
SUBSTITUTE HOUSE BILL 1846

State of Washington

55th Legislature

1998 Regular Session

By House Committee on Government Administration (originally sponsored by Representatives Smith, Koster, Talcott, Sump, Lambert, Buck, Thompson, Mielke, Crouse, Bush, Hankins, McMorris, Chandler, Radcliff, Parlette, B. Thomas and Sheahan)

Read first time 01/30/98. Referred to Committee on .

1 AN ACT Relating to periodically maintaining voter registration
2 lists; amending RCW 29.10.090, 29.10.180, and 29.10.040; and adding a
3 new section to chapter 29.10 RCW.

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

5 **Sec. 1.** RCW 29.10.090 and 1994 c 57 s 41 are each amended to read
6 as follows:

7 ~~((The local registrar of vital statistics in cities of the first
8 class shall submit monthly to the county auditor a list of the names
9 and addresses, if known, of all persons over eighteen years of age who
10 have died.))~~

11 In addition to case-by-case maintenance under RCW 29.10.071 and
12 29.10.075 and the general program of maintenance of voter registration
13 lists under RCW 29.10.180, deceased voters shall be canceled from voter
14 registration lists as follows:

15 (1) Every month, the registrar of vital statistics of the state
16 shall prepare a separate list of persons who resided in each county,
17 for whom a death certificate was transmitted to the registrar and was
18 not included on a previous list, and shall supply ((such monthly lists

1 ~~for each county of the state, exclusive of cities of the first class,)~~
2 the appropriate list to the county auditor ((thereof)) of each county.
3 ((The)) A county ((auditors)) auditor shall compare ((such lists))
4 this list with the registration records and cancel the registrations of
5 deceased voters within at least forty-five days before the next primary
6 or election held in the county after the auditor receives the list.

7 (2) In addition, the county auditor may also use newspaper obituary
8 articles as a source of information in order to cancel a voter's
9 registration. The auditor must verify the identity of the voter by
10 matching the voter's date of birth or an address. The auditor shall
11 record the date and source of the obituary in the cancellation records.

12 (3) In addition ((to the above manner of canceling registration
13 records of deceased voters)), any registered voter may sign a
14 statement, subject to the penalties of perjury, to the effect that to
15 his or her personal knowledge or belief another registered voter is
16 deceased. This statement may be filed with the county auditor. Upon
17 the receipt of such signed statement, the county auditor shall cancel
18 the registration records concerned and so notify the secretary of
19 state. Upon receipt of such notice, the secretary of state shall in
20 turn cancel his or her copy of said registration record.

21 The secretary of state as chief elections officer shall cause such
22 form to be designed to carry out the provisions of this section. The
23 county auditors shall have such forms available for public use.
24 Further, each such public officer having jurisdiction of an election
25 shall make available a reasonable supply of such forms for the use of
26 the precinct election officers at each polling place on the day of an
27 election.

28 **Sec. 2.** RCW 29.10.180 and 1994 c 57 s 44 are each amended to read
29 as follows:

30 In addition to the case-by-case maintenance required under RCW
31 29.10.071 and 29.10.075 and the canceling of registrations under RCW
32 29.10.090, the county auditor shall establish a general program of
33 voter registration list maintenance. This program must be a thorough
34 review that is applied uniformly throughout the county and must be
35 nondiscriminatory in its application. Any program established must be
36 completed at least once every two years and not later than ninety days
37 before the date of a primary or general election for federal office.

1 The county may fulfill its obligations under this section in one of the
2 following ways:

3 (1) The county auditor may enter into one or more contracts with
4 the United States postal service, or its licensee, which permit the
5 auditor to use postal service change-of-address information. If the
6 auditor receives change of address information from the United States
7 postal service that indicates that a voter has changed his or her
8 residence address within the county, the auditor shall transfer the
9 registration of that voter and send an acknowledgement notice of the
10 transfer to the new address. If the auditor receives postal change of
11 address information indicating that the voter has moved out of the
12 county, the auditor shall send a confirmation notice to the voter, send
13 the voter a registration-by-mail form at the voter's new address, and
14 advise the voter of the need to reregister in the new county. The
15 auditor shall place the voter's registration on inactive status;

16 (2) A direct, nonforwardable, first-class, return if undeliverable,
17 address correction requested, mailing to every registered voter within
18 the county. If address correction information for a voter is received
19 by the county auditor after this mailing, the auditor shall place that
20 voter on inactive status and shall send to the voter a confirmation
21 notice;

22 (3) Any other method approved by the secretary of state.

23 **Sec. 3.** RCW 29.10.040 and 1994 c 57 s 36 are each amended to read
24 as follows:

25 A registered voter who changes his or her residence from one county
26 to another county, shall be required to register anew. ~~((Before~~
27 ~~registering anew,))~~ The voter shall sign an authorization to cancel his
28 or her present registration. ((The authorization shall be on a form
29 ~~prescribed by the secretary of state by rule. The))~~ An authorization
30 to cancel a voter's registration shall be forwarded promptly to the
31 county auditor of the county in which the voter was previously
32 registered. The county auditor of the county where the previous
33 registration was made shall cancel the registration of the voter if it
34 appears that the signatures in the registration record and on the
35 cancellation authorization form were made by the same person.

36 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 4.** A new section is added to chapter 29.10 RCW
37 to read as follows:

1 In addition to the case-by-case cancellation procedure required in
2 RCW 29.10.040, the county auditor, in conjunction with the office of
3 the secretary of state, shall participate in an annual list maintenance
4 program designed to detect persons registered in more than one county.
5 This program must be applied uniformly throughout the county and must
6 be nondiscriminatory in its application. The program must be completed
7 not later than thirty days before the date of a primary or general
8 election.

9 The office of the secretary of state shall cause to be created a
10 list of registered voters with the same date of birth and similar names
11 who appear on two or more county lists of registered voters. The
12 office of the secretary of state shall forward this list to each county
13 auditor so that they may properly cancel the previous registration of
14 voters who have subsequently registered in a different county. The
15 county auditor of the county where the previous registration was made
16 shall cancel the registration of the voter if it appears that the
17 signatures in the registration and the signature provided to the new
18 county on the voter's new registration were made by the same person.
19 The office of the secretary of state shall adopt rules to facilitate
20 this process.

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