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SENATE BILL 5270

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State of Washington

63rd Legislature

2013 Regular Session

By Senators Billig, Darneille, Hasegawa, Nelson, Cleveland, Ranker, Frockt, Rolfes, Kohl-Welles, Mullet, and Kline

Read first time 01/24/13. Referred to Committee on Governmental Operations.

1 AN ACT Relating to motor voter preregistration for sixteen and  
2 seventeen year olds; amending RCW 46.20.155 and 29A.08.710; reenacting  
3 and amending RCW 42.56.250; and creating new sections.

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

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature is committed to granting  
6 equal access to voter registration for all voters. The legislature  
7 recognizes the importance of fostering lifelong civic participation.  
8 Currently, many young people are denied access to the most popular form  
9 of voter registration, motor voter. More than forty percent of new  
10 voters are registered through motor voter, but this easy and popular  
11 form of voter registration is not available to young people if they  
12 obtained their driver's license at the age of sixteen or seventeen.  
13 Denial of motor voter to so many young voters has contributed to lower  
14 voter registration levels in the youngest voter age groups. In  
15 Washington, according to the United States census bureau, only 50.8  
16 percent of eligible citizens between the ages of eighteen and twenty-  
17 four are registered to vote, compared to sixty-eight to eighty percent  
18 for other age groups. Studies show that young adults who vote are  
19 likely to continue to do so throughout adulthood. The legislature

1 recognizes that these representational disparities in registration  
2 rates and voting rates within the youth electorate will improve by  
3 enacting election policies that engage all young citizens. Therefore,  
4 the legislature declares that this act, allowing eligible youth at  
5 least sixteen years of age to preregister to vote, is intended to  
6 increase voter turnout in young adults.

7 **Sec. 2.** RCW 46.20.155 and 2009 c 369 s 42 are each amended to read  
8 as follows:

9 (1) Before issuing an original license or identicard or renewing a  
10 license or identicard under this chapter, the licensing agent shall  
11 determine if the applicant wants to preregister or register to vote or  
12 transfer his or her voter registration by asking the following  
13 question:

14 "Do you want to preregister or register to vote or transfer your  
15 voter registration?"

16 If the applicant chooses to preregister, register, or transfer a  
17 registration, the agent shall ask the following:

18 (1) "Are you a United States citizen?"

19 (2) "Are you (~~or will you be eighteen~~) at least sixteen years of  
20 age (~~on or before the next election~~)?"

21 If the applicant answers in the affirmative to both questions, the  
22 agent shall then submit the preregistration, registration, or transfer.  
23 If the applicant answers in the negative to either question, the agent  
24 shall not submit (~~a voter registration~~) an application. Information  
25 provided for preregistration under this section is exempt from public  
26 inspection and copying pursuant to RCW 42.56.250.

27 (2) The department shall establish a procedure that substantially  
28 meets the requirements of subsection (1) of this section when  
29 permitting an applicant to renew a license or identicard by mail or by  
30 electronic commerce.

31 **Sec. 3.** RCW 29A.08.710 and 2005 c 246 s 17 are each amended to  
32 read as follows:

33 (1) The county auditor shall have custody of the original voter  
34 registration records for each county. The original voter registration  
35 form must be filed without regard to precinct and is considered

1 confidential and unavailable for public inspection and copying. An  
2 automated file of all registered voters must be maintained pursuant to  
3 RCW 29A.08.125. An auditor may maintain the automated file in lieu of  
4 filing or maintaining the original voter registration forms if the  
5 automated file includes all of the information from the original voter  
6 registration forms including, but not limited to, a retrievable  
7 facsimile of each voter's signature.

8 (2) The following information contained in voter registration  
9 records or files regarding a voter or a group of voters is available  
10 for public inspection and copying, except as provided in RCW 40.24.060:  
11 The voter's name, address, political jurisdiction, gender, date of  
12 birth, voting record, date of registration, and registration number.  
13 The information contained in voter preregistration applications under  
14 RCW 46.20.155 is exempt from public inspection and copying. No other  
15 information from voter registration records or files is available for  
16 public inspection or copying.

17 **Sec. 4.** RCW 42.56.250 and 2010 c 257 s 1 and 2010 c 128 s 9 are  
18 each reenacted and amended to read as follows:

19 The following employment and licensing information is exempt from  
20 public inspection and copying under this chapter:

21 (1) Test questions, scoring keys, and other examination data used  
22 to administer a license, employment, or academic examination;

23 (2) All applications for public employment, including the names of  
24 applicants, resumes, and other related materials submitted with respect  
25 to an applicant;

26 (3) The residential addresses, residential telephone numbers,  
27 personal wireless telephone numbers, personal electronic mail  
28 addresses, social security numbers, and emergency contact information  
29 of employees or volunteers of a public agency, and the names, dates of  
30 birth, residential addresses, residential telephone numbers, personal  
31 wireless telephone numbers, personal electronic mail addresses, social  
32 security numbers, and emergency contact information of dependents of  
33 employees or volunteers of a public agency that are held by any public  
34 agency in personnel records, public employment related records, or  
35 volunteer rosters, or are included in any mailing list of employees or  
36 volunteers of any public agency. For purposes of this subsection,

1 "employees" includes independent provider home care workers as defined  
2 in RCW 74.39A.240;

3 (4) Information that identifies a person who, while an agency  
4 employee: (a) Seeks advice, under an informal process established by  
5 the employing agency, in order to ascertain his or her rights in  
6 connection with a possible unfair practice under chapter 49.60 RCW  
7 against the person; and (b) requests his or her identity or any  
8 identifying information not be disclosed;

9 (5) Investigative records compiled by an employing agency  
10 conducting an active and ongoing investigation of a possible unfair  
11 practice under chapter 49.60 RCW or of a possible violation of other  
12 federal, state, or local laws prohibiting discrimination in employment;

13 (6) Criminal history records checks for board staff finalist  
14 candidates conducted pursuant to RCW 43.33A.025;

15 (7) (~~Except as provided in RCW 47.64.220, salary and benefit~~  
16 ~~information for maritime employees collected from private employers~~  
17 ~~under RCW 47.64.220(1) and described in RCW 47.64.220(2)) Information  
18 contained in voter preregistration records under RCW 46.20.155; and~~

19 (8) Photographs and month and year of birth in the personnel files  
20 of employees and workers of criminal justice agencies as defined in RCW  
21 10.97.030. The news media, as defined in RCW 5.68.010(5), shall have  
22 access to the photographs and full date of birth. For the purposes of  
23 this subsection, news media does not include any person or organization  
24 of persons in the custody of a criminal justice agency as defined in  
25 RCW 10.97.030.

26 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 5.** This act may be known and cited as the young  
27 voter registration equality act.

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