
HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 4214

State of Washington 62nd Legislature 2011 Regular Session

By Representatives Anderson, Dunshee, and Carlyle

Read first time 01/26/11. Referred to Committee on Local Government.

1 WHEREAS, Taxpayers in certain counties of the state persistently
2 contribute more in state taxes than the state expends in those
3 counties; and

4 WHEREAS, Other counties of the state persistently absorb more state
5 moneys than taxpayers in those counties contribute in state taxes; and

6 WHEREAS, Taxpayers in counties that contribute more in state taxes
7 than the state expends in their counties reap a disproportionately
8 small benefit from their tax contribution, and therefore bear an unjust
9 and unreasonable tax burden; and

10 WHEREAS, The fiscal well-being of the state demands that each
11 Washington county contribute to the economic welfare of the state; and

12 WHEREAS, Principles of fundamental tax-burden fairness call for
13 dissolution and reorganization of counties that persistently absorb
14 more state funds than their taxpayers contribute to state tax revenues;

15 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE AND HOUSE OF
16 REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON, IN LEGISLATIVE SESSION
17 ASSEMBLED:

18 THAT, At the next general election to be held in this state the
19 secretary of state shall submit to the qualified voters of the state

1 for their approval and ratification, or rejection, an amendment to
2 Article XI, section 3 of the Constitution of the state of Washington to
3 read as follows:

4 Article XI, section 3. No new counties shall be established which
5 shall reduce any county to a population less than four thousand
6 (4,000), nor shall a new county be formed containing a less population
7 than two thousand (2,000). There shall be no territory stricken from
8 any county unless a majority of the voters living in such territory
9 shall petition therefor and then only under such other conditions as
10 may be prescribed by a general law applicable to the whole state. If
11 the legislature determines that a county's taxpayers have absorbed
12 state funds equaling at least two hundred percent of the aggregate tax
13 revenues the state has received from the county over the previous ten
14 years, the legislature may, under such other conditions as may be
15 prescribed by general law applicable to the whole state, provide for
16 dissolution and reorganization of the county and cease to recognize it
17 as a legal subdivision of the state. Every county which shall be
18 enlarged or created from territory taken from any other county or
19 counties shall be liable for a just proportion of the existing debts
20 and liabilities of the county or counties from which such territory
21 shall be taken: *Provided*, That in such accounting neither county shall
22 be charged with any debt or liability then existing incurred in the
23 purchase of any county property, or in the purchase or construction of
24 any county buildings then in use, or under construction, which shall
25 fall within and be retained by the county: *Provided further*, That this
26 shall not be construed to affect the rights of creditors.

27 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the concise description of this
28 amendment shall be: "This amendment would authorize the state
29 legislature to dissolve and reorganize counties under certain financial
30 conditions."

31 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the secretary of state shall cause
32 notice of this constitutional amendment to be published at least four
33 times during the four weeks next preceding the election in every legal
34 newspaper in the state.

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