

BETTER - FASTER - CHEAPER

IMPROVE WASHINGTON STATE'S PUBLIC RECORDS ACT GO TO A PUBLIC DISCLOSURE COMMISSION STYLE ENFORCEMENT

WASHINGTON STATE SUPREME COURT – 1974

“But, Initiative 276 is not without the possibility of some real problems which may ultimately produce negative rather than affirmative results insofar as the best interests of the public are concerned. Hence, the well-intentioned motives of the proponents and of those who voted for Initiative 276 may prove to be self-defeating. In other words, improvement in the quality of government may not be enhanced, but could be seriously discounted or diminished despite the well-intentioned purposes and desires of those who supported and approved Initiative 276. Obviously we are not speaking of certainties or even of probabilities but possibilities.”

NOTE: The Public Records Act was part of Initiative 276.

WASHINGTON ATTORNEY GENERAL – 2010

“Mere imperfection” in discovery compliance is not a ground for sanctions. The same is not true under the Public Records Act – penalties and attorney fees *are* awarded for “mere imperfection” in complying with the act’s disclosure requirements.

NOTE: Included with a brief on O’Neill vs Shoreline.

WASHINGTON ATTORNEY GENERAL - 2012

“For three records? This is the problem, the whole regime, the whole system of public records and transparency is threatened by ridiculous litigation,” said McKenna. “I don’t think that’s what the public records act was intended for. I don’t think it was intended for people to make money.” McKenna has proposed legislation to cut down on costly payouts. He wants to establish an administrative review process for public records disputes that he says would be cheaper and quicker than a court resolution.

NOTE: Part of an article on costs of public records by King 5 in February 2012.

WASHINGTON PUBLIC DISCLOSURE COMMISSION

Washington State is ranked the best in the nation following a 2008 study of all states’ campaign finance disclosure requirements and public access to campaign information. This is the fifth consecutive time that Washington has been ranked first in the nation.

NOTE: Formed by Initiative 276, the PDC quickly, accurately, and inexpensively handles complaints.

Fines go into the State General Fund, not into private pockets.

The Public Records Act needs to use this same, or similar, process.