

April 26, 2016 Special Election

King County

Official Local Voters' Pamphlet

as requested by the Proposed Renton Regional Fire Authority



Contact us

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Voter Registration Annex	King County Administration Building 500 4th Ave., Room 440 Seattle, WA 98104

To obtain this pamphlet in an alternate format please contact King County Elections.



King County
Elections

Proposed Renton Regional Fire Authority

King County Elections is not authorized to edit statements, nor is it responsible for the contents therein.

Proposition No. 1

The City of Renton and King County Fire Protection District No. 25 have adopted a Joint Resolution approving the Renton Regional Fire Authority Plan ("Plan") to create the Renton Regional Fire Authority ("Authority") with an effective date of July 1, 2016.

If approved, this proposition would create the Authority, in accordance with the Plan, to provide fire protection and emergency medical services in the City and the District. The Authority will be funded by a six-year fire benefit charge (not to exceed 60% of the operating budget) and property tax (not to exceed \$1.00 per \$1,000 of assessed value). This funding would replace the District's existing property tax rate of \$1.50 per \$1,000 of assessed value, and would reduce Renton's property tax capacity by the tax rate collected by the Authority.

Should the Plan to create a Regional Fire Protection Service Authority be approved?

Yes

No

The complete text of this measure is available at the Elections Office or online at kingcounty.gov/elections.

Statement in favor

Vote Yes on Prop 1 to maintain our high level of emergency services!

Our population is growing, but unstable funding prevents our fire and emergency medical services from keeping up. Fire stations are not meeting recommended response times and staffing levels are falling short.

Prop. 1 establishes a Regional Fire Authority (RFA) that provides stable funding to meet current demands and plan for future growth – estimated at 40% over the next two decades.

The RFA, which has been reviewed by a Citizen's Advisory Committee of business owners and residents, is accountable to a Governing Board and public hearings.

For the average homeowner, \$10 more each month will allow firefighters and emergency services personnel to increase medical aid car and fire station staffing to recommended levels, staff a new fire station in north Renton to improve response times and meet growth, restore fire inspectors and inspections to prevent future emergencies, and enhance public education projects to keep kids, seniors, and families safe.

Endorsed: Renton Firefighters; small business owners, Mayor Denis Law; 5 Renton Councilmembers; County Councilmember Reagan Dunn; a bipartisan coalition including Senators Fain (R) and Hasegawa (D), Reps. Rodne (R) and Bergquist (D); neighbors across Renton and Fire District 25

Submitted by:
Ryan Simonds, Thomas Tasa, and
Chuck Seil
neighborsforasaferenton@gmail.com

Rebuttal of statement against

Since 2000, City tax revenue has declined and our population has nearly doubled. As a result, our fire and medical emergency services have implemented operating efficiencies and cut staff, but response times are falling short.

A Citizen Advisory Council of small business owners, firefighters, and residents reviewed the RFA and agree that it is the best option to stabilize emergency services funding, improve response times, and plan for our future.

Vote Yes on Prop 1!

Explanatory statement

Proposition 1 asks voters to decide whether to form a new Renton Regional Fire Authority ("RRFA") to replace the current structure. The City of Renton ("Renton") provides fire and medical emergency services to Renton residents and, through a contract, to King County Fire District #25 ("FD 25") residents. Currently, the Fire Department competes with other city departments for city revenues.

If Proposition 1 passes, the Renton Fire Department and FD 25 will merge into one organization, the RRFA, effective July 1, 2016. It will have dedicated funding and be governed by a board consisting of three Renton City Councilmembers and three FD 25 Commissioners.

If Proposition 1 passes, Renton plans to construct a north end fire station and, after construction, reduce its property tax assessment.

Under the proposed RFA operating plan, property owners will pay more for fire and emergency services than they do today. The RRFA will be funded by a reduced property tax of \$1.00 per thousand of assessed valuation, and a new fire benefit charge ("FBC"). The additional funding will be used to staff the new fire station, and provide additional service enhancements. The FBC would account for up to 60% of the RRFA budget and must be submitted for voter approval every six years.

These funding sources would replace FD 25's current property tax rate of \$1.50 per thousand and reduce Renton's property tax capacity by up to \$1.00 per thousand. Low income seniors and disabled persons will continue to receive the same percentage discounts.

For questions about this measure, contact:
Rick Marshall
Battalion Chief/Safety Officer
425-430-7101
rmarshall@rentonwa.gov

Statement in opposition

Vote No Prop 1 – Facts You Need To Know:

The RRFA is a separate taxing authority designed to bypass current property tax levy limits by imposing the Fire Benefit Charge (FBC). FBC is a devious adjustable rate voodoo based fee as opposed to current predictable, capped/ fixed tax.

FBC hurts Seniors and Affordable Housing

Your home, hobby garage/barn is charged the same FBC rate as a brand new home.

RRFA will impose huge fees on apartments and rents will go up.

Assessing FBC on local businesses is not good thinking, citizens will ultimately pay increased shopping costs in the form of higher prices.

With 6 figure incomes/benefits, area firefighters are already among the highest compensated in the US, plus something like 20 days off per month.

The FBC scheme is like allowing the RRFA to hack your bank account for six years. RRFA crafts their dream budget and sends you the bill.

It's time to re-evaluate the absurd and costly practice of responding to aid calls with fire trucks.

Taxpayers will be the ones who bear the brutal cost of the FBC scheme like Kent's RFA.

See our No Kent RFA Prop 1 statement.

Google No Fire Benefit Charge Scheme.

Submitted by:
Eric Bernard, Karen Bernard, and
Leroy Stevenson
http://nofirebenefitchargescheme.typepad.com/no_fire_benefit_charge_sc/

Rebuttal of statement in favor

The city claims \$120/year increase for the median Renton homeowner. Nonsense! With the devious FBC funding scheme, the increase is \$264/year – 15% *higher* than what homeowners pay to Kent's RFA!

Three council people who endorsed the RRFA scheme and three fire commissioners will have complete control over your tax dollars. It's doubtful they can be trusted to be good stewards with your money. Only you can be.

Vote No, keep your fixed tax rate.

Registering to vote

Requirements

To register to vote in Washington, you must be:

- A citizen of the United States
- A legal resident of Washington state
- At least 18 years old by election day
- Not under the authority of the Department of Corrections

How to register

- Register online with the Secretary of State, vote.wa.gov
- Download a registration form from the King County Elections website.
- Register in person at the King County Elections office or at the King County Voter Registration Annex.

Registration deadlines

While you may register to vote at any time, there are registration deadlines before each election. The deadlines for the April 26, 2016 special election:

- **March 28** – Deadline to register to vote or update voter registration information.
- **April 18** – In-person registration deadline for people not currently registered in Washington. Register in person at the Elections office in Renton or at the Voter Registration Annex in Seattle.

Keep your voter registration current

Update your registration if you have moved or changed your name, or if your signature has changed. Simply submit a new registration form to update your information.



Why are there measures on my ballot that are not in my pamphlet?

For a special election, districts are not required to participate in a voters' pamphlet. Pamphlets are only printed if a district that is participating in the election requests it from King County Elections.

For this election, Issaquah School District No. 411 and Kent School District No. 415 did not request to participate in the voters' pamphlet.

