

Prop 5: Requiring a 4/5 Supermajority Council vote to Increase Taxes

Explanatory Statement:
If approved by voters, this Proposition would amend the Snohomish County Charter to require any new tax that the Council can impose without a vote of the electorate be passed by a supermajority of the Council (4 out of 5 councilmembers).

This Proposition would not affect County-imposed fees, rates and charges, or special assessments.

This Proposition would amend Chater Section 2.20.

PRO	
Name	Statement
	Snohomish County residents work hard for their money. Before county government takes more of it, there should be broad consensus that the need is real and the cost is justified. Proposition 5 requires four out of five council members to agree before imposing any new councilmanic tax. That's not an unreasonable bar. It's a check that forces deliberation, builds accountability, and ensures tax increases reflect genuine community need rather than a slim political majority. This isn't about blocking the government from functioning. Existing taxes are untouched. Fees, rates, and special assessments are unaffected. The county retains full authority to manage its budget. This proposition simply raises the threshold for reaching into residents' pockets in new ways.
Todd Welch	I want to serve on this committee because fiscal restraint and democratic accountability aren't partisan values. They're the foundation of public trust. Proposition 5 strengthens both.
Mark James	I would like to serve on the Pro Committee for two primary reasons. First, I am the sponsor of Proposition 3 and have an in-depth understanding of its purpose and intent. Second, I am passionate about this issue and believe it is important that voters receive clear, accurate, and factual information to help them make an informed decision. Serving on the Pro Committee would allow me to ensure the proposition is represented fairly and communicated effectively to the public.
Dan Perkins	I would like to serve on the Pro/Con Committee because I believe these propositions will strengthen public trust and improve county government by limiting tax increases, increasing transparency, and making county offices nonpartisan. I value clear, factual communication and want to help prepare a statement that explains why these measures are in the best interest of county residents. I look forward to working collaboratively with other committee members to produce a concise, persuasive, and accurate statement that will help voters make an informed decision. I appreciate the opportunity to contribute to this important civic process.
Janelle M Cass	As a Charter Review Commissioner who sponsored this proposal, I am applying to serve on the Pro Committee for the ballot language for the 4/5 supermajority tax measure. I support this proposal because I believe requiring broad consensus before raising taxes promotes accountability, transparency, and public trust while protecting taxpayers. The measure does not prohibit tax increases; it simply requires a higher level of agreement among elected officials, ensuring they are adopted only when truly necessary and broadly supported. If selected, I will work collaboratively with the other committee members to develop clear, accurate, and legally compliant ballot language that fairly reflects the intent of the proposal. I understand the importance of meeting drafting deadlines and will contribute in a timely and constructive manner throughout the process. My goal is to help provide voters with straightforward language that enables them to make a well-informed decision.

CON	
Name	Statement
Erick Bidstrup	None Provided
Paula Rhyne	I have serious concerns about the impact that Prop 5 will have on Snohomish County and would like to ensure that voters have all the information they need to make an informed decision and fully understand the serious consequences that could arise if Prop 5 passes.
John Lovick	None Provided
Shannon Ozog Some	I am deeply concerned about this proposition passing and would like to help make sure voters are best informed on what this measure would do.
Christine Eck	This Proposition should concern everyone as it risks our representative democracy. Each of the five districts in the County is equally represented by a County Councilmember. Each Councilmember has the same level of authority. Requiring a Supermajority overrides the balance of power by giving inherently more power to the fourth Councilmember who gets to "tip the scales" in process that should be a simply majority among peer Councilmembers. A Supermajority takes away the equal power each Councilmember has as a true, and duly elected representative of their district's residents, and therefore creates an imbalance in the representation of those residents.
Tim Schmitt	There are unforeseen consequences of this proposal.
Doris Fulton	As a senior who relies on institutions which need tax support such as our library system, our public schools, recreation centers, our parks, our roads, our senior centers, and our fire department I see no reason to require a super majority to increase taxes. Doing so will only mean that our essential services go unfunded which harms the little guy not the millionaire developers who want low taxes to sell houses. In states that instituted super majority votes for taxes public schools had to go to four day school weeks. How much will that cost you for babysitting fees for that one day?
Mike Sells	None Provided
Hans Dunshee	Super majority requirements mean super minorities and violate the principle of one person one vote. I want my representatives to have equal power to all others and visa versa
Janice Greene	I oppose Proposition 5 because it reaches beyond new taxes. Its language requires four of five council votes to assess, levy, or increase any councilmanic tax, wording that arguably covers routine levy actions and the statutory one percent adjustment, tools the county now uses by simple majority. Two members could block a majority decision. Rating agencies watch revenue flexibility; constraining it risks the county's credit standing and, with it, higher borrowing costs for roads, courts, and public safety. The Washington Supreme Court struck down a statewide supermajority requirement in League of Education Voters v. State (2013), and whether a county charter version survives review is an open question. A dissenting commissioner warned that Pierce County acted from financial strength Snohomish County does not hold, with no way to undo the change before the next charter review. I reviewed the full 2026 commission record and can present the Con case accurately.
James Kenny	I do not support this proposition. Taxes should be treated like most legislative issues and subject to a majority vote, not a supermajority vote. This proposition will erode the charter balance between the legislative and executive branches. I served on the 2006 Charter Review Commission. I have written multiple pro and con committee statements for past charter proposals and fire service ballot measures. I write professionally, and I know how to write and edit on a committee to produce effective material. Please consider me for the Con committee appointment.