempt may be made before the Friday cutoff. Failing that, a senate bill may be resurrected thereby keeping the measure alive.

HB 2525 Allowing certain mitigation for flood damage without obtaining a permit in the event of a declared emergency or a chronic danger.

HB 2844 Implements the Evergreen Cities proposal sought by the environmental community as one of their top four legislative priorities. Counties may adopt at their option. The program includes management plans, model ordinances, recognition program and coordination with DNR. The bill is opposed by realtors and homebuilders.

HB 3186 Allows counties to establish beach management districts.

Public Health & Human Services

EHB 3142 - Affordable Housing Loan Programs

EHB 3125 creates a rapid response loan fund in the Department of Community Trade and Economic Development to be administered by the Washington State Housing Finance Commission. Eligible organizations, including local governments, may utilize these 0-3 percent interest loans to purchase land on which to develop affordable housing, facilities intended to provide supportive services to affordable housing residents, community facilities preservation or development in gentrifying neighborhoods. Performance measures as placed in the bill for organizational accountability. The Senate Consumer Protection and Housing Committee voted the bill out and it currently awaits a hearing in the Senate Ways and Means Committee. Both the House and Senate proposed capital budgets appropriate \$20 million for this program.

ESSB 5959 - Transitional Housing Operating and Rent (THOR) Program

The THOR program has operated within the Department of Community Trade and Economic Development since 1999, however it is not a program currently in state statute. The THOR program was created to assist at-risk households in securing and retaining housing. Eligible organizations receiving THOR funds must use the monies for rental assistance, case management services, operating expenses of transitional housing facilities that serve homeless families with children, and limited organizational administrative costs. The bill allows counties to opt out of the requirement that all counties must produce a county Affordable Housing for All Program produced by a county taskforce working to end the lack of affordable housing within their community. This plan may be the same as the county Homeless plan or GMA comprehensive plan. The House proposed supplemental budget funds the THOR program at \$3.5 million. The Senate proposed budget was at the \$2.5 million level.

Housing Trust Fund

Both the House and Senate proposed budgets reflected a significant increase in the Housing Trust Fund. The Senate reflected the same level as the Governor's proposed budget, \$50 million from the Capital budget. The House proposed budget goes a step further, in addition to the \$50 million capital funding the budget takes \$40 million from the state general fund for a combined investment of \$90 million in the supplemental budget. The additional funding in the Housing Trust Fund is to help communities address the housing needs of low-income and special needs populations. \$10

million of the enhancement is earmarked for low-income victims of the recent flood and up to \$3 million will be available for short-term loans to purchase property for low-income housing.

Developmental Disabilities Bills and Budget

SB 6736 and the companion **HB 3078**, establishing a lifelong services program for persons with developmental disabilities, did not make it out of the committee prior to cutoff but are addressed in both the Senate and House budget. The House budget sets up a pilot program in at least one county to provide working age adults with severe and profound developmental disabilities a choice between employment-related services and community access services. The Senate budget language would require DSHS to work with the counties to establish a consistent proposed policy for minimum direct service hours for clients, minimum hours of support, timeframes for seeking paid employment and services provided under the pathway to employment while paid employment, and the services provided under pathway to employment are sought. DSHS is required to report back to the legislature by November 1, 2008, with estimated fiscal impacts and an option for making the policy budget neutral for the current level of clients served. Other bills we are monitoring include **HB 2903**, to create the position of Court Access and Accommodations Coordinator to address access to courts by persons, scheduled for public hearing in the Senate Judiciary Committee at 1:30 on February 29 and **SB 6448**, providing for intensive behavior support services for children with developmental disabilities, which received a public hearing and was passed out in executive action in the House Human Services committee on February 28.

RSN Funding in the Senate Budget

Good news for RSNs in the Senate budget. Ten million dollars in state funds has been allocated to enable the community mental health system to maintain and improve delivery of non-Medicaid services including crisis response, counseling, case management, acute care, and residential services for children and adults who are not presently eligible for Medicaid due to income, family circumstances, or the stage or nature of their illness. The funds are to be distributed by population. Since the funding was only included in the Senate budget we are working to ensure the funding is included in the final supplemental budget.

