

JOINT SELECT COMMITTEE ON JUNIOR TAXING DISTRICTS, MUNICIPAL CORPORATIONS, AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT FINANCE

Summary of Responses - Solicited Advice to Committee via September 11, 2012 Inquiry to Organizations Representing Local Government Entities (Revision Date: October 30, 2012)

Entity	Responder	Response Date	Summary of Response
Washington State Noxious Weed Control Board	Alison Halpern, Executive Secretary	Sept. 11, 2012	Expressed willingness to answer service questions that members or committee staff may have.
The Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs	Don Pierce, Legislative Director	Sept. 11, 2012	State budget cuts have resulted in local law enforcement cuts. Expressed concern about crime increases. Indicated that public service programs that improve quality of life have been dramatically reduced or eliminated. Expressed concern about capping of shared liquor revenues.
Washington Fire Chiefs	Mike Brown, Executive Director	Sept. 13, 2012	Asserted that fire service should be used as an example of how jurisdictions can effectively and efficiently consolidate services. Noted that fire service has worked to modify funding provisions. Indicated that fire service would like to assist with disbursement plans for excess liquor revenues.
Washington Association of Conservation Districts	David Vogel, Executive Director	Sept. 18, 2012	Explained conservation districts, including their history, role and alternative local funding mechanisms. Explained the unique non-regulatory nature of districts and asserted that their role should be maintained.
Washington Recreation and Park Association	Brit Kramer, Executive Director	Sept. 18, 2012	Asserted that park districts and Metropolitan Park Districts have added efficiency, accountability, and focused management to park facilities and properties throughout the state.
City of Roy	Debbie Dearing, City Clerk-Treasurer	Sept. 19, 2012	"We want to be able to control our own dollars as much as possible since more steps would mean more percentages going to additional pass through agencies." (Full response)

Washington Library Association	Patty Reyes, Chair, Legislative Planning Committee	Sept. 19, 2012	Requested Committee's assistance in lengthening the amount of time between receipt of assessed value figures (often in mid-September) and the delivery of budgets to county governments (often in mid-November).
Washington Public Utility Districts Association	Erik Poulsen, Government Relations Director	Sept. 20, 2012	Explained the history, authority, and provided services of PUDs. Indicated that PUDs are a special purpose district but not a junior taxing district. Noted that PUDs rarely use their property tax authority. Indicated that there has historically been little interest in consolidating PUDs, as they operate on a countywide or multi-county basis. Indicated that PUDs are preference customers of electricity sold by the Bonneville Power Administration and that, in recent years, PUDs have been providing more local utility services.
Washington Public Ports Association	Johan Hellman, Assistant Director	Sept. 20, 2012	Recommended additional flexibility to junior taxing districts in the following areas: (1) job-building flexibility to industrial development districts; and (2) stormwater infrastructure.
Washington State Water Resources Association	Thomas Myrum, Executive Director	Sept. 20, 2012	Explained the authority, provided services, and governance of irrigation districts. Asserted that district consolidation would be neither feasible nor desirable because districts have service-related contractual agreements with the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, and because some districts cross municipal and county jurisdictions. Asserted also that district consolidation with a local government would likely lead to increased costs for water users, and that statute directs districts to be governed by district water users.
Washington Association of Sewer and Water Districts	Joe Daniels	Sept. 20, 2012	Indicated that the number of water/sewer districts has decreased in recent decades, as many have merged and consolidated into regional utility providers. Noted that governance titles have merged and that districts can dissolve, consolidate, merge, and be assumed. Suggested that, in considering consolidation perspectives, the Committee should examine water and sewer service provisions in western states. Recommended reviewing statutes districts believe are discriminatory and outdated for districts,

			including statutes relating to service provisions by cities, assumptions, and the role of Boundary Review Boards.
American Public Works Association, Washington State Chapter	Peter Capell, President	Sept. 21, 2012	Recommended the following: (1) create a street maintenance utility comparable to a sewer maintenance utility; (2) create a city road levy comparable to a county road levy; (3) focus on provisions enabling general purpose governments to pursue consolidation rather than creating controls for directing consolidations; (4) support increasing the maximum councilmanic vehicle fee authority for jurisdictions using the Transportation Benefit District authority from \$20 to \$40; and (5) secure ongoing funding for the Public Works Trust Fund Program.
Washington Fire Commissioners Association	Roger Ferris, Executive Secretary	September 24, 2012	Noted that fire districts and cities have been consolidating to provide services and that recently, more than 100 cities "have annexed back into a fire district or have chosen to execute a contract for service with the fire district." Noted also that the Legislature has facilitated these consolidations through permissive district-requested legislation. Indicated that property tax statutes remain a significant barrier to consolidation. Suggested modifying arbitration rules and public records requirements, establishing new tax credits for volunteer personnel, and considering new revenue options.
Washington State Housing Finance Commission	Kim Herman, Executive Director	September 25, 2012	Explained the duties of the WSHFC, summarized the financial scope of its actions, discussed its operation role with respect to the Washington higher Education Facilities Authority and the Tobacco Settlement Authority, and noted that it is not a junior taxing district and that it has no authority to collect taxes.