
State Government Committee

HB 1106

Brief Description: Authorizing the secretary of state to observe county election facilities.

Sponsors: Representatives Bush, Haigh, Kenney, Miloscia, McDonald, Campbell, Cox, Edwards, Clements, Veloria, Wood, Pearson, Schindler, Mielke, Woods, Sullivan, Shabro, Roach, Benson, Buck, Condotta, Talcott, Priest, Sump, Carrell, Anderson, Lantz, Schoesler, Darneille, Nixon, Kagi, Boldt, Lovick, McDermott, Pflug, McCoy, Upthegrove and McMahan.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Allows for unannounced visits to county election offices.

Hearing Date: 2/13/03

Staff: Anne Warwick (786-7291) and Katie Blinn (786-7114).

Background:

The Certification and Training Program within the Office of the Secretary of State (Secretary) was created in 1992 in response to a very close legislative district race. The recount in the race revealed inconsistencies and errors that pointed out the critical need for standardization and uniformity in all aspects of the election process. That same legislation also provided for the Election Administration and Certification Board. The Board is made up of representatives from the county auditors, the Legislature, the major political parties and the Secretary. The major responsibilities of the Certification and Training Program are: (a) Training and Certification; (b) Election Assistance and Clearinghouses; and (c) Review Process.

A review of county election procedures may be done at the request of a county auditor, the Secretary, or when a recount is required for a statewide or legislative race. The review may be a full review which covers all aspects of election administration in a county or it may be a partial review. A full review is done during the administration of an election to allow observation of election procedures. In the case of a recount, a special review is conducted covering only the areas which would affect the outcome of a potential recount. The Certification and Training Program may prioritize counties based on the date and results of the last review, any requests from county auditors, any written complaints filed with the

Secretary, any negative media stories or reports, and the date on which the determination is made that a special review is required.

Summary of Bill:

The Office of the Secretary of State, Elections Division, may make unannounced visits to county election offices and facilities to observe handling, processing, counting or tabulation of ballots.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not Requested.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.