
SENATE BILL 5147

State of Washington

59th Legislature

2005 Regular Session

By Senators Kohl-Welles and Kline

Read first time 01/14/2005. Referred to Committee on Government Operations & Elections.

1 AN ACT Relating to paid petition signature gathering; amending RCW
2 29A.84.280; reenacting RCW 29A.84.250; and prescribing penalties.

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

4 **Sec. 1.** RCW 29A.84.280 and 2003 c 111 s 2116 are each amended to
5 read as follows:

6 The legislature finds that paying a worker, whose task it is to
7 secure the signatures of voters on initiative or referendum petitions,
8 on the basis of the number of signatures the worker secures on the
9 petitions encourages the introduction of fraud in the signature
10 gathering process. It has been shown that such a form of payment ((may
11 act as)) has been an incentive in this state and region for ((the))
12 some workers to encourage a person to sign a petition which the person
13 is not qualified to sign or to sign a petition for a ballot measure
14 even if the person has already signed a petition for the measure.
15 Other workers, paid on a per-signature basis, have forged signatures on
16 petitions. Such payments also threaten the integrity of the initiative
17 and referendum process by providing an incentive for misrepresenting
18 the nature or effect of a ballot measure in securing petition
19 signatures for the measure.

1 The legislature intends to provide consistency between voter
2 registration workers and initiative and referendum workers since
3 Washington state bars per-signature payment when registering voters.

4 **Sec. 2.** RCW 29A.84.250 and 2003 c 111 s 2113 are each reenacted to
5 read as follows:

6 Every person is guilty of a gross misdemeanor who:

7 (1) For any consideration or gratuity or promise thereof, signs or
8 declines to sign any initiative or referendum petition; or

9 (2) Provides or receives consideration for soliciting or procuring
10 signatures on an initiative or referendum petition if any part of the
11 consideration is based upon the number of signatures solicited or
12 procured, or offers to provide or agrees to receive such consideration
13 any of which is based on the number of signatures solicited or
14 procured; or

15 (3) Gives or offers any consideration or gratuity to any person to
16 induce him or her to sign or not to sign or to vote for or against any
17 initiative or referendum measure; or

18 (4) Interferes with or attempts to interfere with the right of any
19 voter to sign or not to sign an initiative or referendum petition or
20 with the right to vote for or against an initiative or referendum
21 measure by threats, intimidation, or any other corrupt means or
22 practice; or

23 (5) Receives, handles, distributes, pays out, or gives away,
24 directly or indirectly, money or any other thing of value contributed
25 by or received from any person, firm, association, or corporation whose
26 residence or principal office is, or the majority of whose members or
27 stockholders have their residence outside, the state of Washington, for
28 any service rendered for the purpose of aiding in procuring signatures
29 upon any initiative or referendum petition or for the purpose of aiding
30 in the adoption or rejection of any initiative or referendum measure.
31 This subsection does not apply to or prohibit any activity that is
32 properly reported in accordance with the applicable provisions of
33 chapter 42.17 RCW.

34 A gross misdemeanor under this section is punishable to the same
35 extent as a gross misdemeanor that is punishable under RCW 9A.20.021.

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