



**KING COUNTY**

1200 King County Courthouse  
516 Third Avenue  
Seattle, WA 98104

**Signature Report**

**May 3, 2011**

**Ordinance 17072**

**Proposed No. 2011-0018.4**

**Sponsors Ferguson, von Reichbauer and  
Dunn**

1 AN ORDINANCE providing for the submission to the  
2 qualified electors of King County at a special election to be  
3 held in King County on August 16, 2011, of a proposition  
4 to provide regional health and human services to residents  
5 of King County by renewing and replacing authorization of  
6 the veterans and human services property tax levy in excess  
7 of the levy limitation contained in chapter 84.55 RCW, for  
8 a consecutive six-year period at a first year rate of not more  
9 than \$0.05 per one thousand dollars of assessed valuation,  
10 with subsequent maximum levy collections being increased  
11 by the greater of 1% or the percentage increase in the  
12 consumer price index as long as that amount does not  
13 exceed 3%, for the purpose of providing funding to enable  
14 the provision of health and human services such as  
15 affordable and supportive housing, mental health  
16 counseling, substance abuse prevention and treatment,  
17 employment assistance and other essential regional health  
18 and human services for residents of King County and  
19 establishing county citizen oversight boards to review and

20 report on expenditures of levy proceeds, contingent on  
21 voter approval of the levy.

22 BE IT ORDAINED BY THE COUNCIL OF KING COUNTY:

23 **SECTION 1. Findings:**

24 A. To enhance the available funding for veterans and other human services in  
25 King County, the metropolitan King County council approved Ordinance 15279, placing  
26 a six-year veterans and human services levy on the ballot. In November 2005, the  
27 veterans and human services levy passed with nearly fifty-eight percent approval,  
28 generating much needed funding to help veterans, military personnel and their families  
29 and other individuals and families in need across the county through a variety of regional  
30 health and human services.

31 B. The veterans and human services levy generates an average of \$14.6 million  
32 per year. One-half of these revenues are dedicated exclusively for veterans and their  
33 families and the remaining one-half is dedicated to other King County residents in need  
34 of human services. This levy remains in effect until December 31, 2011.

35 C. All activities supported by the levy advance one or more of three overarching  
36 policy goals:

- 37 1. Reducing homelessness;
- 38 2. Reducing emergency medical and criminal justice involvement; or
- 39 3. Increasing self-sufficiency for veterans, military personnel, their families and  
40 other individuals and families in need.

41 D. Since 2006, the veterans and human services levy has met these policy goals  
42 by:

43           1. Enrolling over one thousand seven hundred chronically homeless individuals  
44 in outreach services as a first milestone in ending homelessness. Of those helped,  
45 approximately eighteen percent are veterans and at least one hundred had been involved  
46 in the criminal justice system due to mental illness or co-occurring disorders;

47           2. Providing over four hundred homeless veterans with twenty-four thousand  
48 bed-nights of emergency shelter and transitional housing, coupled with case management  
49 and advocacy;

50           3. Expanding King County's existing veterans programs and adding one new  
51 program to serve over nine thousand military personnel, veterans and their families.  
52 These programs include: financial aid and emergency assistance for rent, food, utilities,  
53 medical needs and burial; employment services such as job placement, career counseling  
54 and job training; transportation; mental health counseling, including crisis and  
55 posttraumatic stress disorder counseling and intervention services; case management  
56 services for those needing housing, treatment or other assistance; long-term and short-  
57 term housing; treatment for trauma; homeless prevention; veterans' incarcerated  
58 prevention; and other programs;

59           4. Serving three hundred eighty veterans experiencing posttraumatic stress  
60 disorder with five thousand nine hundred thirty hours of levy-funded counseling in 2009  
61 alone, with a demonstrated success rate of ninety-five percent of clients reducing  
62 posttraumatic stress disorder symptoms;

63           5. Assessing over ten thousand four hundred low-income persons for behavioral  
64 health issues. Of these persons, more than three thousand were indicated to have  
65 depression or anxiety symptoms and entered treatment by the end of 2009;

66           6. Treating one thousand primary care clients, including an estimated one  
67 hundred fifty veterans or their family members, successfully reducing their depression or  
68 anxiety symptoms and improving their long-term health prospects; and

69           7. Screening over seven thousand one hundred mothers for maternal depression.  
70 Of these, six hundred eighty-five received behavioral health treatment services,  
71 contributing to the healthy development of their children. Of those measured, sixty-eight  
72 percent have reduced depression or anxiety, or both, thereby improving the likelihood of  
73 their successful parenting and improved self sufficiency;

74           E. Although the veterans and human services levy is set to expire at the end of  
75 2011, the need for veterans and human services remains high. Approximately one  
76 hundred thirty-nine thousand veterans live in King County representing over twenty  
77 percent of the state's veterans. The population of veterans in the state is growing and  
78 Washington ranks eighth nationwide for the total number of veterans in the state.

