



2012 Legislative Priorities

The Washington Association of County Officials (WACO) serves County officials to promote legislative action which allows Counties to serve their citizens effectively and efficiently. WACO is pleased to present this summary of legislative priorities developed by our members for the 2012 Legislative Session.

County Assessors

- Efficiency in Property Tax Assessment System (HB 2638 – DIED H Ways & Means)
 - Authorizing County Assessors to use electronic communications to send assessments and other notices while providing options for taxpayer's without internet access and protecting confidential taxpayer information.
 - Eliminating the requirement that County Assessors value property exempt from property taxes.
- Accountability in Commercial Property Valuation Appeals (SB 6413 – DIED S Gov Ops)
 - Improving settlement opportunities and expediting appeals of commercial property valuations by requiring a petitioner to, within thirty days of appeal, provide income and expense statements for the three years prior to the challenged assessment date.

County Auditors

- Cost Recovery for Records Search Services (HB 2416 – DIED S Rules)
 - Updating Record Search statutes to allow County Auditors to recover up to the actual cost of conducting searches from the person requesting the search.
- Write in Candidate Declarations (SB 6498 – DIED H State Gov)
 - Ensuring voters have the best opportunity to vote for the candidates of their choice by requiring write-in candidates to declare their candidacy prior to ballots being mailed.

County Clerks

- Publication of Dependency Hearing Notices
 - Realigning responsibility to the Petitioner for the publication of legal notice to unknown parents, or parents whose location is unknown, of dependent children.

County Coroners and Medical Examiners

- Forensic Anthropology Services Funding (SB 6376 – DIED S 2nd Reading)
 - Ensuring permanent funding, from an existing funding source, to assist local jurisdictions in determining the identity of human remains

County Prosecutors

- Transparency in the Manner in which Bail is met in Criminal Cases
 - Amending Criminal Bail Laws to require 5% of the bail amount be posted up front, provide for greater security, transparency and certainty for victims of crime, communities affected by crime and the criminal justice system.
- Require Felony Arrestees to Submit a DNA Sample (HB 2588 – DIED H 2nd Reading)
 - Improving the tools needed to resolve outstanding criminal investigations through collecting DNA samples from those persons arrested for felony crimes, once the court has found probable cause.

County Sheriffs

- Vulnerable Adult Protection Order Fees (SB 6403 – Passed Legislature)
 - Minimizing financial barriers to fixed income persons by waiving the County Sheriff's service fee in Vulnerable Adult Protection Orders.

County Treasurers

- Simplification of Advance Tax Calculation and Collection (HB 2639 – DIED S Rules)
 - Shorten the time period when advance taxes must be collected by moving the trigger month from May to July, saving money and reducing administrative waste.

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