

# **Bond Case Briefs**

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## **UNFUNDED MANDATES - WASHINGTON**

### **Washington State Association of Counties v. State**

**Supreme Court of Washington - January 27, 2022 - P.3d - 2022 WL 244109**

Counties and Washington State Association of Counties (WSAC) filed suit against State of Washington, seeking declaratory judgment that counties were entitled to reimbursement in full from State for costs incurred to comply with statute requiring State auditors to install minimum of one ballot box per 15,000 registered voters and minimum of one ballot drop box in each city, and damages.

The Superior Court granted partial summary judgment to counties and WSAC, and ordered State to fully reimburse counties for funds expended in order to comply ballot-box statute. State petitioned for direct review.

The Supreme Court held that:

- Specific statute entitling counties to reimbursement from State proportional share of election-related costs controlled over general unfunded-mandate statute that required State to fully reimburse political subdivisions for newly imposed or increased responsibility;
- Amendment did not violate state constitutional prohibition against amendment or revision of existing statute by mere reference to its title; and
- Amendment's retroactivity provision did not deprive counties of vested right without due process of law.