
HOUSE BILL 1554

State of Washington

67th Legislature

2021 Regular Session

By Representatives Chase and McCaslin

Read first time 03/11/21. Referred to Committee on State Government & Tribal Relations.

1 AN ACT Relating to postelection audits that enhance ballot
2 integrity; adding a new section to chapter 29A.60 RCW; creating new
3 sections; and declaring an emergency.

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

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** It is the intent of the legislature to
6 assure all voters in the state that only legitimate votes are counted
7 accurately in Washington state elections.

8 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 29A.60
9 RCW to read as follows:

10 (1) As used in this section, "company" means an impartial,
11 independent company selected to perform the audit of a county's
12 election results described in this section. The company shall be
13 selected by the Democratic and Republican party chairpersons of the
14 county. If the chairpersons cannot agree on a company to audit the
15 county's election results, the company shall be chosen by coin toss.

16 (2) Beginning immediately after certification of the election,
17 the company shall conduct a statistically significant manual hand
18 count audit of all ballots tabulated for that election, including
19 duplicated and adjudicated ballots, in at least 12 precincts in the
20 county. The 12 precincts selected for the audit shall be chosen by

1 the county Democratic and Republican party chairpersons, with each
2 party choosing six precincts. In counties where the number of ballots
3 cast in the 12 chosen precincts is fewer than five percent of the
4 total number of ballots cast, additional precincts must be selected
5 until at least five percent of ballots cast are included in the
6 audit.

7 (3) The races or ballot measures counted for the audit shall be
8 selected by the Democratic and Republican party chairpersons of the
9 county and may be different races or ballot measures for each
10 precinct.

11 (4) The auditing method shall be a manual hand count of the
12 physical ballots, performed by examining the votes marked on each
13 ballot for the race or issue selected for the individual precinct as
14 compared to the results generated from running those same ballots
15 through the county's tabulation equipment.

16 (5) Public election observers must be allowed to observe all
17 processes of the audit beginning with locating the ballots for each
18 precinct, sorting and counting ballots, and the results of the audit.
19 Observers must also be permitted to examine duplicated and
20 adjudicated ballots from the precincts subject to the audit,
21 alongside the original ballots, to determine the accuracy of the
22 duplications and adjudications.

23 (6) By December 31st in the same year as the election, the
24 company must submit a report to the legislature detailing the
25 findings of the audit and any recommendations to improve ballot
26 integrity in future elections.

27 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** Within 30 days of the effective date of
28 this section, the company, as defined in section 2 of this act, must
29 perform an audit of the 2020 general election in the county.

30 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 4.** This act is necessary for the immediate
31 preservation of the public peace, health, or safety, or support of
32 the state government and its existing public institutions, and takes
33 effect immediately.

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