

HOUSE BILL NO. 366

INTRODUCED BY G. CUSTER

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A BILL FOR AN ACT ENTITLED: "AN ACT ALLOWING A CLERK OF DISTRICT COURT AND JUSTICE OF THE PEACE TO RECEIVE UP TO \$2,000 A YEAR IN ADDITION TO BASE SALARY; AMENDING SECTION 7-4-2503, MCA; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE."

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MONTANA:

Section 1. Section 7-4-2503, MCA, is amended to read:

"7-4-2503. Salary schedule for certain county officers -- county compensation board. (1) (a) The salary paid to the county treasurer, county clerk and recorder, clerk of the district court, county assessor, county superintendent of schools, county sheriff, county surveyor in counties where county surveyors receive salaries as provided in 7-4-2812, justice of the peace, county coroner, and county auditor in all counties in which the office is authorized must be established by the county governing body based upon the recommendations of the county compensation board provided for in subsection (4).

(b) Except as provided in subsection (2), the annual salary established pursuant to subsection (1)(a) must be uniform for all county officers referred to in subsection (1)(a).

(2) (a) An elected county superintendent of schools must receive, in addition to the salary based upon subsection (1), the sum of \$400 a year, except that an elected county superintendent of schools who holds a master of arts degree or a master's degree in education, with an endorsement in school administration, from a unit of the Montana university system or an equivalent institution may, at the discretion of the county commissioners, receive, in addition to the salary based upon subsection (1), up to \$2,000 a year.

(b) The county sheriff must receive, in addition to the salary based upon subsection (1), the sum of \$2,000 a year.

(c) The county sheriff must receive a longevity payment amounting to 1% of the salary determined under subsection (1) for each year of service with the sheriff's office, but years of service during any year in which the salary was set at the level of the salary of the prior fiscal year may not be included in any calculation of longevity increases. The additional salary amount provided for in this subsection may not be included in the salary for purposes of computing the compensation for undersheriffs and deputy sheriffs as provided in 7-4-2508.



1 (d) If the clerk and recorder is also the county election administrator, the clerk and recorder may receive,
2 in addition to the base salary provided in subsection (1)(a), up to \$2,000 a year. The additional salary provided
3 for in this subsection (2)(d) may not be included as salary for the purposes of computing the compensation of any
4 other county officers or employees.

5 (e) The county treasurer, clerk of district court, and justice of the peace may each receive, in addition
6 to the base salary provided in subsection (1)(a), up to \$2,000 a year. The additional salary provided for in this
7 subsection (2)(e) may not be included as salary for the purposes of computing the compensation of any other
8 county officers or employees.

9 (f) The county coroner may be a part-time position, and the salary may be set accordingly.

10 (3) (a) Subject to subsection (3)(b), the salary for the county attorney must be set as provided in
11 subsection (4).

12 (b) If the uniform base salary set for county officials pursuant to subsection (1) is increased, then the
13 county attorney is entitled to at least the same increase unless the increase would cause the county attorney's
14 salary to exceed the salary of a district court judge.

15 (c) (i) After completing 4 years of service as deputy county attorney, each deputy county attorney is
16 entitled to an increase in salary of \$1,000 on the anniversary date of employment as deputy county attorney. After
17 completing 5 years of service as deputy county attorney, each deputy county attorney is entitled to an additional
18 increase in salary of \$1,500 on the anniversary date of employment. After completing 6 years of service as deputy
19 county attorney and for each year of additional service up to completion of the 11th year of service, each deputy
20 county attorney is entitled to an additional annual increase in salary of \$500.

21 (ii) The years of service as a deputy county attorney accumulated prior to July 1, 1985, must be included
22 in the calculation of the longevity increase.

23 (4) (a) There is a county compensation board consisting of:

24 (i) the county commissioners;

25 (ii) three of the county officials described in subsection (1) appointed by the board of county
26 commissioners;

27 (iii) the county attorney;

28 (iv) two to four resident taxpayers appointed initially by the board of county commissioners to staggered
29 terms of 3 years, with the initial appointments of one or two taxpayer members for a 2-year term and one or two
30 taxpayer members for a 3-year term; and

1 (v) (A) subject to subsection (4)(a)(v)(B), one resident taxpayer appointed by each of the three county
2 officials described in subsection (4)(a)(ii).

3 (B) The appointments in subsection (4)(a)(v)(A) are not mandatory.

4 (b) The county compensation board shall hold hearings annually for the purpose of reviewing the
5 compensation paid to county officers. The county compensation board may consider the compensation paid to
6 comparable officials in other Montana counties, other states, state government, federal government, and private
7 enterprise.

8 (c) The county compensation board shall prepare a compensation schedule for the elected county
9 officials, including the county attorney, for the succeeding fiscal year. The schedule must take into consideration
10 county variations, including population, the number of residents living in unincorporated areas, assessed
11 valuation, motor vehicle registrations, building permits, and other factors considered necessary to reflect the
12 variations in the workloads and responsibilities of county officials as well as the tax resources of the county.

13 (d) A recommended compensation schedule requires a majority vote of the county compensation board,
14 and at least two county commissioners must be included in the majority. A recommended compensation schedule
15 may not reduce the salary of a county officer that was in effect on May 1, 2001.

16 (e) The provisions of this subsection (4) do not apply to a county that has adopted a charter form of
17 government or to a charter, consolidated city-county government."
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19 **NEW SECTION. Section 2. Effective date.** [This act] is effective July 1, 2015.

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