Transportation & Public Works

Bidding

SSB 6235 did not pass cutoff deadlines. This bill would have changed the method to secure consulting, architectural, engineering, or other services via competitive bidding. The proposed substitute is a substantial improvement to the initial bill introduced. Most significantly, the bill adds other construction-related services to the services that governmental agencies must publicly announce requirements for and negotiate contracts for on the basis of demonstrated competence and qualification for the type of professional services required and at fair and reasonable prices. WSAC Opposed.

Concurrency

HB 2950/SB 6566 did not pass cutoff deadlines. This bill addresses the issue of concurrency and impact fees for transportation purposes. Basically, this bill states that the payment of impact fees would constitute an acceptable strategy for meeting concurrency. WSAC is working to allow a county to make this determination and not pre-empt our local decision making authority.

County Bridges

SB 6808/HB2969 have not passed cutoff deadlines. These bills will require counties and cities to maintain, replace, or appropriate funds for bridges deemed to be "especially deficient" and are now dead. This bill requires if a county (or city) that has a bridge with a rating of 9 or less (out of 100), the state treasurer would be required to withhold twenty-five percent of their state gas tax revenues until enough revenue is accrued to fund 50% of the estimated cost to replace the bridge or rehabilitated at a rating of 80 or better. WSAC opposes this bill. The County Road Administration Board also expressed concern over the program administration requirements and policy implications.

Transportation Benefit Districts

HB 3143 passed the House 93-0, and is scheduled for a hearing in Senate Transportation. This bill provides for the increase in governing body membership for single-county public transportation benefit areas from not more than nine to not more than 11.

Tolling

SHB 1773 passed the house 59-35, and has had a public hearing in Senate Transportation. This legislation establishes the policy framework for the imposition of tolls on state-owned facilities. Either the Legislature or the Transportation Commission (if so delegated) can impose tolls, including variable pricing, on a facility or corridor. All revenue from a tolled facility or corridor must be used only to improve, preserve, or operate the facility or corridor on or in which it is collected

Transportation Improvement Board

Since the early 1990s, counties that wished to transfer a county road to a state highway, or petition for a state highway to become a county road would require Transportation Improvement Board (TIB) approval. This legislation (**SB 6321**) proposes to transfer this authority to the Washington State Transportation Commission (WSTC). WSAC supports this bill. **SB 6321** passed the Senate 47-0 and has been passed by the House Transportation Committee.

Day Labor

SSB 6347 would permit counties with a population of less than 22,000 to be exempt from construction day labor use restrictions. This bill passed the Senate 48-0, but died in the House.

Wetland Mitigation Banking

SB 6761 passed the Senate 46-2. This bill states that the criteria for determining a service area for a wetland mitigation bank must include restricting, with exceptions, the maximum allowable service area to the water resource inventory area (WRIA) in which the bank is located. Most importantly, the Department of Ecology and the appropriate county or city in which the bank is located has final approval for determining the service area for specific banks. WSAC supports this bill.

Regional Transportation Investment Districts

SB 6771 passed the Senate 27-22 and has had a public hearing in House Transportation. This bill temporarily eliminates the opportunity for a regional transportation investment district to be formed under this chapter and the participating county or counties shall not submit a ballot proposition to voters prior to November 1, 2009.

Surface Mining

HB 2981 failed to pass cutoffs. This bill deals with surface mining and instead of requiring counties to permit their small mines and restricting the pits from which counties can purchase materials; this bill will now create a joint select committee on surface mine regulations. Representatives Kretz and Blake discussed working on this issue in the interim.

Boards & Commissions

Many Opportunities to Represent Counties on Statewide Boards and Commissions

The following positions on statewide boards and commissions are available to County Commissioners, Council members or Executives. The WSAC Board will either nominate or appoint representatives according to statute at their March 27 regular meeting.

To apply for any of the seats, complete the short online interest form by March 17 at <http://www.wacounties.org/WSAC/boards.asp>. If you have any questions please contact Michelle Zahrly at (360) 586-4219 ext. 112 or mzahrly@wacounties.org.

Puget Sound Ecosystem Coordinating Board –Alternate

Counties are represented by 7 individuals on the “Ecosystem Coordination Board”; Commissioner Kevin Ranker is the lead representative and an alternate is needed in the event he is unable to attend. http://www.psp.wa.gov/EB_about.html

Enhanced 911 Advisory Committee – Eastside Alternate

http://emd.wa.gov/e911/e911_advisory_committee.shtml

Municipal Research Council - The Municipal Research Council is a state agency that provides a comprehensive research and services program for the 281 cities and towns and 39 counties of Washington State.

