



**King County**  
**Metropolitan King County Council**  
**Committee of the Whole**

**STAFF REPORT**

<b>Agenda Item No.:</b>	10	<b>Date:</b>	10 Dec 2012
<b>Proposed No.:</b>	2012-0475	<b>Prepared by:</b>	Nick Wagner

**SUMMARY**

Proposed Motion 2012-0475 (pp. 3-5 of these materials) would adopt King County's 2012 State Legislative Agenda (pp. 7-8) and Statement of State Policy (pp. 9-13).

**BACKGROUND**

Each year King County develops a State Legislative Agenda and Statement of State Policy. The Council and the Executive work together through their respective government relations staff to decide on the positions that are most important to bring to the attention of the Washington State Legislature. These are then reduced to writing in the form of a Legislative Agenda and a Statement of State Policy, which is reviewed by the Executive and then transmitted to the Council for final review and adoption.

**THE PROPOSED LEGISLATION**

Proposed Motion 2012-0475 (pp. 3-5) would adopt the King County's 2013 State Legislative Agenda (pp. 7-8) and Statement of State Policy (pp. 9-13), which are attachments to the motion.

**INVITED**

1. Jason King, Director of Government Relations,  
Metropolitan King County Council
2. Genesee Adkins, Director of Government Relations,  
Intergovernmental Relations, King County Executive Office

**AMENDMENTS**

It is possible that amendments to the State Legislative Agenda or the Statement of State Policy, or both, will be proposed in committee.

**ATTACHMENTS**

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**ATTACHMENTS**

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**KING COUNTY**

1200 King County Courthouse  
516 Third Avenue  
Seattle, WA 98104

**Signature Report**

**December 4, 2012**

**Motion**

**Proposed No.** 2012-0475.1

**Sponsors** Gossett

1                   A MOTION adopting the King County 2013 State  
2                   Legislative Agenda and the King County 2013 Statement of  
3                   State Policy.

4                   WHEREAS, the King County council and the King County executive have  
5 worked together through their respective government relations staff and desire to bring  
6 their positions on issues facing the 2013 Washington State Legislature to the attention of  
7 the Washington State Legislature, and

8                   WHEREAS, King County desires to work cooperatively with other local  
9 governments and other organizations such as the Washington State Association of  
10 Counties, the Washington Association of County Officials, the Sound Cities Association,  
11 and the Association of Washington Cities to achieve its 2013 legislative goals, and

12                   WHEREAS, counties have been recognized by the Legislature as partners with  
13 the State in the delivery of such critical services as transportation, criminal justice, public  
14 health, community and human services, and water resources, and

15                   WHEREAS, King County is dependent on a strong fiscal partnership with the  
16 State, and

17                   WHEREAS, King County has a limited number of revenue sources available to  
18 mitigate impacts of budget reductions at the state level, and

19           WHEREAS, the slow recovery from the Great Recession combined with  
20 structural limitations on county funding sources means that revenue growth does not keep  
21 up with the rate of inflation, and

22           WHEREAS, King County's ability to deliver health care, human services,  
23 criminal justice, and other basic services is directly impacted by reductions in the state  
24 budget, and

25           WHEREAS, the state's across-the-board reductions have already affected key  
26 functions of county departments and agencies, and

27           WHEREAS, King County is dedicated to exploring with the State new ideas for  
28 sustained funding for critical services such as transportation, criminal justice, and health  
29 and human services, and

30           WHEREAS, the King County council and the King County executive will  
31 continue to review legislative developments for possible revisions of King County's 2013  
32 state legislative program;

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

34           The King County council hereby adopts the attached King County 2013 State  
35 Legislative Agenda and King County 2013 Statement of State Policy as King County's  
36

37 highest priorities for action in the 2013 legislative session of the Washington State  
38 Legislature.  
39

KING COUNTY COUNCIL  
KING COUNTY, WASHINGTON

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Larry Gossett, Chair

ATTEST:

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Anne Noris, Clerk of the Council

APPROVED this \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_.

