CERTIFICATION OF ENROLLMENT

**ENGROSSED SECOND SUBSTITUTE HOUSE BILL 2595**

65th Legislature

2018 Regular Session

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| Passed by the House March 7, 2018Yeas 50 Nays 48**Speaker of the House of Representatives**Passed by the Senate March 6, 2018Yeas 27 Nays 21**President of the Senate** | CERTIFICATEI, Bernard Dean, Chief Clerk of the House of Representatives of the State of Washington, do hereby certify that the attached is **ENGROSSED SECOND SUBSTITUTE HOUSE BILL 2595** as passed by House of Representatives and the Senate on the dates hereon set forth.Chief Clerk |
| Approved  |  |
| **Governor of the State of Washington** | **Secretary of State** **State of Washington** |

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**ENGROSSED SECOND SUBSTITUTE HOUSE BILL 2595**

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AS AMENDED BY THE SENATE

Passed Legislature - 2018 Regular Session

**State of Washington 65th Legislature 2018 Regular Session**

**By** House Transportation (originally sponsored by Representatives Hudgins, Dolan, Appleton, Gregerson, Pellicciotti, Jinkins, Senn, Wylie, Peterson, Sawyer, Fitzgibbon, Valdez, Stanford, Pollet, Doglio, Goodman, Ormsby, Macri, Riccelli, Robinson, and Stonier; by request of Governor Inslee)

AN ACT Relating to increasing opportunities for citizens to participate in elections by streamlining procedures in order to automatically register citizens to vote; amending RCW 29A.08.110, 29A.08.350, 46.20.207, 29A.08.410, 29A.08.420, and 29A.08.720; adding new sections to chapter 29A.08 RCW; adding a new section to chapter 46.20 RCW; adding a new section to chapter 29A.04 RCW; creating new sections; and providing an effective date.

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

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  This act may be known and cited as the automatic voter registration act of 2018.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  (1) The legislature finds that:

(a) The right to vote is enshrined as one of the greatest virtues of our democracy and that an engaged citizenry is essential at each level of government to ensure that all voices are heard; and

(b) State and local governments should take every step possible to make it easier to vote in Washington state and ensure that fundamental values of a true democracy with full participation remains one of our most important functions. Providing additional opportunities for people to register to vote and helping them make their own choices about who represents them in this democracy and about important issues that are central to their lives and communities are essential to upholding these values.

(2) Therefore, the legislature intends to increase the opportunity to register to vote for persons qualified under Article VI of the Washington state Constitution by expanding the streamlined voter registration process that will increase opportunities for voter registration without placing new undue burdens on government agencies.

**PART I**

**Sec.**  RCW 29A.08.110 and 2009 c 369 s 10 are each amended to read as follows:

(1) For persons registering under RCW 29A.08.120, 29A.08.123, 29A.08.330, and 29A.08.340, an application is considered complete only if it contains the information required by RCW 29A.08.010. The applicant is considered to be registered to vote as of the original date of mailing or date of delivery, whichever is applicable. The auditor shall record the appropriate precinct identification, taxing district identification, and date of registration on the voter's record in the state voter registration list. Any mailing address provided shall be used only for mail delivery purposes, and not for precinct assignment or residency purposes. Within sixty days after the receipt of an application or transfer, the auditor shall send to the applicant, by first-class nonforwardable mail, an acknowledgment notice identifying the registrant's precinct and containing such other information as may be required by the secretary of state. The postal service shall be instructed not to forward a voter registration card to any other address and to return to the auditor any card which is not deliverable.

(2) If an application is not complete, the auditor shall promptly mail a verification notice to the applicant. The verification notice shall require the applicant to provide the missing information. If the applicant provides the required information within forty-five days, the applicant shall be registered to vote as of the original date of application. The applicant shall not be placed on the official list of registered voters until the application is complete.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  A new section is added to chapter 29A.08 RCW to read as follows:

The department of licensing shall implement an automatic voter registration system so that a person age eighteen years or older who meets requirements for voter registration and has received or is renewing an enhanced driver's license or identicard issued under RCW 46.20.202 or is changing the address for an existing enhanced driver's license or identicard pursuant to RCW 46.20.205 may be registered to vote or update voter registration information at the time of registration, renewal, or change of address, by automated process if the department of licensing record associated with the applicant contains the data required to determine whether the applicant meets requirements for voter registration under RCW 29A.08.010, other information as required by the secretary of state, and includes a signature image. The person must be informed that his or her record will be used for voter registration and offered an opportunity to decline to register.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  A new section is added to chapter 29A.08 RCW to read as follows:

(1) If the applicant in section 102 of this act does not decline registration, the application is submitted pursuant to RCW 29A.08.350.