<http://www.mrsc.org/council.aspx#member>

Traffic Safety Commission – Serves at the pleasure of the Governor. Preference for this position will be given for current or past involvement in your local Community Traffic Safety Task Force, a Corridor Traffic Safety project or other efforts to improve traffic safety in your community. The opening was created when Snohomish Councilman Kirke Sievers stepped down from his seat in December. <http://www.wtsc.wa.gov/about/default.php>

Washington Biodiversity Council – The Council’s primary task for the next year is to implement the recommendations in the Biodiversity Conservation Strategy, released last December. The Council is interested in eastside representation but this recruitment is open to all 39 counties. <http://www.biodiversity.wa.gov/council/index.html>

Recent Appointments to Statewide Boards and Commissions

Governor Gregoire has appointed Councilman Dave Gossett, Snohomish County, to the Westside seat of the Affordable Housing Advisory Committee.

The WSAC Executive Committee has appointed Commissioner Mary Lou Peterson, Okanogan County, to an ad hoc committee of the Department of Fish & Wildlife regarding wildlife conflict policies. The committee will meet two times this spring. Commissioner Ken Oliver, Pend Oreille County, was appointed alternate.

Commissioner Brad Miller of Ferry County, who had been serving as eastside alternate to the Enhanced 911 Advisory Committee, has been appointed to the primary position. The vacancy was created when Commissioner Greg Partch resigned due to other commitments.

Congratulations to all and thank you for serving.

Training & Upcoming Events

Booth Space Available for Public Safety Job Fair

Booth space is still available for a Public Safety Job Fair, taking place on Saturday, April 12, 2008 at Paine Field in Everett. The job fair hours are 10am to 4pm with exhibitor set up beginning at 8am. This fair is open to all Washington State Police, Fire, Corrections, Emergency Communications, Emergency Services and Human Resources Departments. For this job fair, booths are offered at an introductory price.

Candidates will be attracted to the fair with a comprehensive PR package that will include posting flyers and print material to all Puget Sound schools and colleges. Targeted radio and newspaper advertising will be also be utilized.

The parking lot has room for agencies who want to display vehicles and apparatus. Live demonstrations will be scheduled on a first come first serve basis.

Directions to the Job Fair site are available at www.NationalRecruitingNetwork.com.

Contact: Director, Jim Patten
Telephone: 425-423-9922
Cell Phone: 425-418-8900
Address: 3101 111th St. S.W., Bay P
Everett, WA 98204
Email: jpatten@nationaltestingnetwork.com

If you are interested in attending, please contact Jim Patten for more information. Copies of the Job Fair flyer are available upon request. We can supply you with enough copies to hand out to applicants or post on your job boards. A printable version of the job fair flyer is available online at www.NationalRecruitingNetwork.com.

Grant Writing USA

Grant Writing Workshop in University Place March 27-28, 2008

The City of University Place Parks & Recreation and Grant Writing USA will present a two-day grant writing workshop in University Place, March 27-28, 2008. Beginning and experienced grant writers from city, county and state agencies as well as nonprofits, K-12, colleges and universities are encouraged to attend.

Purchase orders, checks and cards are welcome. Multi-enrollment discounts are available. Tuition payment is not required at the time of enrollment. Tuition is \$425 and includes all materials: workbook and accompanying 220MB resource CD that's packed full of tools and more than 200 sample grant proposals.

Seating is limited, online reservations are necessary, walk-ins are not allowed. For more information including venue location and maps, graduate testimonials and instant, online enrollment, please visit <http://GrantWritingUSA.com>.

Contact:

Cathy Rittenhouse, Grant Writing USA, 800.814.8191, cathy@grantwritingusa.com.
Marie Hopkins, City of University Place, 253.460.2518, mhopkins@cityofup.com.

More than 5,000 agencies across America turn to Grant Writing USA for grants training. Grant Writing USA delivers nationwide training programs and workshops that dramatically enhance performance in the areas of grant writing, national foundation and government grant maker research and relations, program planning, and personal and organizational excellence. Each element plays an important role in grant writing success and all are covered in this, Grant Writing USA's signature two-day workshop.