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Dow Constantine, County Executive

**Attachments:** A. King County 2013 State Legislative Agenda, B. King County 2013 Statement Policy

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# **King County 2013 State Legislative Agenda**

## **King County**

King County's top state legislative priorities represent a commitment to meeting the critical needs of its residents despite ongoing challenges. This agenda aims to protect essential functions ranging from health and human services to sustainable funding for local roads and transit. It reflects the County's partnerships with our public employees and with state agencies, as well as our desire to make King County a thriving hub of economic development and job creation. These key policy objectives further support the county's Strategic Plan and its focus on efficiency, partnerships, and customer service.

### **Preservation of the Safety Net: Sustaining Health Care, Housing, and Human Services**

King County believes in preserving the safety net of basic services for its residents. Funding for programs that are critical to maintaining a foundational level of support for our communities include those that provide maternity support, mental health, public and primary health care, substance abuse, family planning, domestic violence and sexual assault survivor services, housing and services for low income and homeless persons, food assistance, employment training and services, and disability & developmental disability services. We support the implementation of health reform provisions that will strengthen access to quality health and human services for all residents, that will further integrate primary and behavioral health care services, and that will support provision of preventive services that address the underlying causes of health inequities. Cuts at the state level often compound those from the federal government, and that magnifying effect is appreciable. King County welcomes opportunities to preserve efficient and effective safety net programs through funding tools that can be implemented at the local level.

### **Resources for Transportation Needs – Funding, Tools & Flexibility for Transit & Roads**

Funding mechanisms supporting both roads and transit are fundamentally flawed, and the County struggles to provide basic levels of service. New state revenues and local financing tools should prioritize resources for preserving local and regional roads and bridges, sustainable funding sources for public transportation, and giving regions flexibility to make investments to meet their economic development needs. King County supports additional direct state support for local and regional needs, as well as local revenue tools to augment the state's direct investment. State projects must also adequately address the impact on and partnership with King County where appropriate. The State has not provided for any mitigation for the central portion of the Alaskan Way Viaduct corridor, where transit capacity is critical in order for the Bored Tunnel project to succeed. The State must also advance a design for the reconstructed Colman Dock that accommodates passenger ferry operations in a meaningful, multimodal fashion. Both directly distributed and competitive state and federal funds continue to be key resources for the County's diverse transportation needs.

### **Consolidation of Special Districts' Governance into County Government**

The careful consolidation of the King County Ferry and Flood Control Zone Districts' governance and oversight into the County could achieve considerable efficiencies and savings that could translate to greater deployed services. It is critical that the existing property tax authorities supporting the Districts each be maintained separate from the existing County's general taxing authority, in order to preserve the resources necessary to support these critical public safety and transportation & mobility services for county residents without expanding the Districts' current scope of authorization.

### **Preserve Existing Authority & Additional Local Revenue Options and Flexibility**

Local governments need increased access to existing and new revenue tools in order to maintain and improve core services and quality of life in the face of decreasing support from the state and federal government. The County must both preserve its current revenue authority and gain additional flexibility within existing mechanisms. Financial partnerships between the State and local governments like the annexation sales tax credit are built on a mutual trust and provide critical flexible resources. Counties also seek new councilmatic and voter-approved revenue tools to accommodate additional demands and services shifted to counties.

### **Revising Contracting Requirements to Utilize County Employees for Selected Functions**

There are sometimes occasions where it is more cost- and time-efficient to keep certain functions internal to county departments, maximizing flexibility and minimizing delay. Minor or emergency repair of public infrastructure like county roads, or uniquely bio-engineered flood plain restoration work are two prime examples where state-governed day labor limits and definitions could be modified favorably. These types of smaller repair projects can often be more efficiently implemented by a local jurisdiction's work force rather than following public work procurement processes, which are not always cost effective or timely for these smaller repair projects. These changes, however, would not include revisions to procurement procedures related to most major public works projects.

