



Legislation Text

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Clerk 4/30/2007

AN ORDINANCE providing for the submission to the qualified electors of King County at a special election to be held on November 6, 2007, of a proposition to fund Medic One and emergency medical services by authorizing a regular property tax levy in excess of the limitations contained in chapter 84.55 RCW, for a consecutive six-year period, collection beginning in 2008, at a rate of not more than \$0.254 per one thousand dollars of assessed valuation in the first year and using the annual growth in the medical care consumer price index to establish the limit factor for the levy in years two through six, for the purpose of providing an efficient and effective regional response to medical emergencies.

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE COUNCIL OF KING COUNTY:

SECTION 1. Findings:

A. Emergency medical services, publicly known as Medic One, is a well-integrated, publicly funded, emergency medical service system that is designed to provide an efficient and effective response to medical emergencies.

B. The Medic One emergency medical services program includes a tiered response system that includes basic life support services provided by fire department and fire district emergency medical technicians, advanced life support (paramedic) services, and regional support programs and services that provide medical oversight and direction, citizen and emergency personnel training, planning, public education, and other support programs and services.

C. Emergency medical services are among the most important services provided to county residents. These services include basic and advanced life support, medical quality assurance, effective communications systems, emergency medical technician training, cardiopulmonary resuscitation and defibrillation training, injury prevention education, medical quality assurance and related services. In combination, these programs have made the emergency medical services network in King County an invaluable lifesaving effort and an important part of the quality of life standards afforded citizens of the county.

D. Cardiovascular disease is the leading cause of death in the nation and in King County. The delivery of paramedic services in King County has tripled the survival rate of victims of cardiac arrest; the initiation of cardiopulmonary resuscitation by bystanders or emergency medical technicians has doubled hospital discharge rates.

E. King County should continue to exercise leadership and assume responsibility for assuring the orderly and comprehensive development and provision of emergency medical services throughout the county.

F. Ordinance 15652 directed the county executive to transmit to the council for review and approval an emergency medical services strategic plan for the next levy period beginning in 2008.

G. Further, Ordinance 15652 directs the plan show the proposed levy program at two funding levels:

1. The base level for carrying forward the current program adjusted for inflation and population growth; and
2. The base level plus services and capital enhancements proposed to improve advanced life support and strategic initiatives.

H. The 2008-2013 strategic plan is the primary policy and financial document that will direct the emergency medical services network into the future. It details the roles, responsibilities and programs for our renowned system.

I. In October 2005, a region wide effort to review the issues and options facing the emergency medical services systems and to develop recommendations for the next strategic plan was convened. The process

brought together stakeholders that represented the full range of emergency medical service providers as well as elected officials, finance directors and appointees from large cities, suburban cities and fire districts.

J. These stakeholders spent one year reviewing the needs of the emergency medical services system and the financial and programmatic policies necessary to meet these needs. The result of the stakeholders' work is reflected in the 2008-2013 strategic plan.

K. The concern for assuring a county-wide Medic One emergency medical services program is shared by King County cities and fire protection districts who participate in Medic One emergency medical services programs.

L. Medic One emergency medical services provided to county residents should be of high quality and should meet uniform service delivery standards.

M. The demand for Medic One emergency medical services has grown over the years; however, such demand has not been accompanied by stable source of revenues.

N. Medic One emergency medical services are essential and should be afforded a stable and discreet funding base.

O. The provision of Medic One emergency medical services on a countywide basis is a public purpose of King County. In order to assure such a provision of services, it is both necessary and appropriate that an additional regular property tax of \$0.254 or less per \$1,000 of assessed valuation be levied as provided for in this ordinance. This levy continues funding of Medic One programs approved by the people of King County in 2001.

P. It is planned anticipated that the emergency medical services within the boundary of the city of Seattle will be provided by Seattle Medic One emergency medical services program.

SECTION 2. Approval of cities over fifty thousand population. Consistent with historic practice and methodology described in RCW 84.52.069, legislative bodies of all cities in the county over fifty thousand population are requested to approve the Medic One/Emergency Medical Services 2008-2013 Strategic Plan

and, on or before May 15, 2007, agree that a Medic One county-wide levy proposal should be submitted to the qualified electors of King County in 2007.

SECTION 3. Definitions. The definitions in this section apply throughout this ordinance unless the context clearly requires otherwise.

A. "Levy" means the portion of the regular property tax levy, for the specific purpose and term provided in this ordinance and authorized by the electorate in accordance with state law.