DOR Sponsors Tribal Sovereignty Workshops

Area businesses, local governments and the general public are invited to attend a free tribal workshop called "Uncovering the Mystery of Tribal Sovereignty – Facts and Fiction about tribes, state government, and their taxing authority," to be held in Tacoma on March 25 and Vancouver March 27.

The workshop, sponsored by the Governor's Office of Indian Affairs, Department of Revenue and Association of Washington Business, will help participants understand the law affecting anyone who does business with tribes and tribal members, or does business on a tribal reservation. Topics will include taxation and economic development, shared jurisdiction, treaties, Indian law, the 1989 Centennial Accord, the difference between trust land and fee land, and how tribes contribute to economic development. A panel will answer questions, and it is designed to promote candid and open dialogue on tough issues.

Check-in starts at 8:30 a.m. and the workshops run from 9 a.m. to noon. The Tacoma workshop will be held on the mezzanine of the Washington State Historical Society, 1911 Pacific Avenue. The Vancouver workshop will be held in conference room 102 of the WSDOT Southwest Regional Office, 11018 NE 51st Circle. To register, please call 1-800-647-7706, or register online at Department of Revenue's website by clicking on *Workshops and Education* at <http://dor.wa.gov>. For more information on doing business with Indian tribes or tribal members visit <http://dor.wa.gov/content/FindTaxesAndRates/RetailSalesTax/Indians/IndianTaxGuide/default.aspx>.

Washington Counties – [wacounties.org/Calendar of Events](http://wacounties.org/Calendar%20of%20Events)

Courthouse Ramblings

Former Commissioners Remembered

Sadly, several former County Commissioners and WSAC members have passed away this month. We want to extend our heartfelt sympathy to the families and our thanks for their loved one's service to Washington's counties.

Wesley Newton Estes, born February 12, 1912 in Winlock, Washington passed away February 21. He grew up in Grays Harbor County and attended Washington State University. Wes served first as a Public Utilities District Commissioner and then as Thurston County Commissioner from 1967 to 1970. He owned several Chevron stations in the Olympia area and was active in Rotary, Capitalarians, Elks and the Republican Party. He is survived by his two sons, grandsons and great-grandson. Memorials can be sent as gifts in his name to the Washington State Historical Society.

Michael Dennis Keogh, just one day shy of his 78th birthday, passed away February 19 in Usk, Washington. Mike worked for Exxon Corporation for 20 years and then, with his wife Aurelie, purchased and operated the Usk General Store for more than 27 years. He served as Pend Oreille County Commissioner for 12 years and was appointed by Governor Booth Gardner to represent Eastern Washington business interests in the timber industry in Washington, D.C. He was an active board member for many organizations and accomplished much in the realms of economic development and tourism. Mike is survived by his wife, Aurelie, five children, and 23 grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

Clive W. Price passed away February 15 in Surprise, Arizona. He was born on February 1, 1926 in Idaho but spent most of his life on his Hereford cattle ranch in Hunters, Washington. Beginning in 1980, he served several terms as a Stevens County Commissioner. He was a past member of the Stevens County Cattleman's Association and the Gideon's. He leaves behind his wife of nearly 61 years, Nina, three children and many grandchildren. Memorial contributions may be given to the Colville Chapter of Gideon's International

Attachments

Welcome to the U.S. Communities Purchasing & Finance Agency (U.S. Communities) website <http://www.uscommunities.org/>

The Association of School Business Officials International (ASBO), the National Association of Counties (NACo), the National Institute of Governmental Purchasing (NIGP), the National League of Cities (NLC), and the United States Conference of Mayors (USCM), jointly sponsor the

U.S. Communities Government Purchasing Alliance (U.S. Communities)

Designed in cooperation with an Advisory Board of local government purchasing officials, U.S. Communities pools the purchasing power of public agencies, achieves bulk volume discounts on behalf of public agencies, competitively solicits quality products through a lead public agency and provides a purchasing forum for public agencies nationwide.

You can obtain information on how to contact all U.S. Communities suppliers by telephoning (866) 472-7467 or by sending an email to info@uscommunities.org



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Ray Burnett,
Commissioner of Purchases and Supplies
Kansas City, MO.

