



KING COUNTY

1200 King County Courthouse
516 Third Avenue
Seattle, WA 98104

Signature Report

January 6, 2011

Motion 13398

Proposed No. 2010-0624.2

Sponsors Hague, Ferguson and Phillips

1 A MOTION establishing the King County 2011 State
2 Legislative Agenda.

3 WHEREAS, the King County council and the King County executive have
4 worked together through their respective government relations staff and desire to bring
5 their positions on issues facing the 2011 Washington state Legislature to the attention of
6 the Washington state Legislature, and

7 WHEREAS, King County desires to work cooperatively with other local
8 governments and other organizations, such as the Washington State Association of
9 Counties, the Washington Association of County Officials, the Suburban Cities
10 Association and the Association of Washington Cities, to achieve its 2011 legislative
11 goals, and

12 WHEREAS, counties have been recognized by the state Legislature as partners
13 with the state in the delivery of such critical services as transportation, criminal justice,
14 public health, community and human services and water resources, and

15 WHEREAS, King County is dependent on a strong fiscal partnership with the
16 state, and

17 WHEREAS, King County's general fund suffers from a structural imbalance
18 between the limited revenue authorities and the growth rate of expenditures, and

19 WHEREAS, the ongoing national recession has resulted in dramatic budget
20 shortfalls at all levels of government across the nation, and

21 WHEREAS, the dramatic downturn of the economy has magnified the general
22 fund's structural problem as forecast sales tax and interest earnings deteriorate and the
23 cost of providing services increases due to rising inflation, and

24 WHEREAS, King County's ability to deliver health care, human services, and
25 other basic services is directly impacted by reductions in the state budget, and

26 WHEREAS, the state's across-the-board reductions have already affected key
27 functions of county departments and agencies, and

28 WHEREAS, King County is dedicated to exploring with the state new ideas for
29 sustained funding for critical services such as transportation, criminal justice, health and
30 human services and flood protection, and

31 WHEREAS, the King County council and the King County executive will
32 continue to review legislative developments for possible revisions of King County's 2011
33 state legislative program;

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

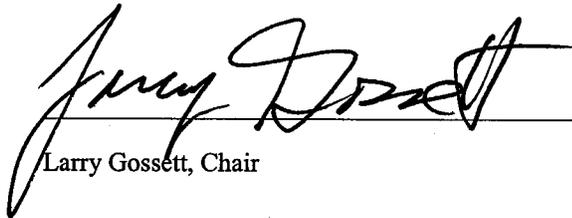
35 The King County council adopts the attached King County 2011 State Legislative

36 Agenda and King County 2011 Statement of State Policy as King County's highest
37 priorities for action in the 2011 legislative session of the Washington state Legislature.
38

Motion 13398 was introduced on 12/6/2010 and passed by the Metropolitan King County Council on 1/3/2011, by the following vote:

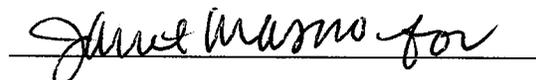
Yes: 9 - Mr. Phillips, Mr. von Reichbauer, Mr. Gossett, Ms. Hague,
Ms. Patterson, Ms. Lambert, Mr. Ferguson, Mr. Dunn and Mr.
McDermott
No: 0
Excused: 0

KING COUNTY COUNCIL
KING COUNTY, WASHINGTON



Larry Gossett, Chair

ATTEST:



Anne Noris, Clerk of the Council

Attachments: A. King County 2011 State Legislative Agenda, dated Jan. 3, 2011, B. King County 2011 Statement of State Policy, dated Jan. 3, 2011



King County

King County 2011 State Legislative Agenda

King County's top state legislative priorities underscore a single objective: seeking the flexibility, tools, and authority to help the County support its duty to address the most critical needs of its communities in a time of continuing fiscal challenges. These key policy objectives further support the county's unanimously adopted Strategic Plan and its focus on customer service, partnerships, and ways to bring down costs.

