



**KING COUNTY**

1200 King County Courthouse  
516 Third Avenue  
Seattle, WA 98104

**Signature Report**

**May 9, 2006**

**Ordinance 15453**

**Proposed No.** 2006-0183.2

**Sponsors** Hague, Patterson, Phillips and  
Ferguson

1 AN ORDINANCE establishing the King County citizens'  
2 elections oversight committee; and adding a new chapter to  
3 K.C.C. Title 2.  
4  
5

6 **PREAMBLE:**

- 7 1. The proper administration of elections is an essential function of  
8 county government in Washington state and is a public trust that must be  
9 kept.
- 10 2. In July 2003, the council created the King County citizens' elections  
11 oversight committee in response to issues in the 2002 general election.  
12 The elections oversight committee concluded its work in 2004 by issuing a  
13 detailed report with one hundred sixteen recommendations.
- 14 3. The council reconvened the elections oversight committee in April  
15 2005, again in response to election issues, and the committee concluded its  
16 work in March 2006, issuing a report that identified improvements in

17 elections, areas where improvement is still needed, and making six high-  
18 priority recommendations.

19 3. In both instances, the King County citizens' elections oversight  
20 committee has provided invaluable service to county voters and county  
21 government, serving for over two years and making important  
22 recommendations to improve the conduct of elections.

23 3. The legislature has enacted several laws during the 2005 and 2006  
24 sessions that have changed how elections are conducted.

25 4. Elections experts and citizen advisory groups have made numerous  
26 recommendations to the council and executive that, if enacted, would  
27 significantly change and improve elections operations.

28 5. King County may consolidate elections operations into a single facility.

29 6. Given all the mandated and potential changes in elections operations,  
30 King County would benefit from the ongoing service of a citizens' election  
31 oversight committee to help oversee changes and to advise the council.

32 BE IT ORDAINED BY THE COUNCIL OF KING COUNTY:

33 SECTION 1. Sections 2 through 8 of this ordinance should constitute a new  
34 chapter in K.C.C. Title 2.

35 NEW SECTION. SECTION 2. The King County citizens' elections oversight  
36 committee is hereby established. For the purposes of this chapter, "the committee"  
37 means the King County citizens' elections oversight committee.

38 NEW SECTION. SECTION 3. A. The chair of the council and the vice chair of  
39 council affairs shall solicit nominations for membership from all council members. The

40 chair of the council and the vice chair of council affairs shall jointly appoint oversight  
41 committee members who are confirmed by motion to the committee.

42 B. Committee membership shall include:

43 1. One representative from a nonpartisan organization active in King County  
44 that evaluates candidates and ballot measures, such as the Municipal League;

45 2. One representative from a nonpartisan organization active in King County  
46 that provides elections information to the public, such as the League of Women Voters;

47 3. One representative of an independent research and policy institute; and

48 4. One representative from a junior taxing district;

49 5. One representative of the Chinese-speaking community;

50 6. Two King County registered voters who are not representatives of any of the  
51 groups listed in subsection B.1. through 5. and 7. through 12. of this section

52 7. One representative from the King County Democratic Party;

53 8. One representative from the King County Republican Party;

54 9. One representative from the Washington state Democratic Party;

55 10. One representative from the Washington state Republican Party;

56 11. One ex officio, nonvoting representative from the Office of the Secretary of  
57 State;

58 12. One ex officio, nonvoting representative from the Washington State  
59 Association of County Auditors;

60 C. All members should have:

61 1. A working knowledge of local or state government elections operations and  
62 management;

63           2. A strong commitment to an accountable, transparent, well-managed and  
64 efficient elections operation in King County; and

65           3. A willingness to commit the time necessary to attend committee meetings and  
66 activities.

67           D. Except for the member representing the Washington State Association of  
68 Auditors, a nominee or appointee to the committee shall not hold elective public office or  
69 be a candidate for election to public office, other than as a precinct committee officer.

70           E. Except for the ex officio members, members shall serve three-year terms.  
71 However, the representatives representing the groups under subsection B.6, 9. and 10. of  
72 this section appointed in 2006 initially shall serve one-year terms and the representative  
73 representing the group under subsection B.1, 2, 7. and 8. of this section appointed in 2006  
74 initially shall serve a two-year term. Ex officio members serve at the pleasure of their  
75 office or association.

