
HOUSE BILL 1430

State of Washington

55th Legislature

1997 Regular Session

By Representatives Fisher, Gardner and Talcott

Read first time 01/27/97. Referred to Committee on Government Administration.

1 AN ACT Relating to processing of absentee ballots; and amending RCW
2 29.36.060.

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

4 **Sec. 1.** RCW 29.36.060 and 1991 c 81 s 32 are each amended to read
5 as follows:

6 The opening and subsequent processing of return envelopes for any
7 primary or election may begin on or after the tenth day prior to such
8 primary or election. The opening of the security envelopes and
9 tabulation of absentee ballots shall not commence until after 8:00
10 o'clock p.m. on the day of the primary or election. If, prior to
11 opening the return envelope, the county auditor determines that the
12 voter, to whom the absentee ballot was issued, died prior to the day of
13 the election or primary for which the absentee ballot was issued, the
14 return envelope may not be opened and the absentee ballot may not be
15 counted.

16 After opening the return envelopes, the county canvassing board
17 shall place all of the ballot envelopes in containers that can be
18 secured with numbered seals. These sealed containers shall be stored
19 in a secure location until after 8:00 o'clock p.m. of the day of the

1 primary or election. Absentee ballots that are to be tabulated on an
2 electronic vote tallying system may be taken from the inner envelopes
3 and all the normal procedural steps may be performed to prepare these
4 ballots for tabulation before sealing the containers.

5 The canvassing board shall examine the postmark, statement, and
6 signature on each return envelope containing the security envelope and
7 absentee ballot. They shall verify that the voter's signature is the
8 same as that in the registration files for that voter. For absentee
9 voters other than out-of-state voters, overseas voters, and service
10 voters, if the postmark is illegible, the date on the return envelope
11 to which the voter attests shall determine the validity, as to the time
12 of voting, of that absentee ballot under this chapter. For any
13 absentee voter, a variation between the signature of the voter on the
14 return envelope and that in the registration files due to the
15 substitution of initials or the use of common nicknames is permitted so
16 long as the surname and handwriting are clearly the same.

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