
SUBSTITUTE SENATE BILL 5684

State of Washington

69th Legislature

2025 Regular Session

By Senate State Government, Tribal Affairs & Elections (originally sponsored by Senators Kauffman, Valdez, Hasegawa, and Nobles)

READ FIRST TIME 02/17/25.

1 AN ACT Relating to prohibitions on electioneering within
2 buildings containing the division of elections for county auditor
3 offices, including any adjacent county owned and operated parking
4 lots routinely used for parking at the buildings; amending RCW
5 29A.84.510; and creating a new section.

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

7 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature finds that every state,
8 including Washington, has some form of restriction on political
9 activities near polling places while voting is taking place. These
10 electioneering prohibitions near voting centers, ballot drop boxes,
11 and election offices create reasonable "buffer zones" and do not
12 significantly impinge on First Amendment rights. These prohibitions
13 are important tools to prevent intimidation and election fraud.

14 The legislature further finds that parking lots, which serve as
15 corridors for voters seeking to register to vote and cast a ballot,
16 are an extension of election offices and should not feature campaign
17 signs or placards encouraging voters to cast votes for or against a
18 candidate or ballot measure during the election period. This narrowly
19 tailored prohibition protects both First Amendment rights of
20 political campaigns and the right of voters to be free from any form
21 of intimidation or influence while they attempt to cast a ballot.

1 **Sec. 2.** RCW 29A.84.510 and 2022 c 69 s 3 are each amended to
2 read as follows:

3 (1) During the voting period that begins eighteen days before and
4 ends the day of a special election, general election, or primary, no
5 person may:

6 (a) Within a voting center or student engagement hub; or within
7 the building that contains the division of elections for a county
8 auditor's office, including any county owned and operated parking lot
9 adjacent to the building and routinely used for parking at that
10 building and any routes of access between the building and the
11 parking lot; or in any public street or room in any public manner
12 within 100 feet measured radially from the entrance to a voting
13 center or student engagement hub or 25 feet measured radially from a
14 ballot drop box as described in RCW 29A.40.170:

15 (i) Suggest or persuade or attempt to suggest or persuade any
16 voter to vote for or against any candidate or ballot measure;

17 (ii) Circulate cards or handbills of any kind;

18 (iii) Solicit signatures to any kind of petition; or

19 (iv) Engage in any practice which interferes with the freedom of
20 voters to exercise their franchise or disrupts the administration of
21 the voting center;

22 (b) Engage in any activities restricted under (a) of this
23 subsection through electronic amplification located more than 100
24 feet from an entrance to a voting center or student engagement hub or
25 25 feet from an entrance to a ballot drop box if the person is
26 capable of being understood within 100 feet of the voting center or
27 student engagement hub or 25 feet of the ballot drop box;

28 (c) Obstruct the doors or entries to a building in which a voting
29 center or ballot drop location is located or prevent free access to
30 and from any voting center or ballot drop location.

31 (2) The auditor shall post a sign at the point or points
32 specified at each voting center as required by RCW 29A.40.160 during
33 the voting period providing notice of the prohibition in subsection
34 (1)(a) of this section.

35 (3) Any sheriff, deputy sheriff, or municipal law enforcement
36 officer shall stop the prohibited activity, and may arrest any person
37 engaging in the prohibited activity.

38 (4) Any violation of this section is a gross misdemeanor,
39 punishable to the same extent as a gross misdemeanor that is

1 punishable under RCW 9A.20.021, and the person convicted may be
2 ordered to pay the costs of prosecution.

3 (5) Nothing in this section may be construed to limit or
4 otherwise restrict the access of an authorized political party
5 observer to a voting center, student engagement hub, or ballot drop
6 box for the purpose of observing the election process.

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