### **Strengthen Partnerships with the State Department of Corrections**

The State continues to struggle with the demands of a still growing inmate population, in spite of limited physical and human resources to accommodate them. At the same time, King County has excess correctional capacity and is a willing partner in helping the State manage its inmate housing needs. King County supports a focused conversation with key officials in both the Administration and the Legislature to determine what role King County can play in helping effectively manage some of the state's corrections population, including appropriate contract rates and any necessary policy changes to ensure public safety. A partnership of this kind can also provide transitional services to persons leaving the prison system to better prepare them for release.

### **Policy Reforms and Resources for Gang Violence Prevention & Intervention**

Keeping the public safe is a top priority for King County, and the proliferation of gang activity is a threat to public safety. King County has invested significant resources to enhance gang intervention and prevention efforts. We support full funding of state investments in youth violence prevention and intervention programs, which have been proven to redirect youth away from becoming involved in gangs. While we support reforming the law related to firearm possession by juveniles to allow for escalating penalties for those who have a record of unlawful possession charges, we must simultaneously provide holistic prevention and intervention strategies to these youth and their families, to provide the opportunity to turn their lives around. Despite the budget challenges facing the state, programs that foster safe environments for our kids should be preserved. Following established best practices, only a comprehensive, balanced approach of prevention, intervention, suppression, and reentry will accomplish this goal.





**King County**

## **King County 2013 Statement of State Policy**

### **Biodiversity Conservation & Habitat Protection and Restoration**

King County encourages state resources for implementation of habitat protection and restoration projects in approved WRIA-based salmon recovery plans. We support streamlining of federal and state permitting requirements and other incentives for public and private parties to carry out projects that will restore habitat for listed endangered species as well as the consideration of multiple species and their habitats. We support the Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program's work to support high priority local parks and open space projects. We support incentives to protect working farm and forest lands and regionally significant open space and habitat. We support proposals to link state funding of infrastructure improvements and other amenities to agreements by cities to receive development rights.

### **Climate Change and Energy**

We support collaborative development of short- and long-term regional targets for reducing greenhouse gas emissions that meet or exceed state emissions reduction goals and are informed by current science, recent emissions inventories, and local land use patterns. We support alignment of state transportation funding and incentives with Vision 2040 recommendations for focused growth in urban centers. We support continued energy efficiency incentives and innovations, as well as the ongoing exploration of clean energy alternatives, as well as appropriate roles for waste-to-energy technology.

### **Economic Development**

We encourage state efforts to partner with local governments and provide them with tools needed to build strong, diverse, and sustainable economies. We support regional economic growth through strategic public-private partnerships such as the Central Puget Sound Regional Economic Strategy. King County also encourages increased funding for Associate Development Organizations to implement this and other economic strategies to retain existing businesses and strategically recruit new ones. We support revisions to public works and sole source contracting laws that would allow full compliance with state and federal laws and that would maximize the use of in-house employees in public works. We support continued funding of infrastructure programs that provide resources to local jurisdictions to promote economic development, including the Local Revitalization Financing Program, the Community Economic Revitalization Board, the Public Works Trust Fund, the Transportation Improvement Board, and the Model Toxics Control Account.

King County also strongly supports education and workforce development programs for youth and adults including adequate K-12 funding and continued funding for dislocated worker retraining programs—matched to industry skill needs—at community and technical colleges. We support education funding that strengthens the in-state pipeline of aerospace workers to enable this vital industry to thrive and expand while providing family-wage jobs for King County and Washington residents. King County promotes programs that provide public contracting opportunities for small and disadvantaged businesses. We support maintenance and construction of infrastructure that facilitates efficient movement of freight and goods to promote domestic and international trade. We support rural economic development policies and programs that maintain the character of rural areas and sustain rural lifestyles.

### **Elections**

King County supports modifications to state election law that would provide cost savings and improved customer service. We also support consideration of policies to ensure greater efficiencies without compromising access to voting and democracy and customer service.

