

# Resolution Cover Sheet

Please include this form with each resolution.

Name of District: Charter Reivew Commission

District Address: 223 East 4th Street, Ste. 4, Port Angeles, WA 98362

Date of Election: November 4, 2025

Contact Person/ Title: Susan Fisch - 2025 Charter Review Commission Chair

Contact Phone: 303-241-0992 Email: Susan.Fisch@clallamcountywa.gov

Attorney for District: Duncan Fobes, PBFL - Patterson Buchanan Fobes & Leitch, Inc., P.S.

Attorney Phone: Cell 206-418-9783 Email: dkf@pattersonbuchanan.com

Work 206-462-6704

Type of Election (levy, bond, lid lift, etc.): Ballot measure for proposed amendment to the Clallam County Charter

Please state the pass/fail requirement for this measure (simple majority, supermajority, 60% plus validation, etc.) as determined by your legal counsel:

Simple majority.

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## Questions?

Clallam County Elections Division

Phone: 360-417-2217

Email: [elections@clallamcountywa.gov](mailto:elections@clallamcountywa.gov)

2025  
Clallam County Charter Review Commission

Resolution Number CRC 1

Resolution Proposing Charter Amendment Regarding Coroner Duties

The Clallam County Charter Review Commission elected by the voters of Clallam County for the year 2025 finds that:

1. Article IV, Section 4.20, of the Clallam County Charter provides in pertinent part that “The Prosecuting Attorney will serve as ex-officio coroner without extra compensation.”
2. Clallam County’s Prosecuting Attorney has resigned his position as ex-officio coroner, based on his belief that state law precludes him from serving as ex-officio coroner.
3. Since the Prosecuting Attorney’s resignation as ex-officio coroner, a District Court Judge has been acting as coroner under a state statute providing that if the office of coroner is vacant the duties of the coroner’s office may be performed by any district judge.
4. Continuing with a District Court Judge as coroner because the coroner’s position is vacant is not a viable, long-term solution to the situation that now exists because of the conflict between what the Clallam County Charter requires and what the Attorney General and the Clallam County Prosecuting Attorney believe a state statute requires.
5. Even if Clallam County’s Charter would control over conflicting state law, having the Prosecuting Attorney serve as ex-officio coroner is increasingly thought of as involving conflicts of interest and is not a preferred alternative.
6. The Clallam County Charter Review Commission desires to amend the Clallam County Charter by removing the requirement that the Prosecuting Attorney also serve as ex-officio coroner, thereby removing the responsibility for performing those duties, or having those duties performed, to the Clallam County Commissioners under a provision of Article 11, Section 4, of the Washington State Constitution that provides that any duties of county officials prescribed by state law, with certain exceptions, if not assigned to specific officers by the County Charter, will fall on the Board of County Commissioners. In such a case, the County Commissioners could hire personnel with the appropriate training and credentials to serve as the coroner.

Therefore, the 2025 Clallam County Charter Review Commission hereby proposes that Article IV – OTHER ELECTED OFFICIALS, Section 4.20: Powers and Duties, of the Clallam County Charter be amended to read as follows:

All other elected officials shall exercise the powers and duties of their respective offices as provided by law. All elected officials and their departments shall utilize the personnel, budgeting, purchasing, property control and records management systems established by the Commissioners through ordinance except insofar as

such utilization would be contrary to the powers and duties of the constitutional officers. (~~The Prosecuting Attorney will serve as ex-officio coroner without extra compensation.~~)

Any language in double parentheses with a line through it is existing Clallam County Charter language and will be taken out of the Charter if this measure is approved by voters. Any underlined language does not appear in current Clallam County Charter language but will be added to the Charter if this measure is approved by voters.

Further, the 2025 Clallam County Charter Review Commission, pursuant to Article XI, Sub-Sections 11.20.10 and 11.20.20 of the Clallam County Charter, and Clallam County Code Section 37.10.020, calls for:

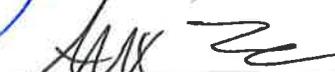
1. The Clerk of the 2025 Charter Review Commission to cause this Resolution, and five copies of the same, to be filed with and registered by the Clallam County Auditor, along with the Resolution Coversheet required by the Clallam County Auditor; and
2. For the Charter amendment proposed by this Resolution to be submitted to the voters at the next statewide general election occurring at least 90 days after registration of the proposed amendment by the Auditor.