76           NEW SECTION. SECTION 4. The mission of the committee is to help King  
77 County restore and maintain public confidence in elections. The committee shall make  
78 recommendations to the council to:

79           A. Improve performance of the King County elections section; and

80           B. Help ensure that accountability and performance of the elections section is  
81 provided in a transparent manner that is meaningful to the residents of King County.

82           NEW SECTION. SECTION 5. A. Before undertaking its other responsibilities  
83 identified in this chapter, the committee shall elect officers and adopt administrative  
84 procedures consistent with this chapter.

85           B. To accomplish its responsibilities as outlined in this ordinance, the committee  
86 shall complete the following tasks:

87           1. Review recent reports on elections and recent legislation that affects elections  
88 standards, procedures, equipment and technologies;

89           2. Conduct oversight of the implementation of new standards or procedures for  
90 elections as mandated by federal, state or county legislation;

91           3. Monitor the primary and general elections and canvassing board meetings to  
92 observe if proper procedures are followed, to report on any problems that are observed or  
93 come to light, to recommend corrective actions on problems that may arise and to ensure  
94 that any problems that arise are discussed in an open and public manner. The committee  
95 shall report to the council in a timely way on any significant problems that might occur or  
96 on any serious concerns the committee may have;

97           4. Meet at least quarterly; and

98           5. Submit a report to the council on its observations, findings and  
99 recommendations regarding the primary and general elections by February 1 of each year  
100 by filing eleven copies of the report with the clerk of the council for distribution to all  
101 councilmembers.

102           NEW SECTION. SECTION 6. A. The council shall provide for appropriate  
103 staffing of the committee.

104           B. County staff in the department of executive services and the records, elections  
105 and licensing services division shall provide information requested by the committee in a  
106 timely manner.

107 C. By March 31, 2009, the citizens' elections oversight committee shall evaluate  
108 the extent to which county elections operations have changed or improved over the  
109 previous four years and whether there is a need for an ongoing elections oversight  
110 committee. This evaluation shall be submitted to the clerk of the council. The council  
111 shall then make its own determination on the need for an ongoing elections oversight  
112 committee.

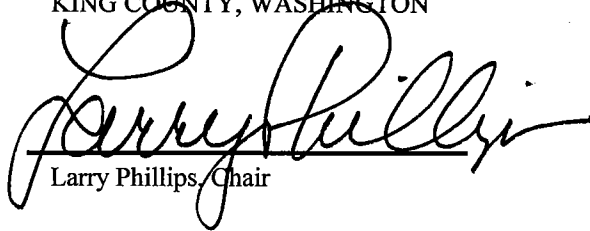
113 NEW SECTION. SECTION 7. The county shall reimburse committee members  
114 for mileage at the standard county reimbursement rate for travel within the county to and  
115 from committee meetings. The county shall provide parking free of charge in the county  
116 garage to committee members while attending meetings where committee business is

117 conducted or the county shall pay for parking for committee business conducted at  
118 locations not near the county garage.  
119

Ordinance 15453 was introduced on 4/24/2006 and passed by the Metropolitan King County Council on 5/8/2006, by the following vote:

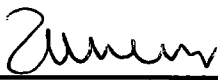
Yes: 7 - Mr. Phillips, Ms. Lambert, Mr. Ferguson, Mr. Gossett, Ms. Hague, Ms. Patterson and Mr. Constantine  
No: 0  
Excused: 2 - Mr. von Reichbauer and Mr. Dunn

KING COUNTY COUNCIL  
KING COUNTY, WASHINGTON



Larry Phillips, Chair

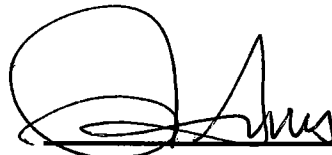
ATTEST:



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Anne Noris, Clerk of the Council

APPROVED this 15 day of May, 2006.



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Ron Sims, County Executive

Attachments None

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CLERK  
KING COUNTY COUNCIL