Protect Critical State Support for Health, Housing, and Human Services

King County believes in preserving the safety net of basic services for its residents. Funding for programs that are critical to maintaining a foundational level of support for our communities include those that provide maternity support, mental health, public and primary health care, substance abuse, family planning, housing and services for low income and homeless persons, food assistance, and disability including developmental disability support services. While times of economic hardship can mean unavoidable reductions, some cuts are more detrimental than others, and we hope to educate decision makers about alternatives to cuts that have a compounding effect over time and that ultimately cost taxpayers more.

Transit Funding Options

King County Metro's reliance on sales tax revenues has forced the agency to make significant reductions in the past two years, and yet a near- and long-term funding crisis still looms as the economic recovery remains weak. Metro supports sustainable funding tools in order to avoid catastrophic cuts in the near term and to grow services in the future. Thanks to the work of the Regional Transit Task Force, the agency will continue on a path of cost reductions, increased efficiencies, and fundamental reprioritization around principles, objectives, and performance measures.

Tax Suppression & Flood Control

The continued housing market slide has had an unexpected and quite serious effect on the revenue source for the Flood Control Zone District, the countywide flood district. As a result of a decline in assessed property values, several areas of the county are expected to reach the state-imposed \$5.90 local property tax levy ceiling beginning in 2011, forcing the most junior district to reduce or stop collecting revenues—in this case, the Flood District. We seek relief from the state's \$5.90 ceiling so that the county can continue to collect countywide revenues to allocate toward flood protection.

Annexation Tools & Sustainable Land Use

We support resources to facilitate annexations, including granting counties the authority to levy a utility tax. Additionally, we support tools to make annexations easier for cities, including increased flexibility in advance of and during the transition, state capital and operating assistance, and an extension of the sales tax credit. King County supports focusing population growth in the urban growth area and the preservation of rural and resource lands and critical areas. Land use and transportation must be integrated and supported by adequate infrastructure, with transportation concurrency as a key consideration. We support programs and incentives that promote these principles in compliance with the Growth Management Act.

King County Stadium & Tourism Revenues, Preservation of 4Culture

The retirement of some of the debt used to finance public stadiums presents an opportunity to extend those revenue streams. We believe that those local county taxes should be locally managed. We support the extension of these revenues in keeping with their historical intent,

which is the investment in facilities and programs that directly stimulate tourism, attract visitors, generate economic activity, and support arts and culture programs throughout King County.

Court-Related Costs of Involuntary Treatment Cases from Outside King County

The limited number of evaluation and treatment (E&T) beds often results in persons detained through involuntary commitment in one county being placed in a treatment facility in another, where court hearings then follow. King County is home to a large share of out-of-county cases, and we seek a policy that would reimburse the county for court-related costs of these cases.

Resources to Ensure a Healthy Puget Sound

The health of Puget Sound remains fragile. We support comprehensive efforts to improve stormwater management, link land use and transportation planning with habitat protection, and restore habitat. We support the establishment of new funding mechanisms for habitat protection and restoration, including both direct state support and optional watershed-based funding tools. We also support fees on petroleum products that contribute to stormwater pollution, and making those resources available to local governments in the form of grants for addressing petroleum pollution or for low impact development retrofit projects.

Secure Medicine Return

Unused and unwanted medicines present a serious concern due to poisonings, abuse, illegal diversion, and environmental impacts. We support legislation that would direct pharmaceutical companies that sell their products in Washington to develop, fund, and implement a statewide take-back program for unwanted, unused, or left-over medicines from residential sources.

State Support for Local Levee Systems

The threat of flooding in the Green River Valley has been lessened by the construction of a grout wall at the Howard Hanson Dam and by channelization work at the dam funded but yet to be completed. The flood control system is truly a network, and the levees are its backbone. We support an increased state role in supporting both the Green River Valley levee system and other levee systems throughout the region to augment the significant local investment of county taxpayers.

