

**DRAFT  
PROPOSITION 8**

**(Issue Nos. 17, Initiative/Referendum)**

**A. Proposed Ballot Title:**

The Snohomish County Charter Review Commission proposed amendments to the Snohomish County Charter concerning initiatives and referendums. This measure would clarify the initiative and referendum process, accommodate possible ballot title appeals and provide for initiatives and referenda to be voted upon at general elections. Should this proposal be:

Approved.....

Rejected.....

**B. Charter Amendments Required:**

**Section 5.40 Initiative — Procedure**

Any registered voter of Snohomish county may file an initiative proposal containing the full text of the measure, ordinance or amendment to an ordinance with the officer in charge of holding elections. The officer in charge of holding elections shall give the proposed initiative a number, which shall thereafter be the identifying number for the measure and shall transmit a copy of the proposal to the Prosecuting Attorney, who within ten working days, of the filing date, shall formulate a concise statement, posed as a positive question, not to exceed fifty words, which shall express and give a true and impartial statement which shall be the ballot title. The prosecuting attorney shall file the ballot title with the officer in charge of holding elections, who shall provide notice of the ballot title to the petitioner. The ballot title shall be subject to appeal in accordance with state law. Within fifteen working days after the ballot title is filed with the officer in charge of holding elections or, if the ballot title is appealed, within five working days after a final decision of the court on the appeal, the officer in charge of holding elections shall confer with the petitioner to review and establish the form and style of the initiative petition as required by such officer or ordinance.

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The petitioner shall have ninety days from the day after such officer confers with the petitioner as to form and style of the initiative petition to collect the signatures of the registered voters of the county equal in number to not less than seven percent of the number of votes cast in the county in the last governor's election. Each petition shall contain the warning clause prescribed by state law, the full text of the proposed measure, ordinance or amendment to an ordinance and the ballot title. If the initiative proposal is identical to a mini-initiative that was rejected by the council, the initiative petition may include signatures collected for the mini-initiative.

The officer in charge of holding elections shall verify the sufficiency of the signatures on the petition and, if it is validated, submit the proposal to the people at the next general election being not less than one hundred twenty days from the submission of the petition

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for signature verification, unless the county council enacts the proposal without change or amendment not less than ninety days prior to said election. If the county council does not adopt the proposed measure and adopts a substitute measure concerning the same subject matter not more than fifteen days after the petition has been validated, the substitute measure shall be placed on the same ballot with the initiative proposal.

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The voters shall be given the choice of accepting either or rejecting both and shall then be given the choice of accepting one and rejecting the other. If a majority of the voters voting on the first issue is for accepting either, then the measure receiving the majority of the votes cast on the second issue shall be deemed approved. If a majority of those voting on the first issue is for rejecting both, then neither measure shall be approved regardless of the vote on the second issue.

### Section 5.80 Referendum — Procedure

Within ten days after the ordinance is passed by the county council, any registered voter of Snohomish County may file a referendum petition signed by one hundred (100) registered voters of Snohomish County against the ordinance or portion thereof with the officer in charge of holding elections. Within 15 days of the filing of the petition, the officer in charge of holding elections shall verify the sufficiency of the signatures. After filing of the referendum petition, and verification of the signatures on the referendum petition, the ordinance or portion thereof so referred shall be suspended until the officer in charge of holding elections shall determine that petitions with sufficient numbers of signatures to place the referendum on the ballot have not been filed within the allocated time, or until the voters have ratified and approved the ordinance or portion thereof. The filing of a referendum petition against a portion of an ordinance shall not delay the remainder of the measure from taking effect.

Within five working days of filing the referendum petition, the officer in charge of holding elections shall confer with the petitioner to review the proposal as to form and style as required by such officer or ordinance. The officer in charge of holding elections shall give the referendum petition a number, which shall thereafter be the identifying number for the measure and shall then transmit a copy of the petition to the prosecuting attorney, who within ten working days after receipt thereof, shall formulate a concise statement, posed as a question, not to exceed fifty words, which shall express and give a true and impartial statement of the measure being referred. Such concise statement will be the ballot title. The prosecuting attorney shall then file the ballot title with the officer in charge of holding elections, who shall provide notice of the ballot title to the petitioner. The ballot title shall be subject to appeal in accordance with state law.

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The petitioner shall have forty-five days after the ballot title is filed with the officer in charge of holding elections or, if the ballot title is appealed, forty-five days after a final decision of the court on the appeal to collect the signatures of registered voters of the county equal in number to not less than five percent of the number of votes cast in the county in the last governor's election. Each petition shall contain the full text of the measure being referred and the ballot title.

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The officer in charge of holding elections shall verify the sufficiency of the signatures on the petition and, if it is validated, submit the measure to the people at the next general

election being not less than one hundred twenty days from the submission of the petition for signature verification.

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