Washington State House of Representatives Office of Program Research	BILL ANALYSIS

State Government & Tribal Affairs Committee

HB 1654

Brief Description: Modifying canvassing provisions.

Sponsors: Representatives Appleton, Haigh and Hunt.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Requires a county auditor to process and canvass ballots on a daily basis when the auditor is in possession of more than 10,000 absentee ballots that have yet to be processed.

- Allows a random audit of ballot counting equipment in counties voting entirely by mail, upon mutual agreement of the political party observers or at the discretion of the county auditor.

Hearing Date: 2/13/07

Staff: Alison Hellberg (786-7152).

Background:

County auditors are required to process absentee ballots and canvass the votes on a daily basis in counties with a population of 75,000 or more, and at least every third day in counties with a population of less than 75,000, excluding Sundays and holidays, as long as the auditor has more than 25 ballots that have yet to be canvassed. During the final four days before the certification of the election, the auditor has discretion in determining when to process the remaining ballots.

Representatives from each major political party must be allowed to observe the counting of ballots and may request manual counts.

Summary of Bill:

If a county auditor is in possession of more than 10,000 absentee ballots that have yet to be processed, he or she must process and canvass ballots on a daily basis. At a minimum, the auditor

---

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

must process and canvass absentee ballots every third day. Sundays and legal holidays do not count.

In counties voting entirely by mail, a random audit of the ballot counting equipment may be conducted upon mutual agreement of the political party observers or at the discretion of the county auditor. The random audit process includes a comparison of a manual count to the machine count and will be limited to one office or issue. The audit must begin no later than 8:30 p.m. on election day and must be completed not later than 48 hours after election day.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: Sections 1 and 3 of the bill take effect 90 days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed. Section 2 of the bill takes effect on July 1, 2013.