(2) For each such application, the secretary of state must obtain a digital copy of the applicant's signature image from the department of licensing.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  A new section is added to chapter 29A.08 RCW to read as follows:

(1)(a) For persons age eighteen years and older registering under section 102 of this act, an application is considered complete only if it contains the information required by RCW 29A.08.010 and other information as required by the secretary of state. The applicant is considered to be registered to vote as of the original date of issuance or renewal or date of change of address of an enhanced driver's license or identicard issued under RCW 46.20.202 or change of address for an existing enhanced driver's license or identicard pursuant to RCW 46.20.205. The auditor shall record the appropriate precinct identification, taxing district identification, and date of registration on the voter's record in the state voter registration list. Any mailing address provided shall be used only for mail delivery purposes, and not for precinct assignment or residency purposes. Within sixty days after the receipt of an application or transfer, the auditor shall send to the applicant, by first-class nonforwardable mail, an acknowledgment notice identifying the registrant's precinct and containing such other information as may be required by the secretary of state. The United States postal service shall be instructed not to forward a voter registration card to any other address and to return to the auditor any card which is not deliverable.

(b) An auditor may use other means to communicate with potential and registered voters such as, but not limited to, email, phone, or text messaging. The alternate form of communication must not be in lieu of the first-class mail requirements. The auditor shall act in compliance with all voter notification processes established in federal law.

(2) If an application is not complete, the auditor shall promptly mail a verification notice to the applicant. The verification notice must require the applicant to provide the missing information. If the applicant provides the required information within forty-five days, the applicant must be registered to vote. The applicant must not be placed on the official list of registered voters until the application is complete.

(3) If the prospective registration applicant declines to register to vote or the information provided by the department of licensing does not indicate citizenship, the information must not be included on the list of registered voters.

(4) The department of licensing is prohibited from sharing data files used by the secretary of state to certify voters registered through the automated process outlined in section 102 of this act with any federal agency, or state agency other than the secretary of state. Personal information supplied for the purposes of obtaining a driver's license or identicard is exempt from public inspection pursuant to RCW 42.56.230.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  A new section is added to chapter 46.20 RCW to read as follows:

For persons eighteen years of age or older who meet requirements for voter registration, who have been issued or are renewing an enhanced driver's license or identicard under RCW 46.20.202 or applying for a change of address for an existing enhanced driver's license or identicard pursuant to RCW 46.20.205, and have not declined to register to vote, the department shall produce and transmit to the secretary of state the following information from the records of each individual: The name, address, date of birth, gender of the applicant, the driver's license number, signature image, and the date on which the application was submitted. The department and the secretary of state shall process information as an automated application on a daily basis.

**Sec.**  RCW 29A.08.350 and 2013 c 11 s 18 are each amended to read as follows:

The department of licensing shall produce and transmit to the secretary of state the following information from the records of each individual who requested a voter registration or update at a driver's license facility: The name, address, date of birth, gender of the applicant, the driver's license number, signature image, and the date on which the application for voter registration or update was submitted. The secretary of state shall process the registrations and updates as an electronic application.

**Sec.**  RCW 46.20.207 and 1993 c 501 s 3 are each amended to read as follows:

(1) The department is authorized to cancel any driver's license upon determining that the licensee was not entitled to the issuance of the license, or that the licensee failed to give the required or correct information in his or her application, or that the licensee is incompetent to drive a motor vehicle for any of the reasons under RCW 46.20.031 (4) and (7).

(2) Upon such cancellation, the licensee must surrender the license so canceled to the department.

(3) Upon the cancellation of an enhanced driver's license or identicard for failure of the licensee to give correct information, if such information had been transferred to the secretary of state for purposes of voter registration, the department must immediately notify the office of the secretary of state, and the county auditor of the county of the licensee's address of record, of the cancellation of the license or identicard and identify the incorrect information.

**PART II**

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  A new section is added to chapter 29A.04 RCW to read as follows:

(1) Beginning July 1, 2019, the health benefit exchange shall provide the following information to the secretary of state's office for consenting Washington healthplanfinder applicants who affirmatively indicate that they are interested in registering to vote, including applicants who file changes of address, who reside in Washington, are age eighteen years or older, and are verified citizens, for voter registration purposes:

(a) Names;

(b) Traditional or nontraditional residential addresses;

(c) Mailing addresses, if different from the traditional or nontraditional residential address; and

(d) Dates of birth.

(2) The health benefit exchange shall consult with the secretary of state's office to ensure that sufficient information is provided to allow the secretary of state to obtain a digital copy of the person's signature when available from the department of licensing and establish other criteria and procedures that are secure and compliant with federal and state voter registration and privacy laws and rules.

(3) If applicable, the health benefit exchange shall report any known barriers or impediments to implementation of this section to the appropriate committees of the legislature and the governor no later than December 1, 2018.

(4) If the health benefit exchange determines, in consultation with the health care authority, that implementation of this act requires changes subject to approval from the centers for medicare and medicaid services, participation of the health benefit exchange is contingent on receiving that approval.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  A new section is added to chapter 29A.08 RCW to read as follows:

(1) The governor shall make a decision, in consultation with the office of the secretary of state, as to whether each agency identified in subsection (3) of this section shall implement automatic voter registration. The final decision is at the governor's sole discretion.

