



Washington Association
of COUNTY OFFICIALS

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HB 1161 / SB 5187

Modernizing existing County Auditor Statutes

The proposed bill will improve office efficiency by modernizing existing statute to align with current practice.

The legislation will improve the efficiency of the County Auditor office by:

- Eliminating duplicate county inventories
- Standardizing commissioner reimbursement processes
- Ending auditor duties in selection of a county's newspaper of record, air pollution control authority vacancy appointments, and in the separate publication of certain fire protection district election results

County Asset Inventories:

- Currently, the County Commissioners do an annual inventory in March. While the County Auditor does a fiscal report in May.
- The filing times for the two inventories do not match.
- HB 1161 eliminates duplicate processes to align with the County Annual Report.
- Bill eliminates enforcement language that has duplicates in other parts of statute.

Currently the date of March report would not reflect assets in May fiscal report, often causing conflicting asset totals.

Fraud would still be covered by existing official misconduct statute.

Paper of Record:

- In actual practice the Clerk of the Board (commissioner's clerk) selects the paper of record.
- Bill would take the County Auditor out of the statute to align with practice.

End Post-Election Notification of Creation of a Fire Service Authority:

- Notice is already covered in ballot process.
- Ballot results of all ballots already published.
- Current statute adds redundant notification.
- Elimination of requirement would save counties on publication cost.

County Coroner Personal Affects Inventory:

- Currently the County Coroner creates an inventory of the deceased personal affects and files a duplicate copy with the County Auditor.
- Bill would eliminate the duplicate County Auditor copy.

Standardizing Commissioner Reimbursement Processes:

- Currently only County Commissioners are required to have a judge approve their reimbursements.
- Bill will standardize the reimbursement process by bringing County Commissioners in line with every other elected county official.

Air Pollution Control Authority Vacancy Appointments:

- Under the current statute the County Auditor is required to fill vacancies in clean air agencies when they occur.
- This bill would remove the County Auditor from the statute, leaving the decision to the appropriate entity.
- The Washington Clean Air Authority raised no objections to this language.