



**KING COUNTY**

1200 King County Courthouse  
516 Third Avenue  
Seattle, WA 98104

**Signature Report**

**April 4, 2005**

**Motion 12099**

**Proposed No.** 2005-0054.2

**Sponsors** Patterson, Lambert and Ferguson

1           A MOTION directing the executive to undertake actions to  
2           improve the conduct of the elections process in King  
3           County and supporting election reforms in Washington  
4           state.

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          WHEREAS, voter confidence in the election process is paramount to maintaining  
8           the integrity of our democracy, and

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          WHEREAS, in the November 2004 general election, the election for governor  
          was the closest in state history, and

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          WHEREAS, the closeness of the election brought state and county elections  
          procedures under very close public scrutiny, and

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          WHEREAS, errors in the election process occurred in numerous counties  
          throughout the state, including King County,

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          WHEREAS, on February 14, 2003, the metropolitan King County council  
          adopted Ordinance 14570 to strengthen the management and oversight of elections by  
          requiring council confirmation of the executive's appointments to the positions of director

18 of the King County records, elections and licensing services division and the  
19 superintendent of elections, and

20 WHEREAS, in March 2003, the King County council hired an elections  
21 consultant to conduct an independent review of county elections, and

22 WHEREAS, on April 22, 2003, the council's elections consultant produced a final  
23 report for the county council thoroughly reviewing county elections procedures and  
24 making recommendations for improving the election process in King County, and

25 WHEREAS, on July 14, 2003, the county council adopted Ordinance 14711  
26 establishing a King County citizens' election oversight committee to examine procedural  
27 issues that had been identified in the 2002 and 2003 elections, to identify the causes of  
28 the problems, to review all elections procedures, and to recommend actions for improving  
29 the conduct of elections in King County, and

30 WHEREAS, in May 2004, following one year of diligent work, meeting twice or  
31 more each month, the oversight committee issued a one-hundred-fifty-eight-page report  
32 that identified and discussed twenty-one major issue areas and made one hundred nine  
33 findings and one hundred sixteen recommendations for improvements or areas of further  
34 study by the county, and

35 WHEREAS, on August 30, 2004, the council passed Motion 11987, which set a  
36 schedule to implement those recommendations of the citizens' election oversight  
37 committee that had not yet been implemented, recognizing that the majority of  
38 recommendations had already been implemented, and

39 WHEREAS, the council supports ongoing internal employee investigations within  
40 the records, elections and licensing services division and supports the director taking the  
41 necessary actions to improve the performance of the elections division, and

42 WHEREAS, the King County council intends to institute reforms that will further  
43 improve the elections process in King County and Washington state, and will help restore  
44 public confidence in elections;

45 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT MOVED by the Council of King County:

46 A. The executive is hereby requested to undertake specific activities that have  
47 been previously recommended by the citizens' election oversight committee, the labor,  
48 operations and technology committee and proposed by the director of records, elections  
49 and licensing services. These activities consist of:

50 1. Evaluating the training needs of both permanent and temporary elections  
51 staff, developing an appropriate training curriculum and annually submitting and  
52 justifying a budget ordinance that will provide adequate resources for the ongoing  
53 training of employees;

54 2. Preparing a space plan for consolidation of elections operations into a single  
55 facility, estimating the costs of consolidation and proposing a schedule for consolidation.  
56 The plan should consider a range of options including making use of existing space,  
57 leasing space and constructing a new facility;

58 3. Evaluating all of the resource needs for elections and presenting them in a  
59 report to the council transmitted by August 1, 2005. The needs should be detailed and  
60 explained in such a way as to provide an understanding of the functional areas of  
61 elections as well as personnel and equipment needs;

62           4. Proposing for the council's consideration, several options to differentiate  
63 provisional ballots from regular ballots, including ways to prevent them from being  
64 inserted into optical scanning machines;

65           5. Identifying an appropriate countywide election that could be conducted  
66 completely by mail as a pilot demonstration. If the council approves an all-mail election,  
67 within sixty days following certification of the election, the executive shall submit a  
68 report to the council describing the costs, advantages and disadvantages of all mail  
69 elections. The report should include statistically valid survey information from voters on  
70 their views of the election;

71           B. The executive and the courts are requested to, by July 1, 2005, file with the  
72 clerk of the council, for distribution to all councilmembers, a report to the council on  
73 improved coordination between agencies required under state and or federal law to report  
74 on eligibility standards for voter registration in the areas of residency, citizenship and  
75 felony status with attention to improving the timeliness, accuracy and quality of  
76 information provided to ensure proper data matching and verification of voter status.

77           1. The report should also include information on the progress and impacts of  
78 implementation of the statewide voter registration database mandated under federal law  
79 by 2006.

80           2. The executive is requested to, by July 1, 2005, file with the clerk of the  
81 council, for distribution to all councilmembers, a report on improved reporting and  
82 procedures for the reconciliation of ballots issued, voters voting, and ballots cast, both for  
83 absentee and polling place ballots at the precinct level. The report should specifically  
84 indicate the manner in which the records, elections and licensing services division has

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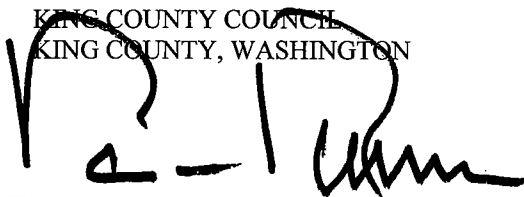
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85 complied with state and federal laws and administrative rules governing the process for  
86 reconciliation prior to the certification of an election. Reconciliation reports prepared by  
87 the records, elections and licensing services division following each general election shall  
88 be submitted to the council and retained by the elections division for a period of twenty  
89 years.  
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Motion 12099 was introduced on 2/7/2005 and passed as amended by the Metropolitan King County Council on 4/4/2005, by the following vote:

Yes: 10 - Mr. Phillips, Ms. Edmonds, Mr. von Reichbauer, Ms. Lambert, Mr. Pelz, Mr. Ferguson, Mr. Gossett, Mr. Irons, Ms. Patterson and Mr. Constantine  
No: 3 - Mr. Dunn, Mr. Hammond and Ms. Hague  
Excused: 0

KING COUNTY COUNCIL  
KING COUNTY, WASHINGTON



Larry Phillips, Chair

ATTEST:



Anne Noris, Clerk of the Council

**Attachments**      None