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Washington Association of Coroners and Medical Examiners

WACME Class Registration

Medicolegal Death Investigator Training

This course is available to death investigators including prosecutor, coroner, medical examiner and law enforcement personnel. This course will assist the investigator in preparing for the National Certification examination process.

COURSE DESCRIPTION: The purpose of this course is to provide basic training in the field of medicolegal death investigation. This course is intended for individuals who are employed as investigators for medical examiner, coroner, or prosecutor/coroner offices, and for law enforcement personnel who support these agencies by functioning as medicolegal death investigators. The course utilizes the training text *Medicolegal Death Investigator*, by S.C. Clark, et. al and covers the eight general areas outlined in the text. Those areas include: Interacting with Federal, State, and Local Agencies; Communicating; Interacting with Families; Investigation Deaths, Identifying and Preserving Evidence; Maintaining Ethical and Legal Responsibilities; Demonstrating Scientific Knowledge; and Coping with Job-Related Stress. The concepts presented will provide a basic background to investigate most all deaths. In addition, there will be discussion of the investigation of sudden unexplained infant deaths. The course includes both didactic and practical sessions. This training is intended to prepare the medicolegal death investigator to apply for registry certification.

Registry certification for medicolegal death investigators can be obtained through The American Board of Medicolegal Death Investigators, Inc. (<http://www.slu.edu/organizations/abmdi/>). This is the basic level of certification. Investigators who have demonstrated the skills to successfully complete registry certification and meet the board's requirements may apply for a higher level of certification in the future when this becomes available. The purpose of certification is to demonstrate that the investigator has the necessary knowledge and skills to perform medicolegal death investigations.

Space is limited. Priority will be given to Coroner, Medical Examiner, and Prosecutor/Coroner personnel. All others wishing to register will be allowed as space provides. *Attendees must attend the entire session to receive training credit.*

Cost: Training Course is being provided by WACME and no fee is required.

Registration: Contact Kathie with WACO, send to 206 Tenth Avenue SE, Olympia, WA 98501.
Email: khouts@wacounties.org, Phone: 360-753-7319, Fax: 360-664-2812

Training: April 21-25, 2008, at the *Red Lion Hotel - Kelso, 510 Kelso Drive, Kelso, Washington, 98626

Lodging: A block of non-smoking rooms is being held at the hotel at a special rate of \$99.00 plus tax.
Registrants are required to make their own reservations. Reservations Phone: 1-360-578-4006.

***Directions to Hotel:** *From Seattle* Take I-5 South to the WA-4 EXIT 39 toward Kelso. Turn LEFT onto Allen Street/WA-4 and continue to follow Allen Street. Turn RIGHT onto S. Kelso Drive. *From Portland* take I-5 North towards Seattle (crossing into Washington); take the WA-4 exit – EXIT 39 – toward Kelso/Longview. Turn RIGHT onto Allen Street, turn RIGHT onto S. Kelso Drive.

Medicolegal Death Investigator Training

April 21-25, 2008

PREREGISTRATION:

Preregistration is required.

Please complete this application and send to:

WACO, Attn: Kathie Houts, 206 10th Ave SE, Olympia WA 98501

khouts@wacounties.org

Phone: (360) 753-7319

Fax: (360) 664-2812

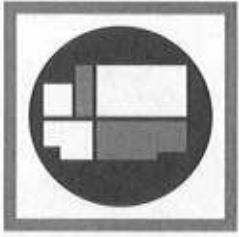
GENERAL COURSE APPLICATION

Applicants Name (Last)		(First)	(Middle)
Title/Rank:	Social Security Number (last four):	Agency:	
Agency Mailing Address: (Street or PO Box)		(City)	(State) (Zip)
Agency Phone:	Agency Fax:	Email Address:	

Additional Applicants

Applicants Name:	Rank:	Last four numbers of Social Security Number:

NOTE FOR PROSECUTORS AND LAW ENFORCEMENT: PLEASE INDICATE ON THIS FORM IF YOU ARE A DEPUTY CORONER. Reimbursement will be paid to Coroners, Medical Examiners, Prosecutor/Coroners and staff for lodging, per diem and mileage.