### **Emergency Management & Flood Hazard Reduction**

We support integrated approaches to major river flood hazard reduction, including development of regional standards for levee maintenance that both protect public safety and meet state and federal requirements for protecting listed species. We support an increased state role in providing support for major flood hazard mitigation projects, including those that meet multiple objectives of reducing future flood damages, protecting existing development, protecting habitat, and providing open space benefits. We support state investment in infrastructure including roads and bridges where hydraulic impacts cause flooding and other public safety risks. We support clarification of immunity and liability for flood control prevention and navigation projects. We support state development of integrated state goals, programs, and regulations for floodplain management. We support state involvement in emergency management and additional regional tools to support emergency preparedness and disaster response. We also support efforts to prevent harassment of E-911 operators and continued steps toward full implementation of E-911 programs.

### **Health Care and Support**

King County develops and implements creative and effective strategies and programs that prevent the leading causes of poor health, ensure access to appropriate and quality physical and behavioral health services, and promote individual health and intervention to reduce health disparities. Supporting and expanding this work requires stable funding at the state level for our public health, mental health, and chemical dependency prevention and support infrastructure. Addressing health disparities in our community requires investments in resources and initiatives that will give all our residents access to affordable health care, including prescription drug coverage, alcohol and substance abuse treatment, and comprehensive mental health services.

The County seeks support for initiatives that will protect the health of our communities and provide environmental safeguards ensuring the safety of our residents. We support steps that will encourage healthy eating and active living standards that will prevent obesity and reduce use of tobacco and tobacco by-products, and that provide for local discretion over these policy and regulatory areas. We support state law modifications that would facilitate implementation of federal health reform and that would expand health care access and preventive care to all Washingtonians.

### **Homelessness & Housing**

King County is the administrative lead for the Countywide Ten Year Plan to End Homelessness. The plan's success is built on existing strong collaborations between local, state and federal governments and community nonprofit providers and having the tools to measure the effectiveness of our investments. We support maintaining and expanding funding and initiatives for affordable appropriate housing at the state level for homeless and low income residents of King County. Housing and supportive services help county residents remain successfully housed and prevent future homelessness. King County also supports flexibility in administration and investment of hotel/motel revenues to increase affordable housing consistent with state law.

Complementing the housing strategy is the provision of tools to reduce homelessness for families, individuals, and youth through early support and intervention, including consideration of ways to prevent discharging youth and adults directly into homelessness from state institutions.

We support modifications to the Homeless Management Information System toward its improved operation. We support robust funding for the Housing Trust Fund, which provides a powerful tool for local agencies' creation and support of affordable and homeless housing. We support the Housing & Essential Needs program and all of its components.

### **Human Services**

King County supports funding for human services programs that help all children and youth grow and prosper socially and academically, offer paths to reduce or prevent involvement in the criminal justice, crisis mental health and emergency medical systems, and provide a safety net of services and partnerships to support our most vulnerable residents. We further support initiatives that offer opportunities for independence, self-sufficiency, and mobility for our residents of all ages.

We support state resources for homelessness programs, including the renewal of existing document recording fees. We support programs that assist the developmentally disabled, including early intervention funding and school transition funding. We support community mobilization programs and other means to prevent and treat substance abuse and violence. We support state resources to maintain access to mental health facilities and psychiatric beds.

### **Infrastructure and Transportation**

The roads system in unincorporated King County is critically important to people who live and travel in the county, but it is aged and deteriorating. Substantial investments are needed to restore roads and bridges, maintain them in good condition, and meet new transportation demands. However, the county's available funding falls far short of the need. The unincorporated-area road system owned and managed by the county includes 1,691 miles of paved roads, 51 miles of unpaved roads, 184 bridges—including several jointly owned with cities—and other related services and facilities within the 2,130 square miles of total land area in King County. King County seeks state funds to support county roads projects and facilities and will continue to pursue opportunities in future state revenue packages, state competitive grants, and other means that will help meet the great unmet needs of our county and regional facilities.

