



## Legislation Text

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Clerk 04/06/2009

A MOTION establishing the process for appointing the county executive in the event of a vacancy in the office.

WHEREAS, the King County council is committed to principles of good government and the transparency of its proceedings, and

WHEREAS, it is anticipated that the King County executive will shortly resign the executive's elected office for a federal position, and

WHEREAS, the King County council has the duty under the county charter to fill the resulting vacancy in the office of executive by appointment of an individual to serve as executive until the executive's successor is elected and qualified at the November 2009 general election, and

WHEREAS, the Washington state Attorney General's office has opined that a board of county commissioners may not appoint one of their members to a vacant position that they have the duty to fill, and

WHEREAS, the challenges facing an appointed county executive during the intervening months before a November election will be enormous and are expected to include substantial budget shortfalls, and

WHEREAS, criminal justice and public safety programs are likely to be the most severely impacted by those budget shortfalls, and

WHEREAS, strong leadership by the King County executive will be essential to securing "life boat" funding and ensuring that the county accesses appropriate federal stimulus package funds, and

WHEREAS, the King County executive is considered to be one of the highest ranking elected officials in Washington state, and

WHEREAS, the Municipal League of King County has published ratings of candidates for public office, reviewed and made recommendations on proposed ballot measures and closely monitored the workings of local government for almost a century, and

WHEREAS, it will be critically important for an appointed county executive to focus attention on the business of King County rather than the demands of campaigning for office, and

WHEREAS, in order to expedite a difficult budget process, an interim county executive will need to have strong ties and relationships with the state Legislature, other governments, transportation groups, environmental groups, labor groups and suburban cities within King County;

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

A. In order to preserve public confidence in the selection process for an appointed county executive, a blue ribbon selection committee is hereby established for the express purpose of reviewing eligible candidates for appointment to the office of county executive. The committee shall establish an expedited process that will facilitate prompt appointment of an executive.

B. The committee shall consist of citizen members representing the economic, geographic and ethnic diversity of the county, together with members representing the county's criminal justice and public safety systems.

C. The appointed members are:

1. Citizen members:

- a. Norm Rice, Cochair;
- b. Suzette Cooke, Cochair;
- c. Becky Cox;
- d. Joan Crooks;
- e. Adrian Diaz;
- f. David Freiboth;

- g. Beretta Gomillion;
  - h. Nancy Hutto;
  - i. Sharon Maeda;
  - j. Ted Choi Tam;
  - k. Bob Wallace;
  - l. Tayloe Washburn; and
2. Members representing the county's criminal justice and public safety systems:
- a. Bruce Hilyer;
  - b. Barbara Linde;
  - c. Sue Rahr; and
  - d. Dan Satterberg.

D. Candidates for review shall be those nominated by three or more King County councilmembers by written memorandum to the clerk of the council within three days of the passage of this motion. The memorandum may be submitted by email. Each councilmember may nominate no more than two individuals. Each candidate nominated by at least three councilmembers shall submit a resume, supporting documentation and three references with contact information to the clerk of the council. The clerk shall forward to the council and the committee the names of each individual receiving a nomination from at least three councilmembers.

E. The clerk shall assemble the application materials for each candidate and provide those application materials directly to the committee.

F. Within one week of a vacancy occurring in the office of county executive, the committee shall hold a meeting to interview candidates and shall forward to the King County council its top two to five recommendations. The chair of the council shall schedule the meeting of the committee after consultation with the committee cochairs. The recommendations shall not limit the council's authority under the King County Charter to appoint any citizen meeting the qualifications for office.

G. Evaluation criteria for the blue ribbon selection committee shall include, but not be limited to:

1. Knowledge of the functions of King County government;
2. Knowledge of the issues and challenges facing King County government;
3. A demonstrated ability to develop a responsible budget;
4. A demonstrated ability to respond to public concerns;
5. Demonstrated leadership skills;
6. A commitment to the immediate business of King County that would make it unlikely that the

appointee would run for any elective office while serving as appointed executive;

7. A commitment to maintaining the functions and structure of county government without disruption during the election of a new county executive; and

8. Demonstrated skills in pursuing a legislative agenda at the local, state and federal level.

H. The committee shall deliver a set of written materials arranged to allow councilmembers to make direct comparisons between the candidates. The committee shall provide a list of two to five recommended candidates and observations about the strengths of each.

I. Because of the Municipal League's long record of public service in reviewing candidates for election, the Municipal League is encouraged to review the candidates

presented for consideration to the committee and forward any recommendations to the council.