

1739-S

Sponsor(s): House Committee on State Government (originally sponsored by Representatives Bush, D. Schmidt, Romero, Miloscia, Anderson, Campbell, Talcott, Esser and Casada; by request of Secretary of State)

Brief Description: Protecting the integrity of elections.

HB 1739-S - DIGEST

(DIGEST AS ENACTED)

Declares that an election officer or a person who intentionally disenfranchises an eligible citizen or discriminates against a person eligible to vote by denying voter registration is guilty of a misdemeanor punishable under RCW 9A.20.021.

Requires that, in order to encourage the broadest possible voting participation by all eligible citizens, the secretary of state shall produce voter registration information in the foreign languages required of state agencies. This information must be available no later than January 1, 2002.

Directs the secretary of state to cause to be produced a "voter guide" detailing what constitutes voter fraud and discrimination under state election laws. This voter guide must be provided to every county election officer and voter registrar, and any other person upon request, no later than January 1, 2002.

Provides that all voter registration forms printed after January 1, 2002, must include clear and conspicuous language, designed to draw an applicant's attention, stating that the applicant must be a United States citizen in order to register to vote.

Requires the secretary of state to provide a toll-free media and web page designed to allow voter communication with the office of the secretary of state.

Requires that, when a person who has previously registered to vote in any jurisdiction applies for voter registration in a new jurisdiction, the person shall provide on the registration form, all information needed to cancel any previous registration.

Provides that if a voter is suspected of voting in two or more counties in an election, the county auditors in each county shall cooperate without delay to determine the voter's county of residence. The county auditor of the county of residence of the voter suspected of voting in two or more counties shall take action under this act without delay.

Provides that a county auditor who suspects a person of fraudulent voter registration, vote tampering, or irregularities in voting shall transmit his or her suspicions and observations without delay to the canvassing board.

Provides that, when a complaint providing information concerning fraudulent voter registration, vote tampering, or irregularities in voting are presented to the office of the prosecuting attorney, that office shall file charges in all cases where warranted.

Declares that a person who knows that he or she does not

possess the legal qualifications of a voter and who registers to vote is guilty of a misdemeanor punishable under RCW 9A.20.021.