



# KING COUNTY

## Signature Report

1200 King County Courthouse

516 Third Avenue

Seattle, WA 98104

February 28, 2012

### Motion 13640

Proposed No. 2012-0069.2

Sponsors Ferguson and Gossett

1           A MOTION supporting the creation and adoption of a  
2           Washington Voting Rights Act by the Washington state  
3           Legislature.

4           WHEREAS, to enforce the Fifteenth Amendment to the United States  
5           Constitution, which prohibits states from denying citizens the right to vote based on race  
6           or color, Congress passed the federal Voting Rights Act in 1965, and

7           WHEREAS, the federal Voting Rights Act was extended in 1970, 1975, 1982 and  
8           2006, affirming the need for protections and the importance of combating persistent  
9           discrimination in voting and elections, and

10          WHEREAS, the federal Voting Rights Act outlaws discriminatory voting  
11          practices, including electoral structural changes that systematically dilute the voting  
12          strength of minority citizens, and

13          WHEREAS, high costs and long waits associated with legal action in federal  
14          court may discourage and hinder the ability of parties to bring suits to enforce their rights  
15          under the federal Voting Rights Act, and

16          WHEREAS, building upon the protections provided by the federal Voting Rights  
17          Act and to provide for a more accessible and local means of protecting voting rights, the  
18          state of California enacted the California Voting Rights Act in 2002 and has since seen an

19 marked increase of minorities in local elected office and civic engagement among  
20 minority communities, and

21 WHEREAS, the Washington Voting Rights Act, Senate Bill 6381 and House Bill  
22 2612, modeled after the law in California, has been introduced and is currently under  
23 consideration by the Washington state Legislature, and

24 WHEREAS, if enacted, the Washington Voting Rights Act would promote equal  
25 representation by helping ensure at-large elections and district-based elections could not  
26 be drawn or maintained in a manner that dilutes the votes of a protected class or denies a  
27 protected class an equal opportunity to elect candidates of its choice or an equal  
28 opportunity to influence the outcome of an election, and

29 WHEREAS, King County has responsibility for administering elections and is  
30 committed to an integrated effort to apply the countywide strategic plan's principle of  
31 "fair and just" in all the county does, and

32 WHEREAS, ensuring a fair and just electoral process for members of a protected  
33 class and equal opportunity to influence electoral outcomes are essential to our system of  
34 representative democracy;

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

36 The metropolitan King County council supports the creation of a Washington  
37 Voting Rights Act that promotes equal opportunities to meaningfully participate in our

38 political process for members of any protected class, as defined in the federal Voting  
39 Rights Act.  
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Motion 13640 was introduced on 2/13/2012 and passed as amended by the  
Metropolitan King County Council on 2/27/2012, by the following vote:

Yes: 5 - Mr. Phillips, Mr. Gossett, Ms. Patterson, Mr. Ferguson and  
Mr. McDermott  
No: 4 - Mr. von Reichbauer, Ms. Hague, Ms. Lambert and Mr. Dunn  
Excused: 0

KING COUNTY COUNCIL  
KING COUNTY, WASHINGTON



Larry Gossett, Chair

ATTEST:



Anne Noris, Clerk of the Council

Attachments: None