



April 27, 2020

Governor Jay Inslee
Office of the Governor
Olympia, WA 98504-0002

Dear Governor Inslee,

We write you on behalf of Washington's 39 counties and 281 cities and towns, to ask for your action to extend two emergency proclamations that have a dramatic impact on local governments.

We appreciate your quick action to issue Proclamation 20-28 modifying the requirements of the Open Public Meetings Act and Public Records Act so we can continue to maintain open and transparent government in a manner that protects public health as well as the health of our staff members and elected officials. We also appreciate your efforts to extend that proclamation beyond the initial 30-day period. The current extension to May 4 creates additional uncertainty with the strong likelihood of continued social distancing requirements beyond that date. We ask for an extension of these provisions for at least another 60 days.

Additionally, we ask that the current financial reporting requirements in RCW 43.09.230 be extended until July 31. RCW 43.09.230 requires every local government in Washington to submit their financial reports to the Auditor within 150 days of the close of their fiscal year. For most local governments, this means May 30. Unfortunately, at this time with many staff on leave, working remotely and focused on emergency response it will be impossible to meet the May 30 deadline. These financial reports are an important part of our fiscal accountability and an extended deadline will ensure that they receive the attention that they require and deserve.

Cities and counties understand that Legislative leaders play an important role in approving the extension of these emergency measures. We will also be reaching out to them to ask for their support of these common sense mitigation measures that allow our dedicated public employees to focus on emergency response and public health and safety while insuring that we meet the high standards of accountability and transparency our residents expect.

Thank you for your leadership during this crisis and your support for all local government partners.

Sincerely,

Peter B. King
Chief Executive Officer
Association of Washington Cities

Eric Johnson
Executive Director
Washington State Association of Counties

C: Speaker of the House, Representative Laurie Jinkins
House Majority Leaders, Representative Pat Sullivan
House Minority Leader, Representative JT Wilcox
Senate Majority Leader, Senator Andy Billig
Senate Minority Leader, Senate Mark Schoesler