79           F. King County has a growing homeless population, estimated to be as many as  
80 eight thousand five hundred on any given night. Among these, the United States  
81 Department of Veterans Affairs estimates that there are as many as two thousand five  
82 hundred homeless veterans in the Puget Sound region.

83           G. The current recession continues to challenge individuals and families  
84 throughout the region, as high unemployment and foreclosure rates increase the need for  
85 housing and supportive health and human services.

86           H. King County's current expense fund faces continuing challenges in future  
87 years, including anticipated shortfalls in 2012 and 2013 in excess of twenty million  
88 dollars each year. As a discretionary service under state law, human service funding has

89 been almost entirely eliminated and faces complete elimination in future years. At the  
90 state level, cuts to human services funding are anticipated to have devastating impacts on  
91 King County families in need.

92 I. Given the positive outcomes of the veterans and human services levy on the  
93 lives of veterans, military personnel, their families and other individuals and families in  
94 need, and the projected need for sustained veterans and human services funding in future,  
95 it is appropriate to ask the voters to renew and replace the veterans and human services  
96 levy.

97 J. The current economic crisis has eroded property values causing jurisdictions to  
98 reach the limits of the authorized property tax rate under state law. As a result, any future  
99 increase in the veterans and human services levy rate would negatively affect the ability  
100 of other jurisdictions in King County to collect needed revenues for flood prevention,  
101 hospital maintenance and fire district operations. As such, it is appropriate to maintain  
102 the current rate of \$0.05 per one thousand dollars of assessed valuation in the first year of  
103 the levy.

104 K. Under state law, a levy lid lift is limited to a maximum term of six years if the  
105 levy provides for a specified index to be used to determine the limit factor.

106 **SECTION 2. Definitions.** The definitions in this section apply throughout this  
107 ordinance unless the context clearly requires otherwise.

108 A. "Family" means a veteran's or military personnel's spouse, domestic partner or  
109 child or the child of the spouse or domestic partner or other dependent relatives if living  
110 in the household of a veteran or military personnel.

111 B. "Human services for veterans" means services and projects of the King  
112 County veterans' program specifically developed to meet the needs of veterans, military  
113 personnel and their families in King County.

114 C. "Levy" means the levy of regular property taxes for the specific purpose and  
115 term provided in this ordinance and authorized by the electorate in accordance with state  
116 law.

117 D. "Levy proceeds" means the principal amount of funds raised by the levy and  
118 any interest earnings on the funds.

119 E. "Limit factor" means the greater of 1% or the percentage increase in the  
120 consumer price index as long as that amount does not exceed 3%. The consumer price  
121 index is defined as the ratio of the most recent June Consumer Price Index to the  
122 immediately previous June Consumer Price Index (final published CPI-W Seattle-  
123 Tacoma-Bremerton, as calculated by the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics, or its  
124 successor) expressed as a multiple of one hundred percent to achieve the result of one  
125 hundred percent plus inflation.

126 F. "Military personnel" means those persons currently serving in a branch of the  
127 military, including the National Guard and reservists for any branch of the military.

128 G. "Regional health and human services" means a range of services and related  
129 capital facilities, including housing, that meet basic human needs and promote safe and  
130 healthy communities including, but not limited to:

131 1. Prevention and early intervention services that reduce or prevent adverse  
132 human behaviors and social conditions that lead to crises, serious dysfunction or  
133 disability;

134           2. Criminal justice linked services that assist individuals and their families in  
135 avoiding or mitigating their involvement with the criminal justice system;

136           3. Crisis intervention services that address life threatening situations and other  
137 crises;

138           4. Rehabilitation and support services that provide treatment for individual and  
139 family problems or provide support to maintain or enhance their present level of  
140 independence.

141           H. "Veterans" mean those persons who have served in any branch of the military,  
142 including the National Guard and reservists for any branch of the military.

143           SECTION 3. Levy submittal to voters. To provide necessary funds for the  
144 provision of regional health and human services to King County's veterans, military  
145 personnel and their families and other residents in need of health and human services, the  
146 county council shall submit to the qualified electors of the county a proposition to renew  
147 and replace an expiring levy and authorize a regular property tax levy in excess of the  
148 levy limitation contained in chapter 84.55 RCW for six consecutive years, commencing  
149 in 2011, with collection beginning in 2012, at a rate not to exceed five cents per one  
150 thousand dollars of assessed value in the first year, with subsequent levies limited by the  
151 limit factor as defined in section 2 of this ordinance.

