

RESOLUTION FOR SUNSETTING THE COMMUNITY COUNCILS

WHEREAS the State Legislature created RCW 35.14 in 1967 to ease the process of annexation by creating Community Councils; and

WHEREAS the Community Councils clearly risk violating the principle of “one citizen, one vote” by giving voters in their jurisdiction a second vote on matters relating to land use and planning that their fellow non-community council jurisdiction city residents do not have; and

WHEREAS the Community Councils’ deliberations and decisions impact city-wide and region-wide policy while being unaccountable to most of the citizens in the cities and regions affected by the decisions of the Community Councils; and

WHEREAS 90.4% and 91.9% of registered voters in Kirkland and Bellevue respectively were unable to vote for or against Community Council Members or for or against the reauthorization ballot measures in their cities in the 2021 general election; and

WHEREAS the annual cost of City of Kirkland staff time dedicated directly to the Houghton Community Council has been estimated as being between \$88,300 and \$150,100 which all residents of Kirkland pay for; and

WHEREAS the City of Bellevue had to allocate \$40,000 in legal fees to support the East Bellevue Community Council’s lawsuit against the City of Bellevue; and

WHEREAS the special rules in the Houghton Community Council jurisdiction include policies that make installing solar panels more difficult (KZC 115.60(2)(a)(4)), an extra chapter of the zoning code making two and three-family homes much more difficult to build (KZC 113), and a lack of affordable housing requirements in most commercial, high-density residential, medium density, and office zones in the Houghton jurisdiction (KZC 112.15(1)(a)); and

WHEREAS the special rules in the East Bellevue Community Council jurisdiction include a ban on moderate density single-family residential districts with 7.5 dwelling units per acre (Bellevue LUC 20.10.200), higher minimum parking requirements that make more people pay for parking spots they don’t use (Bellevue LUC 20.20.590 (L)(1)); and

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED the 48th Legislative District Democrats calls on our legislators to pass a law amending RCW 35.14 so the Community Councils will be sunsetted; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED the 48th Legislative District Democrats shall communicate this resolution to State Senator Patty Kuderer, State Representative Amy Walen, and State Representative Vandana Slatter.

Approved Feb 9, 2022