As the operator of one of the largest bus systems in the United States and the carrier for over 60% of all transit riders in the state, King County believes that a stable and well-funded transportation system is important to the economic prosperity and projected growth of our region. As we plan for the future it is clear that transit must play a larger role in moving people. We support efforts to provide public transit with more diverse, stable, and robust funding sources. We support the state's plans for a strong transit component as being critical to the designs for the Alaskan Way Viaduct and SR 520 corridors. We support mechanisms that facilitate smooth operation of the transit system, including fare card data management and fare enforcement. We support better integration of land use and transportation. We support efforts to reduce vehicle miles traveled and to reduce greenhouse gas levels.

We support continued funding of the Commute Trip Reduction program and the Regional Mobility Grant program, as well as state policies that encourage innovation in carpool and vanpool programs. We encourage policy that facilitates transit's effective operation, including policies governing rental or lease of rights-of-way as well as equitable reimbursement for Medicaid-eligible non-emergency trips. We support efforts to expand the use of tolling and congestion pricing to address our infrastructure needs and manage traffic. We support legislative efforts to improve bicycle and pedestrian safety.

King County supports a cooperative relationship with the State in providing for the ferry service needs of the residents of King County, including the effective use of toll credits and federal funds toward maximizing our county investments. We also support elimination of the state-federal conflict on retainage of construction contracts in all modes of federally funded transportation projects. We also support efforts to assure compatible land uses adjacent to airport facilities.

### **Land Use, Growth Management and Annexation**

King County supports the Growth Management Act as the primary means of planning for growth. We support the long-standing, strong state framework for comprehensive, countywide monitoring of the provision of urban services, the capacity to absorb future growth and the sufficiency of the size of the urban growth area. We support integration and streamlining of state land use and related statutes, as well as state funding to assist jurisdictions in meeting planning requirements. As unanimously recommended by the King County School Siting Task Force, we support changes in State laws, guidelines, policies and administrative procedures that would provide school districts with the incentives and tools to site schools in cities and towns. We support tools and incentives to facilitate annexations within urban growth areas and to help cities accommodate the transitional costs of annexations. We also support changes to state subdivision laws that would eliminate illegal practices or conflicts with local zoning. We support better integration of land use, transportation, and public health.

### **Law & Criminal Justice**

We support a fair and accessible justice system that keeps people safe in their homes and communities. We support the use of court fees that appropriately balance the need for revenue with the need to eliminate barriers to court access. We support a state/local split of state-imposed court fees that are collected at the local level. King County supports the development of statewide court case management systems and data exchange that will meet the needs of the County and the many users of its criminal justice system. We support state funding for state mandated programs, including dependency court appointed special advocates. We support tools that allow counties to work with one another in developing effective systems to share criminal justice information, including an appropriate exchange of mental health commitment and firearms information. We support distribution of state resources for parents representation, court interpreters, and extraordinary criminal justice costs. We believe the state should bear responsibility for the costs of notice publication in dependency cases. We support legislation providing for continuation of federal benefits for qualifying mentally ill adult and juvenile inmates and detainees. We are committed to ending domestic violence and sexual assault for our residents. We continue to be concerned about human trafficking and will work to combat its practice.

King County believes that every person has the right to live, work, learn, feel safe and play free from discrimination. We support legislation that prevents discrimination in housing, employment, public accommodations and lending practices. We also support efforts to reduce and reverse disproportionate outcomes in the areas of race and social justice.

### **Revenue, Finance, and General Government**

King County strongly supports maintaining and enhancing local taxing and fee authority and local revenue options. We support fee-based tools to preserve the provision of services by the county assessor and new technology tools to provide more efficient service. King County supports efforts to develop financing tools for spay and neuter programs that support regional animal services objectives. We also support enhanced additional page recording fees to offset

local governments' recording costs. We seek to preserve our ability to operate our own investment pool. We do not support unfunded mandates on the county. If state responsibilities are shifted onto local governments, we would seek new local governance authority and state financial support or new local revenue tools. Such a shift should be weighed carefully, and explored only after investigating ways to reduce state requirements as well as local governments' ability to absorb such responsibilities and costs.

King County supports expanding the banking and financial services options available to local governments in meeting their needs. This expansion should provide local governments with the option of using local and smaller financial institutions, while maintaining a high level of safety and security for public funds. King County also supports amending RCW 39.58 to allow credit unions to accept public deposits in a manner consistent with the restrictions of banks and thrift institutions under this statute.

