

JAY INSLEE
Governor



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May 13, 2021

To the Honorable Speaker and Members,
The House of Representatives of the State of Washington

Ladies and Gentlemen:

I am returning herewith, without my approval as to Sections 9, 17, and 18, Engrossed Second Substitute House Bill No. 1069 entitled:

“AN ACT Relating to local government fiscal flexibility.”

Sections 8 and 9 of this bill amend different versions of RCW 82.04.050, and Sections 17 and 18 establish different effective dates for Sections 8 and 9. Two other bills enacted by the Legislature this session, Substitute House Bill 1095 and Engrossed Senate Bill 5220, contain technical amendments to the same statute that would conflict with Sections 9, 17 and 18 of this bill. Therefore, I am vetoing Sections 9, 17 and 18 to avoid any confusion that may arise from these double amendments. These vetoes will not disturb the substantive provisions of this bill.

In addition, Sections 15 and 16 extend the timeframe for a city-owned utility to issue a tax lien related to unpaid utility fees. This is a difficult time for many Washingtonians, therefore I urge utility providers and local governments to use this power sparingly and as a last resort. Local governments should utilize resources provided by the federal government to cover customer utility bills that are in arrears before relying upon their lien authority. Providers should work with customers by providing payment assistance programs and identifying solutions to prevent service disconnections following the current utility shutoff moratorium. I urge members of the public who need help paying their utility bills to contact their utilities and enroll in their assistance programs.

For these reasons I have vetoed Sections 9, 17, and 18 of Engrossed Second Substitute House Bill No. 1069.

With the exception of Sections 9, 17, and 18, Engrossed Second Substitute House Bill No. 1069 is approved.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jay Inslee", is written over a light gray rectangular background.

Jay Inslee
Governor