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HOUSE BILL 1846

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State of Washington

55th Legislature

1997 Regular Session

By Representatives Smith, Koster, Talcott, Sump, Lambert, Buck, Thompson, Mielke, Crouse, Bush, Hankins, McMorris, Chandler, Radcliff, Parlette, B. Thomas and Sheahan

Read first time 02/11/97. Referred to Committee on Government Administration.

1 AN ACT Relating to periodically maintaining voter registration  
2 lists; amending RCW 29.10.090 and 29.10.180; and creating a new  
3 section.

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

5 **Sec. 1.** RCW 29.10.090 and 1994 c 57 s 41 are each amended to read  
6 as follows:

7 ~~((The local registrar of vital statistics in cities of the first  
8 class shall submit monthly to the county auditor a list of the names  
9 and addresses, if known, of all persons over eighteen years of age who  
10 have died.))~~

11 Every month, the registrar of vital statistics of the state shall  
12 prepare a separate list of persons who resided in each county, for whom  
13 a death certificate was transmitted to the registrar and was not  
14 included on a previous list, and shall supply ((such monthly lists for  
15 each county of the state, exclusive of cities of the first class,)) the  
16 appropriate list to the county auditor ((thereof)) of each county.

17 The county auditors shall compare such lists with the registration  
18 records and cancel the registrations of deceased voters. The county  
19 auditor may also use newspaper obituary articles as a source of

1 information in order to cancel a voter's registration. The auditor  
2 must verify the identity of the voter by matching the voter's date of  
3 birth or an address. The auditor shall record the date and source of  
4 the obituary in the cancellation records.

5 In addition to the above manner of canceling registration records  
6 of deceased voters, any registered voter may sign a statement, subject  
7 to the penalties of perjury, to the effect that to his or her personal  
8 knowledge or belief another registered voter is deceased. This  
9 statement may be filed with the county auditor. Upon the receipt of  
10 such signed statement, the county auditor shall cancel the registration  
11 records concerned and so notify the secretary of state. Upon receipt  
12 of such notice, the secretary of state shall in turn cancel his or her  
13 copy of said registration record.

14 The secretary of state as chief elections officer shall cause such  
15 form to be designed to carry out the provisions of this section. The  
16 county auditors shall have such forms available for public use.  
17 Further, each such public officer having jurisdiction of an election  
18 shall make available a reasonable supply of such forms for the use of  
19 the precinct election officers at each polling place on the day of an  
20 election.

21 **Sec. 2.** RCW 29.10.180 and 1994 c 57 s 44 are each amended to read  
22 as follows:

23 In addition to the case-by-case maintenance required under RCW  
24 29.10.071 and 29.10.075 and the canceling registrations under RCW  
25 29.10.090, the county auditor shall establish a general program of  
26 voter registration list maintenance that is periodically performed.  
27 This program must be applied uniformly throughout the county and must  
28 be nondiscriminatory in its application. Any program established must  
29 be completed not later than ninety days before the date of a primary or  
30 general election for federal office. The county may fulfill its  
31 obligations under this section in one of the following ways:

32 (1) The county auditor may enter into one or more contracts with  
33 the United States postal service, or its licensee, which permit the  
34 auditor to use postal service change-of-address information. If the  
35 auditor receives change of address information from the United States  
36 postal service that indicates that a voter has changed his or her  
37 residence address within the county, the auditor shall transfer the  
38 registration of that voter and send an acknowledgement notice of the

1 transfer to the new address. If the auditor receives postal change of  
2 address information indicating that the voter has moved out of the  
3 county, the auditor shall send a confirmation notice to the voter, send  
4 the voter a registration-by-mail form at the voter's new address, and  
5 advise the voter of the need to reregister in the new county. The  
6 auditor shall place the voter's registration on inactive status;

7 (2) A direct, nonforwardable, first-class, return if undeliverable,  
8 address correction requested, mailing to every registered voter within  
9 the county. If address correction information for a voter is received  
10 by the county auditor after this mailing, the auditor shall place that  
11 voter on inactive status and shall send to the voter a confirmation  
12 notice;

13 (3) Any other method approved by the secretary of state.

14 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** On or before May 1, 2000, each county auditor  
15 shall perform a thorough review of the county's voter registration list  
16 as part of its periodic maintenance of this list under the provisions  
17 of RCW 29.10.180.

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