This Resolution is passed and approved on this 23<sup>rd</sup> day of June, 2025, by the 2025 Clallam County Charter Review Commission.

  
Susan Fisch, District 1 Commissioner, Chair

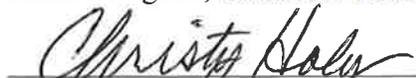
  
Bill Benedict, District 1 Commissioner

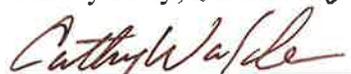
  
Ron Cameron, District 2 Commissioner

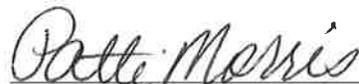
  
Alex Fane, District 1 Commissioner

Rod Fleck, District 3 Commissioner

  
Mark Hodgson, District 3 Commissioner

  
Christy Holy, District 3 Commissioner

  
Cathy Walde, District 3 Commissioner

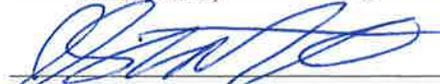
  
Patti Morris, District 2 Commissioner

Chris Noble, District 2 Commissioner

  
Paul Pickett, District 2 Commissioner

  
Ron Richards, District 2 Commissioner

  
Nina Sarmiento, District 3 Commissioner

  
Jim Stoffer, District 1 Commissioner

  
Jeff Tozzer, District 1 Commissioner

such utilization would be contrary to the powers and duties of the constitutional officers. ((The Prosecuting Attorney will serve as ex-officio coroner without extra compensation.))

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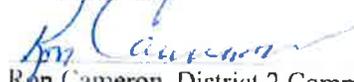
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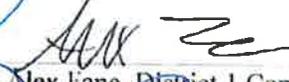
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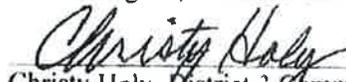
  
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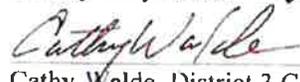
  
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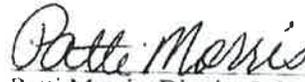
  
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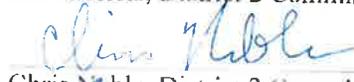
  
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Mark Hodgson, District 3 Commissioner

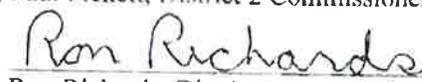
  
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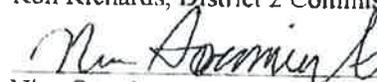
  
Cathy Walde, District 3 Commissioner

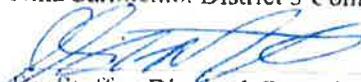
  
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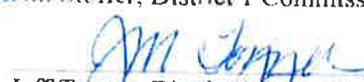
  
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Jeff Tozzer, District 1 Commissioner

PATTERSON BUCHANAN  
FOBES & LEITCH, INC., P.S.

1000 SECOND AVENUE, 30<sup>TH</sup> FLOOR  
SEATTLE, WA 98104

**To:** Todd Mielke, Clallam County Administrator

ATTORNEY – CLIENT PRIVILEGE

**Date:** July 7, 2025

**From:** Duncan Fobes, PBFL

**Subject:** Clallam County - Coroner Issue

**Draft Ballot Language and Explanatory Statement re: County Coroner Revisions**

**Proposed Ballot Measure:**

Charter Amendment Regarding Coroner Duties

The Clallam County Charter Review Commission proposes an amendment to the Clallam County Home Rule Charter, concerning the requirement that the Prosecuting Attorney serve as the ex-officio coroner. This amendment would remove the requirement that the Prosecuting Attorney serve as the ex-officio coroner, thereby removing the duties of coroner from the Prosecuting Attorney to the Board of County Commissioners of Clallam County, who would then have the responsibility to hire personnel with the appropriate credentials and training to serve as coroner. Should this amendment be:

Approved.....[ ]

Rejected.....[ ]

PATTERSON BUCHANAN  
FOBES & LEITCH, INC., P.S.

