
SENATE BILL 5382

State of Washington

69th Legislature

2025 Regular Session

By Senators Valdez, Llias, Nobles, Saldaña, and C. Wilson

Read first time 01/21/25. Referred to Committee on State Government, Tribal Affairs & Elections.

1 AN ACT Relating to requirements pertaining to signatures and
2 addresses of ballot measure petitioners and petition signature
3 gatherers; amending RCW 29A.72.110, 29A.72.120, and 29A.72.130;
4 adding new sections to chapter 29A.72 RCW; and prescribing penalties.

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

6 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** A new section is added to chapter 29A.72
7 RCW to read as follows:

8 The legislature recognizes that the people have reserved for
9 themselves the power to enact or reject legislation through the
10 initiative and referendum process, as provided in Article II, section
11 1 of the state Constitution. The legislature determines that this
12 right must be further guarded against fraud and mistake. Currently,
13 the law requires initiative and referendum petitions to include a
14 statement that the petition signature gatherer swears or affirms
15 under penalty of law that, to the best of the circulator's knowledge,
16 every petitioner signed their true name, correctly provided the
17 accompanying information on the signature sheet, and was not
18 compensated or promised compensation for signing the petition. To
19 adequately guard the people's initiative and referendum right against
20 fraud and mistake, the legislature determines that the law must be
21 clarified to require each petition signature gatherer circulating an

1 initiative or referendum petition to sign the declaration under
2 penalty of false swearing. The requirement for the petition
3 circulator to sign such a declaration aligns with similar
4 requirements in many other states in fact, a majority of states that
5 have a ballot measure process require similar signed declarations.
6 The legislature further finds that an election official verifying
7 that the petitioner's residence address on the petition or paper is
8 the same as the residence address on the affidavit of registration
9 will also guard the people's initiative and referendum right against
10 fraud and mistake.

11 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 29A.72
12 RCW to read as follows:

13 Each petition signature gatherer circulating an initiative or
14 referendum petition must sign a declaration contained on each sheet
15 of the petition affirming, under penalty of false swearing, that
16 every petitioner signing that sheet correctly provided the
17 accompanying information on the signature sheet, that the petitioner
18 was eligible to sign the petition and reviewed the sheet, and that
19 the petitioner was not compensated or given gratuity or promised
20 compensation or gratuity for signing the petition.

21 **Sec. 3.** RCW 29A.72.110 and 2005 c 239 s 1 are each amended to
22 read as follows:

23 Petitions for proposing measures for submission to the
24 legislature at its next regular session must be substantially in the
25 following form:

26 The warning prescribed by RCW 29A.72.140; followed by:

27 INITIATIVE PETITION FOR SUBMISSION TO THE LEGISLATURE

28 To the Honorable, Secretary of State of the State of
29 Washington:

30 We, the undersigned citizens and legal voters of the State of
31 Washington, respectfully direct that this petition and the proposed
32 measure known as Initiative Measure No. . . . and entitled (here
33 set forth the established ballot title of the measure), a full, true,
34 and correct copy of which is printed on the reverse side of this
35 petition, be transmitted to the legislature of the State of
36 Washington at its next ensuing regular session, and we respectfully
37 petition the legislature to enact said proposed measure into law; and

1 each of us for himself or herself says: I have personally signed this
2 petition; I am a legal voter of the State of Washington in the city
3 (or town) and county written after my name, my residence address is
4 correctly stated, and I have knowingly signed this petition only
5 once.

6 The following declaration must be printed on the reverse side of
7 the petition:

8 I,, swear or affirm under penalty of
9 (~~law~~) false swearing that I circulated this sheet of the foregoing
10 petition, and that, to the best of my knowledge, every person who
11 signed this sheet of the foregoing petition reviewed the sheet and
12 knowingly and without any compensation or gratuity or promise of
13 compensation or gratuity willingly signed his or her true name and
14 that the information provided therewith is true and correct. I
15 further acknowledge that under chapter 29A.84 RCW, forgery of
16 signatures on this petition constitutes a class C felony, and that
17 offering any consideration or gratuity to any person to induce them
18 to sign a petition is a gross misdemeanor, such violations being
19 punishable by fine or imprisonment or both.

20 Signature
21 Date
22 Address
23 State of Washington
24 County

25 RCW 9A.46.020 applies to any conduct constituting harassment
26 against a petition signature gatherer. This penalty does not preclude
27 the victim from seeking any other remedy otherwise available under
28 law.

29 The petition must include a place for each petitioner to sign and
30 print his or her name, and the address, city, and county at which he
31 or she is registered to vote.

