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HOUSE BILL 2018

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State of Washington                      60th Legislature                      2007 Regular Session

By Representatives McDermott, Ormsby, Appleton, Miloscia, Hunt,  
Hasegawa and Conway

Read first time 02/05/2007.                      Referred to Committee on State  
Government & Tribal Affairs.

1            AN ACT Relating to the licensing of paid signature-gatherers for  
2 initiative petitions; and adding a new chapter to Title 19 RCW.

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

4            NEW SECTION.    **Sec. 1.** It is the intent of the legislature to  
5 establish reasonable guidelines for the collection of signatures for  
6 initiative petitions by paid signature-gatherers. The initiative  
7 petition process is a tool of the people and has a particular role in  
8 a representative democracy. Because the debate, deliberation, and  
9 compromise that underpin the democratic legislative process are absent  
10 from the initiative process, it is necessary to take measures to  
11 protect the voters of this state from fraud, misrepresentation, and  
12 undue influence.

13            NEW SECTION.    **Sec. 2.** The definitions in this section apply  
14 throughout this chapter unless the context clearly requires otherwise.

15            (1) "Department" means the department of licensing.

16            (2) "Paid signature-gatherer" means a person who is compensated  
17 through payments of money, either as an employee or independent  
18 contractor, to obtain signatures on a petition.

1 (3) "Petition" means an initiative, referendum, or recall petition  
2 that calls for the enactment, repeal, or recall of state or local  
3 legislation.

4 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** All businesses operating in this state  
5 engaged in the activity of collecting signatures for initiative  
6 petitions and that are using paid signature-gatherers must apply to the  
7 department for a license.

8 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 4.** (1) All businesses operating in this state  
9 engaged in the activity of collecting signatures for initiative  
10 petitions and that are using paid signature-gatherers must apply to the  
11 department for a permit for every individual signature-gatherer in its  
12 employ.

13 (2) The application must demonstrate that the employees for whom  
14 the permit is being requested have been through training on the laws  
15 and rules governing the petition process.

16 (3) Training must be conducted in consultation with the secretary  
17 of state.

18 (4) A permit is valid for only one petition. In the event an  
19 individual is gathering signatures for more than one petition, a permit  
20 is required for each petition.

21 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 5.** (1) A petition may not be distributed by a  
22 paid signature-gatherer unless that person has displayed on his or her  
23 person, or on the petition clipboard, the permit for distributing that  
24 petition.

25 (2) A permitted paid signature-gatherer who submits fraudulent  
26 signatures: (a) Will have his or her permit or permits revoked; and  
27 (b) is prohibited from obtaining future permits.

28 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 6.** Nothing in this chapter may be construed to  
29 limit the application of any other statute or rule that applies to  
30 petitions or petition gatherers.

31 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 7.** The department is directed to adopt rules to  
32 implement this chapter.

1        NEW SECTION.   **Sec. 8.**   Sections 1 through 7 of this act constitute  
2   a new chapter in Title 19 RCW.

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