

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5227

As Amended by House, April 16, 2019

Title: An act relating to deadlines for receipt of voter registrations by election officials.

Brief Description: Concerning deadlines for receipt of voter registrations by election officials.

Sponsors: Senators Kuderer, Hunt, Takko, Nguyen and Billig.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: State Government, Tribal Relations & Elections: 2/06/19, 2/15/19 [DP].

Floor Activity:

Passed Senate: 3/11/19, 45-3.

Passed House: 4/16/19, 94-2.

<p style="text-align: center;">Brief Summary of Bill</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Moves deadline to transfer an existing voter registration via telephone, electronically, or at a state agency other than a county auditor or the Secretary of State, to eight days before the election.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON STATE GOVERNMENT, TRIBAL RELATIONS & ELECTIONS

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Hunt, Chair; Kuderer, Vice Chair; Zeiger, Ranking Member; Bailey, Hasegawa, Hawkins and Takko.

Staff: Samuel Brown (786-7470)

Background: Registering to Vote. Persons who are age eighteen or older and who are United States citizens that have lived in the state, county, and precinct for 30 days immediately preceding an election are entitled to vote. The National Voter Registration Act requires states to provide the opportunity to register to vote for federal elections.

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.

Washington adopted the Motor Voter Act, requiring the Department of Licensing (DOL) to provide voter registration services. In addition to DOL, the following agencies and programs offer voter registration:

- the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) Community Services Division;
- the DSHS Aging and Long-Term Support Administration;
- the DSHS Division of Vocational Rehabilitation;
- the DSHS Developmental Disabilities Administration;
- the DSHS Aging and Disabilities Service Administration;
- the Department of Services for the Blind;
- the Health Care Authority; and
- the Health Benefit Exchange.

Voter Registration Deadlines. To register to vote, a person must submit an application via mail or an online registration or at a state agency no later than eight days before the day of the next primary, special, or general election, or in person at their county auditor's office by 8:00 p.m. on the night of the election.

A person may update voter registration by 8:00 p.m. on the night of the election for the change to be effective for that election. A voter who does not transfer the voter's residential information by that deadline may still vote, but will vote in races affecting the voter's previous address.

Summary of Bill: A person updating their voter registration by changing their address by any method other than in person at the county auditor's office must do so no later than eight days before the day of the next primary, special, or general election for the change to be effective for that election.

Any initial voter registration or update must be received by a staff member of the Secretary of State or county auditor eight days before the next election to be timely.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Creates Committee/Commission/Task Force that includes Legislative members: No.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: This is a simple cleanup bill in response to a request from election officials that the deadline from last year's bills was not going to be workable. It will help people understand when a registration needs to be received to allow a voter to participate in an election.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Senator Patty Kuderer, Prime Sponsor; Jay Jennings, Office of the Secretary of State; Mary Hall, Thurston County Auditor.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.

EFFECT OF HOUSE AMENDMENT(S): A person must submit voter registration information through the Health Benefit Exchange, rather than any information, to update a residential location on the person's voter registration.