Surcharge on Court Filing Fees – Extension and Equitable Division

Fees associated with filing court documents and court services provide key resources for both the state court system and King County. The revenue generated by most court fees is split among the state and local jurisdictions; however, in 2009 the surcharge adopted by the legislature did not provide any local distribution. King County seeks to remove the sunset on the surcharge and restore an equitable division of revenue between the state and counties.



King County

King County 2011 Statement of State Policy

Biodiversity Conservation & Habitat Protection and Restoration

King County encourages state resources for implementation of habitat protection and restoration projects in approved WRIA-based salmon recovery plans. We support streamlining of federal and state permitting requirements and other incentives for public and private parties to carry out projects that will restore habitat for ESA-listed species as well as the consideration of multiple species and their habitats. We support the Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program's work to support high priority local parks and open space projects. We support enhanced authority for incentives to protect working farm and forest lands and regionally significant open space and habitat. We support proposals to link state funding of infrastructure improvements and other amenities to agreements by cities to receive development rights.

Climate Change and Energy

We support collaborative development of short- and long-term regional targets for reducing greenhouse gas emissions that meet or exceed state emissions reduction goals and are informed by current science, recent emissions inventories, and local land use patterns. We support alignment of state transportation funding and incentives with Vision 2040 recommendations for focused growth in urban centers.

County Roads

The road system in unincorporated King County is critically important to people who live and travel in the county, but it is aged and deteriorating. Substantial investments are needed to restore roads and bridges, maintain them in good condition, and meet new transportation demands. However, the county's available funding falls far short of the need. The unincorporated-area road system owned and managed by the county includes 1,691 miles of paved roads, 51 miles of unpaved roads, 184 bridges—including several jointly owned with cities—and other related services and facilities within the 2,130 square miles of total land area in King County. We estimate that the cost of optimal management of the post-annexation system would be \$240 million annually. King County seeks state funds to support county roads projects and facilities and will continue to pursue opportunities in future state revenue packages, state competitive grants, and other means that will help meet the great unmet needs in the county.

Economic Development

We encourage state efforts to partner with local governments and provide them with tools needed to build strong, diverse, and sustainable economies. We support regional economic growth through strategic public-private partnerships such as the Central Puget Sound Regional Economic Strategy. King County also encourages increased funding for Associate Development Organizations to implement this and other economic strategies to retain existing businesses and strategically recruit new ones. We support continued funding of infrastructure programs that provide resources to local jurisdictions to promote economic development, including the Local Revitalization Financing Program, the Community Economic Revitalization Board, the Public Works Trust Fund, the Transportation Improvement Board, and the Model Toxics Control Account.

King County also strongly supports education and workforce development programs for youth and adults including adequate K-12 funding and continued funding for dislocated worker retraining programs—matched to industry skill needs—at community and technical colleges. King County promotes programs that provide public contracting opportunities for small and disadvantaged businesses. We support maintenance and construction of infrastructure that facilitates efficient movement of freight and goods to promote domestic and international trade. Finally, we support rural economic development policies and programs that maintain the character of rural areas and sustain rural lifestyles.

Elections

King County supports modifications to state election law that would provide cost savings and improved customer service without infringing upon the elections process for voters. We support consideration of a change to require that regular ballots be received by election day, as well as changes that would allow for the printing of something less than an initiative's full text in the local voter pamphlet. We also support modified approaches to what must appear on the primary and general ballot and how precinct committee officers' races are handled.

Emergency Management & Flood Hazard Reduction

We support integrated approaches to major river flood hazard reduction, including development of regional standards for levee maintenance that both protect public safety and meet state and federal requirements for protecting listed species. We support an increased state role in providing support for major flood hazard mitigation projects, including those that meet multiple objectives of reducing future flood damages, protecting existing development, protecting habitat, and providing open space benefits. We support state development of integrated state goals, programs, and regulations for floodplain management. We support state support for emergency management and additional regional tools to support emergency preparedness and disaster response, as well as continued steps toward implementation of E-911 programs.

