
HOUSE BILL 1542

State of Washington

67th Legislature

2021 Regular Session

By Representatives Hackney, Bergquist, Santos, Simmons, J. Johnson, Valdez, and Pollet

Read first time 02/17/21. Referred to Committee on Civil Rights & Judiciary.

1 AN ACT Relating to jury demographics; adding a new section to
2 chapter 2.36 RCW; and creating a new section.

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

4 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature finds that demographically
5 diverse juries are essential to providing equal justice under law and
6 providing defendants with a representative and impartial jury of
7 peers. However, racial and ethnic minority populations are
8 underrepresented in many jurisdictions' jury pools relative to their
9 population within the jurisdiction. The 2019 jury diversity task
10 force interim report recommends the state should continuously monitor
11 juror demographics to track changes over time across the state so
12 that programs designed to improve jury diversity can be evaluated.
13 The legislature intends to implement the task force's recommendation
14 by enacting this act.

15 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 2.36 RCW
16 to read as follows:

17 (1) The administrative office of the courts shall provide all
18 courts with an electronic demographic survey for jurors who begin a
19 jury term. The survey must collect data on each juror's race,
20 ethnicity, age, sex, employment status, educational attainment, and

1 income, as well as any other data approved by order of the chief
2 justice of the Washington state supreme court. This electronic data
3 gathering must be conducted and reported in a manner that preserves
4 juror anonymity. The administrative office of the courts shall
5 publish this demographic data in an annual report to the governor and
6 shall maintain the reports on a publicly available internet address
7 for at least 10 years.

8 (2) Every court shall offer the electronic demographic survey
9 provided for in subsection (1) of this section to each potential
10 juror who physically or virtually begins a jury term.

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