152           SECTION 4. Deposit of levy proceeds. The levy proceeds shall be deposited in  
153 two special revenue funds, which funds shall be specified by ordinance. The levy  
154 proceeds shall be divided to place fifty percent of the levy proceeds in one fund  
155 designated for the provision of regional health and human services for veterans, military  
156 personnel and their families. The remaining fifty percent of the levy proceeds shall be

157 placed in another fund designated for the provision of regional health and human services  
158 to a wide range of people in need of such services.

159        **SECTION 5. Eligible expenditures.** If approved by the qualified electors of the  
160 county, all levy proceeds shall be used to pay the costs associated with provision of  
161 regional health and human services to a wide range of people in need of such services,  
162 including, but not limited to, services that increase self-sufficiency for veterans, military  
163 personnel and their families, services that reduce involvement in the criminal justice  
164 system, services that reduce emergency medical costs, services for children and youth,  
165 the elderly, the unemployed and underemployed and for services specific to veterans'  
166 needs such as treatment for posttraumatic stress disorder and specialized employment  
167 assistance. The provision of services will include a range of regional health and human  
168 services and related capital facilities including, but not limited to, housing assistance,  
169 homelessness prevention, mental health counseling substance abuse prevention and  
170 treatment and employment assistance.

171        Eligible expenditures shall also include payment of costs to strengthen and  
172 improve the health and human services system and infrastructure to provide greater  
173 access to services and engender better coordination and integration of regional health and  
174 human services addressing the needs of veterans, military personnel and their families.

175        **SECTION 6. Call for special election.** In accordance with RCW 29A.04.321, it  
176 is hereby deemed that an emergency exists requiring the submission to the qualified  
177 electors of the county at a special election to be held on August 16, 2011, a proposition  
178 authorizing a regular property tax levy for the purposes described in this ordinance. The  
179 director of the elections department shall cause notice to be given of this ordinance in



180 accordance with the state constitution and general law and to submit to the qualified  
181 electors of the county, at the said special county election, the proposition hereinafter set  
182 forth. The clerk of the council shall certify that proposition to the director of the  
183 elections department, in substantially the following form, with such additions, deletions  
184 or modifications as may be required for the proposition listed below by the prosecuting  
185 attorney:

186 PROPOSITION \_\_\_: The King County council has passed Ordinance  
187 \_\_\_\_\_ concerning funding for regional veterans, health, and human  
188 services. This proposition would renew and replace an expiring levy and  
189 fund capital facilities and services that reduce medical costs,  
190 homelessness, and criminal justice system involvement with half of  
191 proceeds supporting veterans and their families. It would authorize King  
192 County to levy an additional property tax of 5 cents per \$1,000 of assessed  
193 valuation for collection in 2012 and authorize annual increases by the  
194 percentage increase in the consumer price index or 1%, whichever is  
195 greater, with a maximum increase of 3%, for the five succeeding years.

196 Should this proposition be:

197 Approved? \_\_\_\_\_

198 Rejected? \_\_\_\_\_

199 **SECTION 7. County citizen oversight boards established.** If the levy is  
200 reapproved by the voters, the oversight boards established by Ordinance 15279 shall be  
201 continued and the criteria identified for board membership shall be maintained.

202            **SECTION 8. Ratification.** Certification of the proposition by the clerk of the  
203 county council to the director of the elections department in accordance with law before  
204 the election on August 16, 2011, and any other act consistent with the authority and  
205 before the effective date of this ordinance are hereby ratified and confirmed.

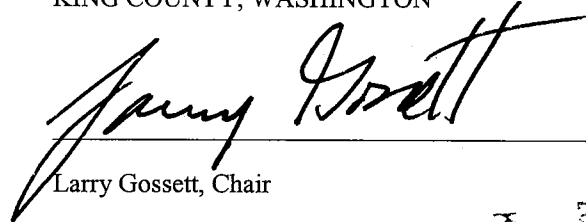
206            **SECTION 9. Severability.** If any provision of this ordinance or its application to

207 any person or circumstance is held invalid, the remainder of the ordinance or the  
208 application of the provision to other persons or circumstances is not affected.  
209

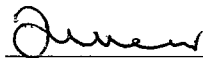
Ordinance 17072 was introduced on 1/3/2011 and passed as amended by the Metropolitan King County Council on 5/2/2011, by the following vote:

Yes: 9 - Mr. Phillips, Mr. von Reichbauer, Mr. Gossett, Ms. Hague, Ms. Patterson, Ms. Lambert, Mr. Ferguson, Mr. Dunn and Mr. McDermott  
No: 0  
Excused: 0

KING COUNTY COUNCIL  
KING COUNTY, WASHINGTON

  
Larry Gossett, Chair

ATTEST:

  
\_\_\_\_\_

Anne Noris, Clerk of the Council

APPROVED this 6 day of MAY, 2011.

  
\_\_\_\_\_

Dow Constantine, County Executive

Attachments: None

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2011 MAY -6 PM 4:23  
CLERK  
KING COUNTY COUNCIL