

FINAL BILL REPORT

SHB 1754

C 241 L 05

Synopsis as Enacted

Brief Description: Authorizing county-wide mail ballot elections.

Sponsors: By House Committee on State Government Operations & Accountability (originally sponsored by Representatives Hunt, Nixon, McDermott, Haigh, Upthegrove, Moeller, Kenney, Chase, Simpson, Miloscia, Sells and Linville; by request of Secretary of State).

House Committee on State Government Operations & Accountability
Senate Committee on Government Operations & Elections

Background:

A county auditor may designate a precinct as a mail ballot precinct if it has fewer than 200 active registered voters, excluding ongoing absentee voters. If the auditor designates a precinct as a mail ballot precinct, he or she must notify all registered voters in the precinct by mail that all future elections will be conducted by mail. If the number of active registered voters in the precinct increases to over 200, or the auditor decides to return to a polling place election environment, the auditor must notify voters by mail and provide the address of the polling place.

Summary:

A county auditor may conduct all elections by mail ballot if he or she is given authorization to do so from the county legislative authority. The county legislative authority must give its authorization to conduct all elections by mail ballot to the auditor at least 90 days in advance of the first election to be conducted by mail. If the county legislative authority and the county auditor decide to return to a polling place environment, the county legislative authority must give its authorization to do so to the auditor at least 180 days in advance of the first election to be conducted in a polling place environment. The auditor must then notify all registered voters in the county and provide them with the polling place to be used.

Prior to converting to a mail ballot election, the auditor must notify all registered voters in the county that all elections will be conducted by mail. Individuals with disabilities must be given voting access in all vote by mail elections.

The Secretary of State must evaluate available technology to allow voters the ability to conveniently determine if their mail ballots were received and counted. The Secretary of State must report his or her findings to the Legislature by December 31, 2006. The report must contain the Secretary of State's recommendations on whether the technology should be implemented and, if so, how.

Votes on Final Passage:

House	58	38	
Senate	28	20	(Senate amended)
House	83	13	(House concurred)

Effective: July 24, 2005