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**State Government & Tribal Relations  
Committee**

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**SB 5015**

**Brief Description:** Concerning fraudulent portrayal of ballot drop boxes.

**Sponsors:** Senators Hunt, Billig, Das, Dhingra, Hasegawa, Keiser, Kuderer, Nguyen and Wilson, C..

**Brief Summary of Bill**

- Establishes a gross misdemeanor for misrepresenting an unofficial ballot collection site or device as an official ballot drop box that has been established by the county auditor.

**Hearing Date:** 3/18/21

**Staff:** Jason Zolle (786-7124).

**Background:**

Ballot Drop Boxes.

Washington elections are conducted by mail, with the county auditor sending each voter a ballot. The auditor must also send voters a return envelope in which they may send their voted ballot back to the county.

The county auditor is also required to establish drop boxes into which voters can deposit their ballots rather than return them by mail. Ballot drop boxes must be established at each voting center opened by the auditor, in addition to at least one location established by the auditor at which people can register to vote in person (e.g., the county auditor's office). Additionally, there must be one ballot drop box per 15,000 registered voters in the county, and one drop box in each city, town, and census-designated place in the county with a post office.

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*This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.*

Auditors must prevent overflow of a ballot drop box. At least two people must be involved when removing ballots from a drop box. Ballots are taken from a drop box to a counting center in secured transport containers. All ballot drop boxes must be secured at 8:00 p.m. on the day of the election.

Gross Misdemeanors.

A gross misdemeanor is punishable by a maximum of 364 days in jail, a fine of up to \$5,000, or both.

**Summary of Bill:**

It is a gross misdemeanor to misrepresent an unofficial ballot collection site or device as an official ballot drop box that has been established by the county auditor.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Not requested.

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