
State Government Committee

SB 5463

Brief Description: Authorizing a pilot project for military and overseas voters to vote over the Internet.

Sponsors: Senators Roach, Kastama, Stevens, McCaslin, Oke, Horn, Fairley, Kohl-Welles, Schmidt, Winsley and Shin; by request of Secretary of State.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Authorizes a pilot program for military and overseas voters to vote over the Internet.

Hearing Date: 3/25/03

Staff: Anne Warwick (786-7291).

Background:

All military and overseas voting is currently done by absentee mail ballot. It has been suggested that Internet voting would increase the convenience to the voter and eliminate barriers to voting participation.

The Secretary of State is requesting legislation authorizing a pilot project supported by the United States Congress in conjunction with the United States Department of Defense, exploring the technical and procedural issues related to Internet voting.

The National Defense Authorization Act of 2002 (Sec. 1604) requires the Secretary of Defense to carry out a demonstration project under which absent uniformed voters are permitted to cast ballots in the regularly scheduled general election for November 2004 through an electronic voting system. The law adds that the demonstration project shall be carried out with participation of sufficient numbers, so that the results are relevant.

Summary of Bill:

Ensures all persons who are out of state or overseas in defense of this great nation or for other purposes to participate in a pilot project sanctioned by the Secretary of State, in compliance with the standards and regulations established by the Federal Voting Assistance Program and the United States Department of Defense. The pilot project would allow

service and overseas voters to register to vote and cast their votes electronically. The votes must be cast and counted in conformity with the provisions of Title 29 RCW. Election officials shall rely upon the procedures established by the United States Department of Defense for security, secrecy, and validation of votes.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not Requested.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.