



Rob McKenna
ATTORNEY GENERAL OF WASHINGTON
1125 Washington Street SE • PO Box 40100 • Olympia WA 98504-0100

April 1, 2009

Dale Washam
Assessor-Treasurer
Office of the Pierce County Assessor-Treasurer
2401 South 35th Street, Rm 142
Tacoma, WA 98409-7498

Dear Mr. Washam:

I am aware that you spoke to Attorney General McKenna several days ago concerning the process by which property appraisals were performed in Pierce County over the past several years. I am also in receipt of your letter, addressed to General McKenna and dated March 25, 2009, addressing these same concerns. As the Attorney General's Chief Deputy, I wanted to respond personally to your concerns.

As a jurisdictional matter, the Office of the Attorney General is limited to providing legal advice to "state officers" and such other duties as may be prescribed by law. *See* Washington State Constitution, Article III, §21. While the matters you raise are indeed concerning on their face, I am unaware of any statutory authority that would grant this office jurisdiction to act on your behalf, as a county official, to rectify the issues you raise. Because this appears to involve matters of local concern, appropriate legal guidance should be sought from the Office of the Pierce County Prosecutor. In the same way that we serve as the lawyers for state officers and agencies, the Pierce County Prosecuting Attorney's Office is charged with providing legal advice on all legal matters arising out of actions or omissions by county officials, employees and agencies.

In the meantime, I am sorry that I am unable to assist you as you request. But I am familiar with Pierce County Prosecutor Gerry Horne and his staff and I have every confidence that they will be able to provide you with the legal advice you need as you work through this issue.

Sincerely,


BRIAN T. MORAN
Chief Deputy Attorney General

BTM:kw

