

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1031

As Passed House:
February 23, 2011

Title: An act relating to ballot envelopes.

Brief Description: Requiring the county auditor to send voters a security envelope that conceals the ballot.

Sponsors: Representatives Armstrong, Orwall, Johnson, Crouse, Appleton, Condotta, Eddy, Clibborn, Haler, Ormsby, Nealey, Klippert, Miloscia, Fagan, Alexander, Taylor, Bailey, Angel, Finn, Warnick, Rodne, Orcutt, Walsh, Pearson, Green, McCoy, McCune, Schmick, Smith, Goodman, Asay, Ross, Blake, Short, Kagi, Hope, Takko, Kristiansen, Reykdal, Frockt, Ladenburg, Rolfes, Shea, Hunt, Hurst and Moeller.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

State Government & Tribal Affairs: 1/12/11, 1/17/11 [DP].

Floor Activity:

Passed House: 2/23/11, 96-0.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Requires the county auditor to send voters a security envelope to conceal the ballot.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON STATE GOVERNMENT & TRIBAL AFFAIRS

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 10 members: Representatives Hunt, Chair; Appleton, Vice Chair; Taylor, Ranking Minority Member; Overstreet, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Alexander, Condotta, Dunshee, Hurst, McCoy and Miloscia.

Staff: Marsha Reilly (786-7135).

Background:

When voting by mail, a voter receives a ballot, a security envelope, and a return envelope. The purpose of the security envelope is to provide secrecy of the ballot. Voters are instructed

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to place the ballot in the security envelope, and then to place the security envelope in the return envelope. The return envelope provides space for the voter to sign the oath to affirm and attest to the statements regarding the voter's qualifications.

Summary of Bill:

A change is made to distinguish that the security envelope shall "conceal" rather than "seal" the ballot.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) The bill changes the word "seal" to "conceal" and will allow county auditors to provide a security sleeve for the ballot rather than an envelope that must be sealed. The sleeve may be reused and will eliminate the process of running security ballot envelopes through a cutting machine. The bill does not require a change, but rather provides the option to use a sleeve. The sleeve will maintain secrecy of the ballot and using the sleeve will reduce processing time.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Representative Armstrong, prime sponsor; Skip Moore, Chelan County Auditor; and Kim Wyman, Thurston County Auditor.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.