WASHINGTON STATE ASSOCIATION OF COUNTIES
and
WASHINGTON ASSOCIATION OF COUNTY OFFICIALS



Telephone (360) 753-1886
Fax 753-2842

Telephone (360) 753-7319
Fax 664-2812

February 15, 2008

TO: Applying Student

RE: The Washington Counties Scholarship Application
Five \$3,000 Washington Counties Scholarships

To be considered, you must submit the following:

- *A signed and completed scholarship application.*
- *A **separate** sheet listing activities, honors and awards.*
- *Two letters of recommendation which must be signed.*
- *A personal statement (limit 300 words).*
- *A sealed transcript of your most recent grades.*
- ***NO PICTURES, PLEASE.***

Completed applications must be **postmarked no later than Tuesday, April 1, 2008. Awards will be made in early May of 2008 for the 2008/09 school year.**

Send your completed application to:

**The Washington Counties Scholarship Fund
206 Tenth Avenue SE
Olympia WA 98501-1311**

Good Luck!

WASHINGTON COUNTIES SCHOLARSHIP FUND

2008/09 Scholarship Application

Five scholarships in the amount of \$3,000 each will be awarded to eligible children of county employees and elected officials by the Washington Counties Scholarship Fund on behalf of the members of the Washington Association of County Officials (WACO) and the Washington State Association of Counties (WSAC). Recipients must be full-time students in a baccalaureate degree, associate degree, or vocational/technical certification program. Eligible students are defined on the reverse side of this form.

I. Please type or print clearly:

Name: _____

Current Address: _____ E-mail: _____

Phone: _____

Permanent Address: _____

Phone: _____

County of Residence: _____ Birthdate: _____

High School Attended: _____ Cumulative GPA: _____

College most recently attended (if applicable): _____ Cumulative GPA: _____

Year in school for 2008/09: Freshman Sophomore Junior Senior Certification

Names of Parents: _____

Name of Parent(s) employed by County: _____

County where Parent is employed: _____

Department: _____ Work phone: _____

2. Please list the following on a separate sheet:

- School and Community Activities/Involvement (include dates)
- Honors and Awards (include dates)

3. To complete your scholarship application, you must submit **two** letters of recommendation which must be signed; a personal statement discussing your academic goals and expectations (limit 300 words); and a **sealed** transcript from the high school or college you are currently attending. The packet must be postmarked and mailed no later than Tuesday, April 1, 2008. We suggest that you submit the required materials as a group. If letters or recommendations arrive separately, it is your responsibility to ensure that they are received by the deadline. If the packet is incomplete by this deadline you will be eliminated from consideration. Letters of recommendation should be from individuals who are particularly aware and supportive of your academic and leadership capabilities as well as your accomplishments to date and must be signed. Your overall score will be lower if all portions of the application are not complete. The highest number of points is assigned to your personal statement; you should compose it with this in mind. **NO PICTURES, PLEASE.** Forward your materials to the Washington Counties Scholarship Fund c/o Washington Counties Building, 206 10th Ave SE, Olympia, WA 98501. Please note that applications will not be retained nor returned by the Committee.

Student's Signature

Date

DEFINITIONS

Eligible Applicants are "children of county employees (including children of all elected officials) who are full-time students in a baccalaureate degree, associate degree, or vocational/technical certification program." (*Bylaws of the Washington Counties Scholarship Fund, Article II, Section 1.*)

"Eligible Children...DOES NOT INCLUDE children of the following:

- a. Washington State Association of Counties (WSAC) Executive Committee;
- b. Washington Association of County Officials (WACO) Executive Officers and most recent Past President.
- c. Members of the Scholarship Fund Investment Committee and Selection Committee.
- d. Substantial Contributors, defined as being a member contributing \$1,000 or more in a consecutive two (2) year period.
- e. Other disqualifying individuals as defined by the IRS Code." (*BYLAWS OF THE WASHINGTON COUNTIES SCHOLARSHIP FUND, Article II, Section 5.*)

Full-Time Student is defined according to the criteria for "full-time" as defined by the institution being attended. **Children** as defined by the IRS are "dependent" and does not include emancipated children, spouses, or grandchildren of county employees.

2008/09 SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION EVALUATION POINTS

*Category	Possible Points
Honors, awards, leadership	15
Personal statement	25
Personal initiative and family	10
Community and/or school involvement	15
Recommendations	<u>10</u>
	75

* These are guidelines only...

Grade point average is not always a deciding factor