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Property Tax Revenues Increase 5.4 Percent in 2009

OLYMPIA, Wash., Sept. 21, 2009 — Property tax revenue increased 5.4 percent to \$8.6 billion in 2009, with nearly 70 percent of the increase stemming from new construction added to the tax rolls and higher voter-approved levies, the Washington State Department of Revenue reported today.

About 1.6 percent -- \$128 million of the \$439 million in additional taxes over 2008 -- was due to regular tax increases on existing properties. The rest resulted from taxes on new construction and voter-approved tax increases for schools and other taxing districts.

Revenues for schools, through local school levies and the state school levy, increased 5.7 percent to \$4.7 billion, while county levies increased 3.6 percent to \$1.4 billion, city levies rose 6.3 percent to \$1.2 billion and junior taxing districts went up 5.3 percent to \$1.4 billion.

Local voter-approved school levies and the state school levy accounted for 54 percent of property taxes, while counties received 16.6 percent and cities got 13.4 percent. Junior taxing districts, such as fire districts, hospitals, emergency medical services, ports and libraries, shared the remaining 15.9 percent.

The percentage share of taxes going to junior taxing districts has increased 51 percent over the past five years, from \$915 million to \$1.4 billion, due mainly to voter-approval of higher taxes for fire districts, and the creation of new taxing districts such as the King County ferry and flood districts.

Additional information on property taxes and assessed values across the state by county and taxing district is available in *Property Tax Statistics 2009*, the agency's annual compilation of property tax information, accessible at:

http://dor.wa.gov/Content/AboutUs/StatisticsAndReports/2009/Property_Tax_Statistics_2009/default.aspx.