### **Stormwater, Water Quality and Puget Sound Partnership**

We support more holistic implementation of the Clean Water Act, including evaluation of and prioritization of actions at a watershed and Puget Sound scale. We support optional programs that would allow state agencies to approve local stormwater programs as qualified local programs. We also support development of state certification for wetland ecologists. We support state technical assistance and regulatory approval for a wider range of tools and approaches for stormwater treatment and management. We seek refinement of NPDES water quality monitoring requirements to focus on value-added monitoring that is coordinated across permit holders consistent with recommendations of the Stormwater Monitoring Workgroup. We support funding and implementation of the Puget Sound Partnership's Action Agenda, including fees on products that have a clear nexus with water pollution. We also support exploration of new watershed-based, optional funding authorities to support water quality, stormwater, and habitat protection and restoration projects. We support regulatory streamlining and other incentives for public and private projects that will restore functioning shoreline and mitigate stormwater impacts.

### **Waste Reduction and Recycling**

We support development of cradle-to-cradle product education, stewardship, recycling, and take-back programs for products for which improper disposal is likely to result in hazardous waste, water quality contamination or other solid waste impacts, including pharmaceuticals and medicines, computers and other electronics, carpet, telephone books, and mercury and fluorescent lighting sources.

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November 30, 2012

The Honorable Larry Gossett  
Chair, King County Council  
Room 1200  
C O U R T H O U S E

Dear Councilmember Gossett:

Attached for your consideration and approval is a motion establishing the 2013 State Legislative Agenda of King County. The proposed 2013 Statement of State Policy document is also attached. As in previous years, it may be necessary to further amend these documents, at a later date, to incorporate major issues and concerns that arise during to the state legislative session.

The September report by the Economic and Revenue Forecast Council shows the state can expect a \$900 billion dollar budget shortfall through the end of the June 2015—the end of the upcoming biennial budget period. Compounding that deficit is the recent McCleary Supreme Court case, which dictates that the State spend \$1 billion or more to meet its obligation to fully fund basic education. At the same time, the county continues to face ongoing fiscal challenges delivering state mandated local government services. Our priorities in the upcoming session include, but are not limited to, protecting state support for health care, housing, and human services, developing new resources for roads and transit, consolidating special districts' governance into the county, and preserving existing authority and seeking additional flexibility. It is clear that we will once again need an aggressive and effective lobbying effort during the 2013 state legislative session by all elected leadership of King County. Only by working together will we be successful. The attached legislative priorities reflect these objectives.

I am also focused on working with the State as a partner on issues of critical regional and statewide significance, where the inadequacy or failure of basic infrastructure poses an immediate threat to public health and safety or to long-term economic stability. These come in many forms, from revenue shortfalls for our county roads network—supported by only a fraction of the many who use it—to keeping the doors of public health facilities open in all communities. With the state's economy still struggling, state legislators will make dire choices among key programs and facilities, and we will need to be nimble, creative, and persistent in upholding King County's key principles and priorities.

As Executive, I look forward to working collaboratively with the County Council and our other intergovernmental partners including the Washington Association of Counties, the City of Seattle and King County cities, to ensure we provide the support needed for our county lobbying team in Olympia.

Sincerely,

Dow Constantine  
King County Executive

Enclosures

cc: King County Councilmembers

ATTN: Michael Woywod, Chief of Staff

Jason King, Director of Government Relations, Communications and  
External Affairs

Carmela Ennis, Government Relations Associate

Anne Noris, Clerk of the Council

Fred Jarrett, Deputy County Executive, King County Executive Office (KCEO)

Dwight Dively, Director, Office of Performance, Strategy, and Budget

Sung Yang, Chief of Staff, KCEO

Frank Abe, Communications Director, KCEO

Joe Woods, Deputy Chief of Staff, KCEO

Genesee Adkins, Director of Government Relations, KCEO

Diane Carlson, Director of Regional Initiatives, KCEO