



Kittitas County, Washington
**BOARD OF COUNTY
COMMISSIONERS**

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District Two
Gary Berndt

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MEDIA RELEASE

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County Commissioners Consider an Admissions Tax

The Kittitas County Commissioners are considering the implementation of a County Admissions Tax. This tax would be collected on tickets, equipment rental, and facilities that are used for recreation or amusement and where an admission is charged. The proposed tax is authorized under Revised Code of Washington (RCW) 36.100.210. A public hearing is proposed for December 8, 2015, at 1:00 pm at the Kittitas County Commissioners' Auditorium located at 205 West 5th in Ellensburg.

The admissions tax will add five percent to the charge for admissions (\$1.25 on a \$25.00 event ticket, for example). The charge will not apply to elementary or secondary school activities or any public facility district. The cities of Roslyn and Ellensburg have already adopted an admissions tax and would not be included in the county tax.

The funds generated by the tax will be used to benefit Kittitas County residents. The Board has pledged the first \$100,000 annually to support public health services, which continues to see dwindling resources, especially in state and federal funding. "If implemented, this tax would be similar to the current lodging tax, where the bulk of the funding is paid by visitors rather than residents," states Kittitas County Commissioner Gary Berndt. "Our Public Health Department is critical to assuring that events are accomplished safely for event attendees as well as preventing disease outbreaks that may be linked to that event."

The decline of public health funding affects the level of programs and services provided by the Kittitas County Public Health Department as well as their capacity to respond to public health emergencies and outbreaks. Examples of programs and services affected include chronic disease prevention, overdose prevention, HIV and Hepatitis C testing, health education and communication, tobacco prevention, health data collection and analysis, and immunizations. These programs are essential to keeping our community healthy and reducing health care costs.

For more information regarding the proposed tax, please contact the Kittitas County Commissioners' Office at 509-962-7508.

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