



Legislation Text

File #: AB2024-400, Version: 1

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TITLE FOR AGENDA ITEM:

Appointment of members to serve on pro and con statement writing committees for a proposed ballot measure amending the Whatcom County Charter to expand the standards for conflict of interest

SUMMARY STATEMENT OR LEGAL NOTICE LANGUAGE:

In December 2023 the Council adopted Ordinance 2023-083, submitting to the qualified voters of Whatcom County a proposal to amend Whatcom County Charter Section 4.30 to expand the standards for conflict of interest. If approved by the voters, the Charter would be amended as follows:

Section 4. 30 Conflicts of Interest.

The County Council, Executive, Assessor, Auditor, Treasurer, Sheriff and Prosecuting Attorney shall hold no other office or employment within County government or any other elected public office during their term of office.

Jurisdictions to Appoint Committees (RCW 29A.32.280)

- The jurisdiction will formally appoint a committee of not more than three who are "for" the measure to prepare a statement advocating voters' approval of the measure and a committee who are "against" the measure to prepare a statement advocating voters' rejection. While each committee will have no more than three members, a committee may seek the advice of any person or persons. Each committee will identify a chair who will serve as the primary contact for the Auditor's Office.
- Persons drafting statements "for" or "against" measures appearing in the local voters' pamphlet who are officers, employees, or a representative of any organization may only be designated as such if that organization has taken an official action to support or oppose the measure, as the case may be.
- The deadline for the appointment of committees is 12 pm (noon) on the resolution deadline for the election in which a ballot measure will appear.
- The appointed committee must abide by the specified timelines for submitting statements for that election. It is not the responsibility of the Auditor's Office to coordinate communications between committee members or to arbitrate disagreements among them.
- If a committee member wishes to withdraw, they must notify the Auditor's Office by email at least 24 hours prior to the submittal deadline for the statement.
- If the jurisdiction is unable to appoint either a For or Against Committee, a list of efforts made is required when submitting the measure to the Auditor's Office. The Auditor will review the efforts, confirming at least three of the suggestions were tried.