32 **Sec. 4.** RCW 29A.72.120 and 2005 c 239 s 2 are each amended to
33 read as follows:

34 Petitions for proposing measures for submission to the people for
35 their approval or rejection at the next ensuing general election must
36 be substantially in the following form:

37 The warning prescribed by RCW 29A.72.140; followed by:

INITIATIVE PETITION FOR SUBMISSION TO THE PEOPLE

To the Honorable, Secretary of State of the State of Washington:

We, the undersigned citizens and legal voters of the State of Washington, respectfully direct that the proposed measure known as Initiative Measure No., entitled (here insert the established ballot title of the measure), a full, true and correct copy of which is printed on the reverse side of this petition, be submitted to the legal voters of the State of Washington for their approval or rejection at the general election to be held on the day of November, (year); and each of us for himself or herself says: I have personally signed this petition; I am a legal voter of the State of Washington, in the city (or town) and county written after my name, my residence address is correctly stated, and I have knowingly signed this petition only once.

The following declaration must be printed on the reverse side of the petition:

I,, swear or affirm under penalty of ((law)) false swearing that I circulated this sheet of the foregoing petition, and that, to the best of my knowledge, every person who signed this sheet of the foregoing petition reviewed the sheet and knowingly and without any compensation or gratuity or promise of compensation or gratuity willingly signed his or her true name and that the information provided therewith is true and correct. I further acknowledge that under chapter 29A.84 RCW, forgery of signatures on this petition constitutes a class C felony, and that offering any consideration or gratuity to any person to induce them to sign a petition is a gross misdemeanor, such violations being punishable by fine or imprisonment or both.

Signature
Date
Address
State of Washington
County

RCW 9A.46.020 applies to any conduct constituting harassment against a petition signature gatherer. This penalty does not preclude the victim from seeking any other remedy otherwise available under law.

1 The petition must include a place for each petitioner to sign and
2 print his or her name, and the address, city, and county at which he
3 or she is registered to vote.

4 **Sec. 5.** RCW 29A.72.130 and 2013 c 11 s 74 are each amended to
5 read as follows:

6 Petitions ordering that acts or parts of acts passed by the
7 legislature be referred to the people at the next ensuing general
8 election, or special election ordered by the legislature, must be
9 substantially in the following form:

10 The warning prescribed by RCW 29A.72.140; followed by:

11 PETITION FOR REFERENDUM

12 To the Honorable, Secretary of State of the State of
13 Washington:

14 We, the undersigned citizens and legal voters of the State of
15 Washington, respectfully order and direct that Referendum Measure
16 No., filed to revoke a (or part or parts of a) bill that
17 (concise statement required by RCW 29A.72.050) and that was passed by
18 the legislature of the State of Washington at the last
19 regular (special) session of said legislature, shall be referred to
20 the people of the state for their approval or rejection at the
21 regular (special) election to be held on the day of November,
22 (year); and each of us for himself or herself says: I have personally
23 signed this petition; I am a legal voter of the State of Washington,
24 in the city (or town) and county written after my name, my residence
25 address is correctly stated, and I have knowingly signed this
26 petition only once.

27 The following declaration must be printed on the reverse side of
28 the petition:

29 I,, swear or affirm under penalty of
30 (~~law~~) false swearing that I circulated this sheet of the foregoing
31 petition, and that, to the best of my knowledge, every person who
32 signed this sheet of the foregoing petition reviewed the sheet and
33 knowingly and without any compensation or gratuity or promise of
34 compensation or gratuity willingly signed his or her true name and
35 that the information provided therewith is true and correct. I
36 further acknowledge that under chapter 29A.84 RCW, forgery of
37 signatures on this petition constitutes a class C felony, and that

1 offering any consideration or gratuity to any person to induce them
2 to sign a petition is a gross misdemeanor, such violations being
3 punishable by fine or imprisonment or both.

4 Signature
5 Date
6 Address
7 State of Washington
8 County

9 RCW 9A.46.020 applies to any conduct constituting harassment
10 against a petition signature gatherer. This penalty does not preclude
11 the victim from seeking any other remedy otherwise available under
12 law.

13 The petition must include a place for each petitioner to sign and
14 print his or her name, and the address, city, and county at which he
15 or she is registered to vote.

16 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 6.** A new section is added to chapter 29A.72
17 RCW to read as follows:

18 (1) (a) For purposes of verifying a signature on an initiative or
19 referendum petition, the secretary of state shall verify that the
20 residence address on the petition or paper is the same as the
21 residence address on the affidavit of voter registration. If the
22 addresses are different, or if the petition or paper does not specify
23 the residence address, or if the information required to be provided
24 under this chapter is not contained in the petition, the affected
25 signature shall not be counted as valid.

26 (b) Notwithstanding (a) of this subsection, the secretary of
27 state shall not invalidate a signature for minor discrepancies, such
28 as an incomplete or inaccurate apartment or unit number in the
29 signer's residence address.

30 (2) A signature invalidated pursuant to this section does not
31 affect the validity of another valid signature on the particular
32 petition or paper.

33 (3) The requirements of this section do not affect the use of
34 statistical sampling techniques for verifying signatures under RCW
35 29A.72.230. Address verification as part of statistical sampling is
36 sufficient to meet the requirements of this section.

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