Health Care and Support

King County develops and implements creative and effective strategies and programs that prevent the leading causes of poor health, ensure access to appropriate and quality physical and behavioral health services, and promote individual health and interventions to reduce health disparities. Supporting and expanding this work requires stable funding at the state level for our public health, mental health and chemical dependency prevention and support infrastructure. Addressing health disparities in our community requires investments in resources and initiatives that will give all our residents access to affordable health care, including prescription drug coverage, alcohol and substance abuse treatment, and comprehensive mental health services.

The County seeks support for regulatory and legislative initiatives that will protect the health of our communities and provide environmental safeguards ensuring the safety of our residents. We support steps that will strengthen healthy eating and active living standards that will prevent obesity and reduce use of tobacco and tobacco by products, particularly use by youth. We support state law modifications that would facilitate implementation of federal health reform and that would expand health care access and preventive care to all Washingtonians.

Homelessness & Housing

King County is the administrative lead for the Countywide Ten Year Plan to End Homelessness. The plan's success is built on existing strong collaborations between local, state and federal governments and community nonprofit providers and having the tools to measure the effectiveness of our investments. We support maintaining and expanding funding and regulatory initiatives for affordable appropriate housing at the state level for homeless and low income

residents of King County. Housing and supportive services help county residents remain successfully housed and prevent future homelessness.

Complementing the housing strategy is provision of tools to reduce homelessness for families, individuals and youth through early support and intervention, including consideration of ways to prevent discharging youth and adults directly into homelessness from state institutions. We support modifications to the Homeless Management Information System toward its improved operation. We support robust funding for the Housing Trust Fund, which provides a powerful tool for local agencies' creation and support of affordable and homeless housing.

Human Services

King County supports funding for human services programs that help all children and youth grow and prosper socially and academically, offer paths to reduce or prevent involvement in the criminal justice, crisis mental health and emergency medical systems, and provide a safety net of services and partnerships to support our most vulnerable residents. We further support initiatives that offer opportunities for independence, self-sufficiency and mobility for our residents of all ages.

We support state resources for homelessness programs, including the renewal of existing document recording fees. We support programs that assist the developmentally disabled, including early intervention funding and school transition funding. We support community mobilization programs and other means to prevent and treat substance abuse and violence. We support state resources to maintain access to mental health facilities and psychiatric beds.

We request the suspension of state requirements of performance management systems that require specific application of the Baldrige criteria to assess public homelessness and affordable housing dollars. King County's current performance management system is sufficient to ensure that these public dollars are well spent, without the additional costs of Baldrige process fees and staffing requirements that would reduce housing and homelessness homeless services programmatic dollars.

Infrastructure and Transportation

As the operator of the 9th largest bus system in the United States and the carrier for over 60% of all transit riders in the state, King County believes that a stable and well-funded transportation system is important to the economic prosperity and projected growth of our region. As we plan for the future it is clear that transit must play a larger role in moving people. We support efforts to provide public transit with a more diverse, stable, and robust funding source. We support the state's plans for a strong transit component as being critical to the designs for the Alaskan Way Viaduct and SR 520 corridors. We support better integration of land use and transportation. We support efforts to reduce vehicle miles traveled and to reduce greenhouse gas levels. We support opportunities to secure fee ownership of the eastside rail corridor by the Central Puget Sound Regional Transit Authority and realize the goal of dual rail and trail use established by three local governments for the corridor

We support continued funding of the Commute Trip Reduction program and the Regional Mobility Grant program. We support state policy that encourages innovation in carpool and vanpool programs, including relaxing the numerical passenger requirements for people with disabilities and for the use of all-electric vehicles. We encourage policy that facilitates transit's effective operation, including fair policies governing rental or lease of rights-of-way as well as equitable reimbursement for Medicaid-eligible non-emergency trips. We support efforts to

expand the use of tolling and congestion pricing to address our infrastructure needs and manage traffic. We support legislative efforts to improve bicycle and pedestrian safety.