(2)(a) Each agency identified in subsection (3) of this section shall submit a report to the governor and appropriate legislative committees no later than December 1, 2018, describing:

(i) Steps needed to implement automatic voter registration under this act by July 1, 2019;

(ii) Barriers to implementation, including ways to mitigate those barriers; and

(iii) Applicable federal and state privacy protections for voter registration information.

(b) In preparing the report required under this subsection, the agency may consult with the secretary of state's office to determine automatic voter registration criteria and procedures.

(3) This section applies to state agencies, other than the health benefit exchange, providing public assistance or services to persons with disabilities, designated pursuant to RCW 29A.08.310(1), that collect, process, and store the following information as part of providing assistance or services:

(a) Names;

(b) Traditional or nontraditional residential addresses;

(c) Dates of birth;

(d) A signature attesting to the truth of the information provided on the application for assistance or services; and

(e) Verification of citizenship information, via social security administration data match or manually verified by the agency during the client transaction.

(4) Once an agency has implemented automatic voter registration, it shall continue to provide automatic voter registration unless legislation is enacted that directs the agency to do otherwise.

(5) Agencies may not begin verifying citizenship as part of an agency transaction for the sole purpose of providing automatic voter registration.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  A new section is added to chapter 29A.08 RCW to read as follows:

(1) If a person who is ineligible to vote becomes, in the rare occasion, registered to vote under section 102 or 201 of this act in the absence of a knowing violation by that person of RCW 29A.84.140, that person shall be deemed to have performed an authorized act of registration and such act may not be considered as evidence of a claim to citizenship.

(2) Unless a person willfully and knowingly votes or attempts to vote knowing that he or she is not entitled to vote, a person who is ineligible to vote and becomes registered to vote under section 102 or 201 of this act, and subsequently votes or attempts to vote in an election held after the effective date of the person's registration, is not guilty of violating RCW 29A.84.130, and shall be deemed to have performed an authorized act, and such act may not be considered as evidence of a claim to citizenship.

(3) A person who is ineligible to vote, who successfully completes the voter registration process under section 102 or 201 of this act or votes in an election, must have their voter registration, or record of vote, removed from the voter registration database and any other application records.

(4) Should an ineligible individual become registered to vote, the office of the secretary of state and the relevant agency shall jointly determine the cause.

**Sec.**  RCW 29A.08.410 and 2009 c 369 s 22 are each amended to read as follows:

A registered voter who changes his or her residence from one address to another within the same county may transfer his or her registration to the new address in one of the following ways:

(1) Sending the county auditor a request stating both the voter's present address and the address from which the voter was last registered;

(2) Appearing in person before the county auditor and making such a request;

(3) Telephoning or emailing the county auditor to transfer the registration; ((~~or~~))

(4) Submitting a voter registration application;

(5) Submitting information to the department of licensing;

(6) Submitting information to the health benefit exchange; or

(7) Submitting information to an agency designated under section 202 of this act once automatic voter registration is implemented at the agency.

**Sec.**  RCW 29A.08.420 and 2009 c 369 s 23 are each amended to read as follows:

A registered voter who changes his or her residence from one county to another county must do so by submitting a voter registration form or by submitting information to the department of licensing, the health benefit exchange, or an agency designated under section 202 of this act once automatic voter registration is implemented at the agency. The county auditor of the voter's new county shall transfer the voter's registration from the county of the previous registration.

**Sec.**  RCW 29A.08.720 and 2011 c 10 s 18 are each amended to read as follows:

(1) In the case of voter registration records received through the health benefit exchange, the department of licensing, or an agency designated under RCW 29A.08.310, the identity of the office or agency at which any particular individual registered to vote must be used only for voter registration purposes, is not available for public inspection, and shall not be disclosed to the public. Any record of a particular individual's choice not to register to vote at an office of the department of licensing or a state agency designated under RCW 29A.08.310 is not available for public inspection and any information regarding such a choice by a particular individual shall not be disclosed to the public.

(2) Subject to the restrictions of RCW 29A.08.710 and 40.24.060, precinct lists and current lists of registered voters are public records and must be made available for public inspection and copying under such reasonable rules and regulations as the county auditor or secretary of state may prescribe. The county auditor or secretary of state shall promptly furnish current lists of registered voters in his or her possession, at actual reproduction cost, to any person requesting such information. The lists shall not be used for the purpose of mailing or delivering any advertisement or offer for any property, establishment, organization, product, or service or for the purpose of mailing or delivering any solicitation for money, services, or anything of value. However, the lists and labels may be used for any political purpose. The county auditor or secretary of state must provide a copy of RCW 29A.08.740 to the person requesting the material that is released under this section.

(3) For the purposes of this section, "political purpose" means a purpose concerned with the support of or opposition to any candidate for any partisan or nonpartisan office or concerned with the support of or opposition to any ballot proposition or issue. "Political purpose" includes, but is not limited to, such activities as the advertising for or against any candidate or ballot measure or the solicitation of financial support.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  A new section is added to chapter 29A.08 RCW to read as follows:

The office of the secretary of state may adopt rules to implement automatic voter registration under this act.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  Sections 101 through 107 of this act take effect July 1, 2019.

**--- END ---**