
**State Government, Elections &
Information Technology Committee**

HB 1513

Brief Description: Concerning the collection of youth voter registration sign up information.

Sponsors: Representatives Bergquist, Stambaugh, Frame, Hudgins, Sawyer, Slatter, Macri, Gregerson, Peterson, McBride, Doglio, Appleton, Fitzgibbon, Goodman, Tharinger, Farrell, Pollet, Ormsby, Dolan and Riccelli.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Authorizes persons 16 and 17 years of age to sign up to vote.
- Requires social studies teachers to coordinate Temperance and Good Citizenship Day events.

Hearing Date: 2/3/17

Staff: Megan Palchak (786-7105).

Background:

The Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) is the primary agency overseeing kindergarten through grade 12 public education in Washington State. Under common school provisions, if the State Board of Education requires civics coursework, the content must include, but is not limited to election issues, elections, ballot measures, initiatives, and referenda. Persons under 18 years of age may not register to vote.

Persons who are 18 years and older may register to vote by mail, electronically, or at the Department of Licensing (DOL), state offices, and colleges.

Except for service and overseas voters, only persons registered to vote shall be permitted to vote at: (1) any election held for the purpose of electing persons to public office, (2) any recall

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election of a public officer, (3) any election held for the submission of a measure to any voting constituency, and (4) any primary election.

Voters' rights are protected by the Constitution and under law, and include the fundamental rights: (1) to vote at all elections, (2) secrecy of the vote, and no requirement to disclose political faith or adherence in order to vote, (3) to cast a vote for any candidate for each office without any limitation based on party preference or affiliation, of either the voter or the candidate.

The Secretary of State (SOS) is the chief election officer for all federal, state, county, city, town, and district elections. County auditors supervise all primary, general, and special elections. They must provide places for holding elections, and provide the supplies and materials necessary. The SOS must ensure that each county auditor is provided with the most recent version of election laws.

Summary of Bill:

The Legislature expresses intent to increase voter turnout by enabling eligible persons 16 years of age to preregister to vote. Persons 16 and 17 years of age may sign up to vote at the DOL, and all other locations, through electronic means. Persons signed up to vote may not vote until eighteen years of age, and his or her name may not be added to the statewide voter registration database until he or she will be 18 years of age prior to the next election.

On Temperance and Good Citizenship Day, social studies teachers must coordinate a voter registration sign up event, with support from county auditors, as resources allow. Teachers must make voter sign up and registration available to students. The event must encourage student who will be 18 years of age the next election to vote.

The OSPI and the SOS must distribute voter registration materials by December 1, annually. The OSPI must consult with the SOS to provide registration methods, and report annually on voter registration process.

Voter sign up records are exempt from public inspection and copying.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Preliminary fiscal note available.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect on January 1, 2018.