
HOUSE BILL 1376

State of Washington

55th Legislature

1997 Regular Session

By Representatives Smith, Talcott, Mielke, McDonald, Mitchell,
D. Sommers, Carrell, Dunn, Thompson and Bush

Read first time 01/23/97. Referred to Committee on Government
Administration.

1 AN ACT Relating to processing of incoming absentee ballots; and
2 amending RCW 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 The ~~((opening and subsequent processing))~~ verification of
7 signatures on return envelopes for any primary or election may begin on
8 or after the tenth day prior to such primary or election. The opening
9 of the return and security envelopes and tabulation of absentee ballots
10 shall not commence until after 8:00 o'clock p.m. on the day of the
11 primary or election.

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

1 ~~normal procedural steps may be performed to prepare these ballots for~~
2 ~~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 shall verify that the voter's signature is the
6 same as that in the registration files for that voter. For absentee
7 voters other than out-of-state voters, overseas voters, and service
8 voters, if the postmark is illegible, the date on the return envelope
9 to which the voter attests shall determine the validity, as to the time
10 of voting, of that absentee ballot under this chapter. For any
11 absentee voter, a variation between the signature of the voter on the
12 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.

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