1000 SECOND AVENUE, 30<sup>TH</sup> FLOOR  
SEATTLE, WA 98104

### **Explanatory Statement:**

The Clallam County Home Rule Charter currently provides that the Prosecuting Attorney shall additionally serve as ex-officio coroner. The amendment, if adopted, would remove the Prosecuting Attorney as ex-officio coroner and place the responsibilities and duties of appointing a coroner to the Board of County Commissioners pursuant to Article XI, Section 4 of the Washington State Constitution, which provides that any duties of county officials prescribed by state law, with certain exceptions, if not assigned to specific officers by the County Charter, will become the responsibility of the Board of County Commissioners. Under this amendment, the Board of County Commissioners would have the ability to hire personnel with the appropriate credentials and training to serve as the coroner.

This statement was prepared by Duncan K. Fobes, Attorney, Patterson Buchanan Fobes & Leitch; 1000 Second Avenue, 30th Floor, Seattle, WA 98104; (206) 462-6700.

### **Corresponding Change to Charter (if the amendment is adopted):**

#### **Section 4:20: Powers and Duties**

All other elected officials shall exercise the powers and duties of their respective offices as provided by law. All elected officials and their departments shall utilize the personnel, budgeting, purchasing, property control and records management systems established by the Commissioners through ordinance except insofar as such utilization would be contrary to the powers and duties of the constitutional officers. ~~((The Prosecuting Attorney will serve as ex-officio coroner without extra compensation.))~~ (Amendment proposed by the Charter Review Commission and approved by the voters November 7, 1989. Amendment proposed by the Charter Review Commission and approved by the voters November 4, 2025.)

# Committee “For” and “Against” Appointment Form

Name of Jurisdiction/Proposition No.: Board of Commissioner - Clallam County Charter Review Commission

Jurisdiction Contact Name: Loni Gores - Clerk of Board of Commissioners and Charter Review Commission

Email: loni.gores@clallamcountywa.gov Phone: 360-417-2256

**Jurisdiction’s responsibility:**

1. Submit completed form to Clallam County Elections Division on or before the resolution submittal deadline: [elections@clallamcountywa.gov](mailto:elections@clallamcountywa.gov)
2. Provide committee members with statement submission requirements and deadlines. (Requirements and deadlines can be found in the Elections Guide for Jurisdictions and Candidates.)

Questions? Call (360) 417-2217

“For” Committee (1-3 members)	
*1st Committee Member:	
Name	Kathleen Smith
Email	karoo12@icloud.com
Phone	360-461-2945
Website	
2nd Committee Member:	
Name	
Email	
3rd Committee Member:	
Name	
Email	

“Against” Committee (1-3 members)	
*1st Committee Member:	
Name	Danetta Rutten
Email	Dasha@wavecable.com
Phone	360-460-1722
Website	
2nd Committee Member:	
Name	
Email	
3rd Committee Member:	
Name	
Email	

*\*1st Committee Member must provide at least one method of contact, which will be published in the voters’ guide/pamphlet.*

## Hillway, Ian

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**From:** dasha@wavecable.com  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 30, 2025 2:16 PM  
**To:** Hillway, Ian  
**Subject:** Re: Committee For and Against Statements

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Flagged

Ian I researched state law last night and the AG's opinion. I am going to withdraw my against on the committee. I had no idea the law changed and the opinion from the AG is detrimental to the endeavors of our county.

I am sorry. Danetta  
Withdraw.

On Jul 30, 2025, at 9:29 AM, Hillway, Ian <Ian.Hillway@clallamcountywa.gov> wrote:

Good morning,

I recently received notice that you are on a FOR or AGAINST committee for the Charter Review Committee Charter Amendment 1 proposition.

Please see the requirements and deadlines listed in the jurisdiction guide at the link below.  
<https://www.clallamcountywa.gov/DocumentCenter/View/16019>

We always encourage you to submit documentation early in case there are issues that require time to correct. The last day our office can receive FOR and AGAINST statements is August 12, 2025, no later than 4:30 PM. If a submission has issues after the deadline has passed, we will follow the guide in order to reconcile the issues.

If you need to review the materials submitted for the resolution, you can find them here:  
<https://www.clallamcountywa.gov/DocumentCenter/View/23323/Charter-Ballot-Measure-Resolution-CRC2025-001>

Please let me know if you have any questions.

Thank you,

**Ian Hillway** | pronouns: he/him/his

Elections Manager

223 E. 4th Street, Room 42 | Port Angeles, WA 98362

☎ 360.417.2217

**Public Records Disclaimer:** Pursuant to the Washington State Public Records Act (RCW 42.56), this e-mail is a public record and may be considered subject to disclosure to a third-party.