



Secretary of State

Kim Wyman

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March 17, 2020

Governor Jay Inslee
416 14th Ave SW
Olympia, WA 98504

The Honorable Governor Jay Inslee,

Thank you for your leadership during these unprecedented times. COVID-19 has disrupted our daily lives in a way I have not seen in my lifetime. As a result, I along with county election officials across the state have activated our continuity of operations plans. As we plan election activities over the next six to eight weeks, we have identified serious risks that will likely limit our ability to successfully conduct the April 28 Special Election in a secure, accessible, and accurate manner.

We, as the chief election officers for the state of Washington, join together today to formally request you cancel the April Special Election using the emergency powers granted to you in statute. These elections can be rescheduled by the boards of each jurisdiction for August 4 or November 3, at their discretion. For background, none of the elections is to elect any person to office, but are a variety of levy and bond elections.

Local jurisdictions across 18 of our counties were slated to conduct special elections on April 28, 2020. As of this writing, in two of those counties, the jurisdictions have proactively cancelled those requests. I join with the 16 remaining counties with scheduled special elections in being concerned about our ability to conduct this election. The election period begins now and lasts through certification day on May 8, 2020.

While public contact in an election is greatly reduced because Washington is a vote-by-mail state, the staffing requirements to conduct an election remain. The uncertainty of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic could dramatically impair a county's ability to perform its statutory duties in an election. From courthouse closures, to workforce reductions of election staff, postal staff, or disruptions with vendors who support election operations, circumstances outside of our control could make it impossible for counties to meet statutory election requirements. These include mail processing, voter registration, canvassing results, and certifying an election.

When conducting elections, officials must always balance access and security. Right now, both of these standards are in peril. While the potential impacts are many and unknown, a positive COVID-19 diagnosis for an elections staff person could result in election offices being shut down for cleaning while the election is in progress and facilities are full of live ballots that require security. Additionally, election officials cannot safely assist voters in person while protecting their staff by maintaining social distancing required to slow the spread of COVID-19. Many counties operate with very small election departments, and if staff were exposed and in quarantine there would be no one available to run the election.

To facilitate this election at this time would be uncertain at best. The situation is changing daily and the uncertainty surrounding this pandemic significantly inhibits our ability to conduct this special election to the standards we hold in Washington. We are working with the State Superintendent of Public Instruction as well as other affected jurisdictions on alternative options for conducting this special election, including holding these elections during the August Primary or November General.

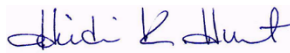
Therefore, I, along with county election officials throughout the state, ask that you cancel the April Special Election.

If you would like to discuss this matter further, please do not hesitate to reach out to us directly. Thank you for your urgent attention and consideration to this request.

Sincerely,



Kim Wyman
Secretary of State



Heidi Hunt
Adams County Auditor



Darla McKay
Asotin County Auditor



Brenda Chilton
Benton County Auditor




Skip Moore
Chelan County Auditor



Shoona Riggs
Clallam County Auditor



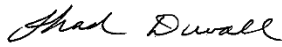
Greg Kimsey
Clark County Auditor



Anne Higgins
Columbia County Auditor



Carolyn Fundingsland
Cowlitz County Auditor



Thad Duvall
Douglas County Auditor



Donna Deal
Garfield County Auditor



Michele Jaderlund
Grant County Auditor



Joseph MacLean
Grays Harbor County Auditor



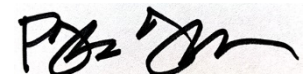
Sheilah Crider
Island County Auditor



Rose Ann Carroll
Jefferson County Auditor



Julie Wise
Director of King County
Elections



Paul Andrews
Kitsap County Auditor



Jerry Pettit
Kittitas County Auditor



Brenda Sorensen
Klickitat County Auditor



Larry Grove
Lewis County Auditor



Shelly Johnston
Lincoln County Auditor

Paddy McGuire
Mason County Auditor

Cari Hall
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Joyce Kidd
Pacific County Auditor

Marianne Nichols
Pend Oreille County Auditor

Julie Anderson
Pierce County Auditor

Milene Henley
San Juan County Auditor

Sandra Perkins
Skagit County Auditor

Robert Waymire
Skamania County Auditor

Garth Fell
Snohomish County Auditor

Vicky Dalton
Spokane County Auditor

Lori Larsen
Stevens County Auditor

Mary Hall
Thurston County Auditor

Nicci Bergseng
Wahkiakum County Auditor

Karen Martin
Walla Walla County Auditor

Diana Bradrick
Whatcom County Auditor

Sandra Jamison
Whitman County Auditor

Charles Ross
Yakima County Auditor