

RESOLUTION NO. 40-14

A Joint Resolution Supporting the Washington State Association of Counties (WSAC) Fiscal Sustainability Initiative

WHEREAS, county governments across the State of Washington are facing a financial and service delivery crisis; and

WHEREAS, the cost of providing essential public services is outpacing the growth of revenue, leaving counties with few options other than cutting services to the public; and

WHEREAS, under the Constitution and laws for the State of Washington, many state programs are administered and carried out by counties for residents of both incorporated and unincorporated areas including: administering and operating civil and criminal justice systems; running elections; assessing and collecting property taxes to support schools, cities, fire districts and other functions in addition to county operations; developing plans including Growth management and Shoreline Management plans; delivering public health services as well as programs for the mentally ill, developmentally disabled; and addressing the need for low-income housing; and

WHEREAS, counties also provide a primary government services for residents of unincorporated areas including law enforcement, transportation (both roads and transit), land use and zoning, parks, animal control, stormwater control; and

WHEREAS, unlike states and cities, counties are financed primarily by two sources of revenue; property taxes and sales and use taxes. However, property tax growth is capped at 1% plus the value of new construction, and sales tax collections have become increasingly challenging with the Growth Management Act allowing cities to annex large tax-paying businesses into their jurisdictions; and

WHEREAS, in addition to revenue limitations, counties are challenged with a host of regulatory requirements that are increasingly complex and expensive, expanding liability costs, and increasing employment costs, regardless of a county's ability to pay; and

WHEREAS, WSAC launched its Fiscal Sustainability Initiative in an effort to educate lawmakers about the services counties provide, advance new revenue generation and cost containment options to improve the fiscal health of county governments, and to advance legislation in support of these options.

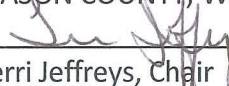
NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Mason County Commissioners hereby support the Washington State Association of Counties Fiscal Sustainability Initiative, and a willingness to work with WSAC and other county officials across the state to advance the initiative.

APPROVED this 22<sup>nd</sup> day of July, 2014.

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS  
MASON COUNTY, WASHINGTON

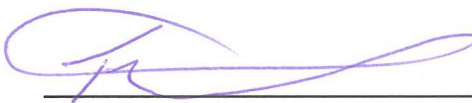
ATTEST:

  
Clerk of the Board

  
Terri Jeffreys, Chair

  
Tim Sheldon, Commissioner

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

  
Tim Whitehead, Chief DPA

  
Randy Neatherlin, Commissioner