King County supports a cooperative relationship with the State in providing for the ferry service needs of the residents of King County, including the effective use of toll credits and federal funds toward maximizing our county investments. We support efforts to assure compatible land uses adjacent to airport facilities.

Land Use, Growth Management and Annexation

King County supports the Growth Management Act as the primary means of planning for growth. We support integration and streamlining of state land use and related statutes, as well as state funding to assist jurisdictions in meeting planning requirements. We support tools and incentives to facilitate annexations within urban growth areas and to help cities accommodate the transitional costs of annexations. King County also supports legislation that encourages environmental stewardship by landowners, as well as particular SEPA categorical exemptions for practices or projects that are regulated through other state or federal protections. We also support changes to state subdivision laws that would eliminate illegal practices or conflicts with local zoning. We support better integration of land use, transportation, and public health.

Law & Criminal Justice

We support a fair and accessible justice system that keeps people safe in their homes and communities. We support the use of court fees that appropriately balance the need for revenue with the need to eliminate barriers to court access. We support a state/local split of state-imposed court fees that are collected at the local level. We support state funding for state mandated programs, including dependency court appointed special advocates. We support tools that allow counties to work with one another in developing effective systems to share criminal justice information. We support legislation shifting the cost of certain court services to the person or entity filing the action, including court costs in Involuntary Treatment Act cases involving persons from outside of King County and notification in dependency actions. We support legislation providing for continuation of federal benefits for qualifying mentally ill adult and juvenile inmates and detainees. We are committed to ending domestic violence and sexual assault for our residents. We continue to be concerned about human trafficking and will work to combat its practice.

Licensing and Records

King County supports a modified definition of "pet animal" that supports local public health and safety policy objectives. We also support enhanced additional page recording fees for local governments.

Revenue, Finance, and General Government

King County strongly supports maintaining and enhancing local taxing and fee authority and local revenue options. We support opportunities for greater flexibility and efficiency in the governance of separate countywide entities, such as flood and ferry districts, to continually serve the best interests of the public. We support legislation that would allow local government participants in the Public Employees' Retirement System to pay additional amounts into the system up to a defined rate and receive credit for these contributions in future years. We support fee-based tools to preserve the provision of services by the county assessor's office. We seek to preserve our ability to operate our own investment pool. We do not support unfunded mandates on the county. If state responsibilities are shifted onto local governments, we would seek new local governance authority and state financial support or new local revenue tools. Such a shift should be weighed carefully, and explored only after investigating ways to

reduce state requirements as well as local governments' ability to absorb such responsibilities and costs.

Stormwater/Water Quality/Puget Sound Partnership

We support more holistic implementation of the Clean Water Act, including evaluation of and prioritization of actions at a watershed and Puget Sound scale. We support optional programs that would allow state agencies to approve local stormwater programs as "qualified local programs." We support state technical assistance and regulatory approval for a wider range of tools and approaches for stormwater treatment and management. We seek refinement of NPDES water quality monitoring requirements to focus on value-added monitoring that is coordinated across permit holders consistent with recommendations of the Stormwater Monitoring Workgroup. We support funding and implementation of the Puget Sound Partnership's Action Agenda, including fees on products that have a clear nexus with water pollution. We also support exploration of new watershed-based, optional funding authorities to support water quality, stormwater, and habitat protection and restoration projects. We support regulatory streamlining and other incentives for public and private projects that will restore functioning shoreline and mitigate stormwater impacts. We support sales tax exemptions for purchase of equipment for reclaimed water and biosolids production and transport.

Waste Reduction and Recycling

We support development of "cradle-to-grave" product education, stewardship, recycling, and take-back programs for products for which improper disposal is likely to result in hazardous waste or water quality contamination, including pharmaceuticals and medicines, computers and other electronics, carpet, and fluorescent lighting.