B. "Levy proceeds" means the principal amount of funds raised by the Levy, any interest earnings on the funds and the proceeds of any interim financing following authorization of the Levy.

C. "Limit factor" means the ratio of the most recent September Consumer Price Index to the immediately previous September Consumer Price Index (final published CPI-W All City Average, as calculated by the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics, or its successor) for medical care, expressed as a multiple of one hundred percent to achieve the result of one hundred percent plus inflation.

SECTION 4. City of Seattle services. It is recognized that the city of Seattle operates and funds a Medic One emergency medical services program that is part of the countywide delivery system. During the period of this six-year levy as set forth herein, King County shall ensure that all tax revenues collected pursuant to such six-year levy from taxable property located within the legal boundaries of the city of Seattle are available for emergency medical services within the city of Seattle.

SECTION 5. Deposit of levy proceeds. All funds collected under this levy shall be deposited into the county emergency medical services fund, or its successor.

SECTION 6. Eligible expenditures. If approved by the qualified electors of the county, all levy proceeds shall be used only for the provision of emergency medical care or emergency medical services, including related personnel costs, training for such personnel, and related equipment, supplies, vehicles and structures needed for the provision of emergency medical care or emergency medical services. Expenditures shall be consistent with the Medic One/Emergency Medical Services 2008-2013 Strategic Plan adopted by

Proposed Ordinance 2007-0182.

SECTION 7. Administration and governance. If the qualified electors approve the regional Medic One/Emergency Medical Services levy, the program will continue to be administered by the emergency medical services division of the Seattle-King County department of public health. In order to implement the Medic One program, emergency medical services division shall continue to consult with regional technical stakeholders, steering committee members, elected official committee members and other participants of the Medic One/Emergency Medical Services 2008-2013 Strategic Plan process.

SECTION 8. Levy submittal to voters. To provide necessary funds for Medic One purposes identified in section 5 of this ordinance, the county council shall submit to the qualified electors of the county a proposition authorizing a regular property tax levy in excess of the levy limitation contained in chapter 84.55 RCW for six consecutive years, with collection commencing in 2008, at a rate not to exceed twenty-five and four-tenth cents per one thousand dollars of assessed value. In accordance with RCW 84.55.050, this Levy shall be a regular property tax levy subject to the limit factor in years two through six, limited to the annual growth in the medical care consumer price index for Seattle-Tacoma-Bremerton.

SECTION 9. Ratification. Certification of the proposition by the clerk of the county council to the manager of the records, elections and licensing services division in accordance with law before the election on November 6, 2007, and any other act consistent with the authority and before the effective date of this ordinance are hereby ratified and confirmed. This levy shall be submitted to and approved by the voters in accordance with RCW 84.55.050.

SECTION 10. Call for special election. In accordance with RCW 29A.04.321, a special election is called for November 6, 2007, to consider a proposition authorizing a regular property tax levy for the purposes described in this ordinance. The manager of the records, elections and licensing services division shall cause notice to be given of this ordinance in accordance with the state constitution and general law and to submit to the qualified electors of the county, at the said special county election, the proposition hereinafter set forth. The

clerk of the council shall certify that proposition to the manager of the records, elections and licensing services division, in substantially the following form:

PROPOSITION ___: The King County council has passed Ordinance _____ to fund the continued provision of existing Medic One emergency medical services. It would authorize King County to exceed RCW 84.55 regular property tax limitations and levy an additional property tax of 25.4 cents or less per \$1,000 of assessed valuation for six consecutive years, with collection beginning in 2008. Increases to this levy in years two through six would be limited to the annual growth in the medical care consumer price index for Seattle-Tacoma-Bremerton.

Should this proposition be:

Approved? _____

Rejected? _____

SECTION 11. The county executive is hereby authorized and directed to enter into an interlocal agreement with the city of Seattle relating to the funding of the Medic One program, consistent with the provisions of section 4 of this ordinance.

SECTION 12. The manager, King County records and elections division, is hereby authorized and requested to prepare and distribute a local voters' pamphlet, pursuant to K.C.C. 1.10.010, for the special election called for in this ordinance, the cost of the pamphlet to be included as part of the cost of the election.

SECTION 13. Severability. If any provision of this ordinance or its application to any person or circumstance is held invalid, the remainder of the ordinance or the application of the provision to other persons or circumstances is not affected.