
HOUSE BILL 1477

State of Washington

54th Legislature

1995 Regular Session

By Representatives Campbell, Pelesky, Smith and Carrell

Read first time 01/26/95. Referred to Committee on Government Operations.

1 AN ACT Relating to processing of incoming ballots; and amending RCW
2 29.36.060.

3 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

4 **Sec. 1.** RCW 29.36.060 and 1991 c 81 s 32 are each amended to read
5 as follows:

6 (1) The ~~((opening and subsequent))~~ processing of ~~((return~~
7 ~~envelopes))~~ ballots for any primary or election may begin on or after
8 the tenth day prior to such primary or election. The opening of the
9 return and security envelopes and tabulation of absentee ballots,
10 including those to be tabulated on an electronic vote tallying system,
11 shall not commence until after 8:00 o'clock p.m. on the day of the
12 primary or election.

13 ~~((After opening the return envelopes, the county canvassing board~~
14 ~~shall place all of the ballot envelopes in containers that can be~~
15 ~~secured with numbered seals. These sealed containers shall be stored~~
16 ~~in a secure location until after 8:00 o'clock p.m. of the day of the~~
17 ~~primary or election. Absentee ballots that are to be tabulated on an~~
18 ~~electronic vote tallying system may be taken from the inner envelopes~~

1 ~~and all the normal procedural steps may be performed to prepare these~~
2 ~~ballots for tabulation before sealing the containers.))~~

3 The canvassing board shall examine the postmark, statement, and
4 signature on each return envelope containing the security envelope and
5 absentee ballot(~~(.—They))~~ and shall verify that the voter's signature
6 is the same as that in the registration files for that voter. For
7 absentee voters other than out-of-state voters, overseas voters, and
8 service voters, if the postmark is illegible, the date on the return
9 envelope to which the voter attests shall determine the validity, as to
10 the time of voting, of that absentee ballot under this chapter. For
11 any absentee voter, a variation between the signature of the voter on
12 the return envelope and that in the registration files due to the
13 substitution of initials or the use of common nicknames is permitted so
14 long as the surname and handwriting are clearly the same.

15 After processing, the county canvassing board shall place all
16 return envelopes containing the security envelope and ballot in sealed
17 containers that can be secured with seals having two signatures, one
18 from each party. These sealed containers shall be stored in a secure
19 location until after eight o'clock p.m. on the day of the primary or
20 election.

21 The county canvassing board shall open the return envelopes
22 beginning at eight o'clock p.m. the night of the primary or election
23 and shall place all of the return envelopes in a container separate
24 from the security envelopes. The ballots shall then be separated from
25 the security envelopes, at which time manual or electronic tabulation
26 shall begin.

27 (2) For the purpose of this section, "processing" means the
28 verification of signatures and grouping, as referred to in RCW
29 29.36.070, and "tabulation" means the opening of returned and security
30 envelopes and the process of counting ballots by manual means or use of
31 an electronic vote tallying system.

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