



Legislation Text

File #: 2006-0230, **Version:** 3

A MOTION establishing county policy on certain elections issues and requesting the executive to perform specific actions related to elections processes and facilities and establishing timelines for executive and council actions.

WHEREAS, three citizens groups, an expert audit of elections, two management consultants and the Secretary of State have reviewed King County elections and made recommendations to the county on ways to improve the conduct of elections, and

WHEREAS, in response to the King County citizens' elections oversight committee detailed report that included six high-priority recommendations, management and staff of the elections section have worked hard and made many improvements and have conducted successful elections in 2005 and 2006, and

WHEREAS, the Secretary of State has recommended reconfiguring elections facilities to be more functional and the King County citizens' election oversight committee and the Elections Center recommended consolidating elections operations into a single facility, and

WHEREAS, efforts to acquire or construct a new consolidated elections facility should proceed quickly but thoughtfully so that consolidation can occur in a timely way prior to the next presidential election, and

WHEREAS, the King County citizens' election oversight committee and the Elections Center found a number of problems with voter registration records including voters improperly registered, felons registered who were ineligible to vote and deceased voters were not removed from voter registration records in a timely way, and

WHEREAS, in January 2006, all counties in Washington State began operating in coordination with the Secretary of State's statewide voter database; and

WHEREAS, the King County citizens' election oversight committee and the Elections Center recommended that elections operations and facilities needed improved security, and

WHEREAS, the King County citizens' election oversight committee and the Independent Task Force on Elections and the executive have recommended that a management consultant be hired to assist the King County elections section become a high performing organization, and

WHEREAS, the King County council wishes to receive regular reports on elections from the director of records, elections and licensing services, and

WHEREAS, the council, the executive, elections section management and staff understand that continual improvement is necessary, and

WHEREAS, the council will continue its active oversight of elections and may mandate additional measures to ensure the continual improvement in the conduct of elections;

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

A. King County shall consolidate all elections operations into a single facility;

B. The executive is requested to transmit an ordinance to the council by August 15, 2006, to acquire or construct a specific facility into which all elections operations will be consolidated. The council will act on the ordinance by October 2;

C. The executive is requested to provide a report to the council on progress made to improve the accuracy of voter registration records and how these actions respond to recommendations of the elections audit and the citizens' election oversight committee recommendations. The executive is further requested to transmit to the council a plan for further improving and maintaining voter registration records. The plan shall be transmitted to the council by August 15, 2006. When providing either the report or the plan requested under this subsection, eleven copies of the report or plan shall be filed with the clerk of the council, for distribution to all councilmembers;

D. The executive is requested to provide a progress report to the council on progress made to improve

elections security and how these actions respond to recommendations of the elections audit and the citizens' election oversight committee recommendations. The executive is further requested to evaluate elections security and to transmit to the council a security plan by July 31, 2006, that addresses security related to facilities, personnel, electronic systems and ballots. When providing either the report or the plan requested under this subsection, eleven copies of the report or plan shall be filed with the clerk of the council, for distribution to all councilmembers;

E. The executive is requested to hire a management consultant to assist the director of records, elections and licensing services. The role of the consultant is to help the director lead the organization to become a model elections operation and to function at a very high level of competence with high morale, low turnover and full staffing; and

F. The director of records, elections and licensing services is requested to report to the council quarterly regarding improvements made by the director's and the director's staff to the conduct of elections and improvements that are in process or have yet to be made. The first report shall cover the last quarter of 2006. The director shall submit the original and ten copies of the quarterly reports to the clerk of the council two weeks after

the end of each calendar quarter. The clerk shall distribute the report to all councilmembers.