

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5634

As of February 8, 2001

Title: An act relating to initiative or referendum petition signature solicitors.

Brief Description: Regulating initiative and referendum signature solicitors.

Sponsors: Senators Regala, Patterson, Swecker, Rasmussen, McAuliffe and Kohl-Welles.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: State & Local Government: 2/1/01.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON STATE & LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Staff: Aaron Jennings (786-7445)

Background: It is a gross misdemeanor to undertake certain acts in relation to signing or soliciting signatures for initiative or referendum petitions. A person cannot accept consideration for signing or declining to sign a petition or to vote, or decline to vote for a referendum or initiative. Paid petition signature gathers cannot receive compensation based on the amount of signatures solicited or procured. A person cannot interfere with the right of a voter to sign petitions. A person cannot receive, handle, distribute, etc. funds from any out-of-state person, corporation, or association for the purpose of aiding signature gathering, or aiding the rejection or adoption of an initiative or referendum.

Summary of Bill: Signature gatherers must be state residents, 18 years of age and wear a badge when soliciting signatures that state whether the gatherer is a paid signature gatherer or an unpaid volunteer. Further, the signature gatherer must execute an affidavit that states the signature gatherer's name and residence and includes a statement that the gatherer has read and understands the laws relating to initiative and referendum signature petitions. The affidavit must be affixed on each signature petition when gathering signatures and when the petition is submitted to the Secretary of State. Failure of a signature gather to comply with any of the provisions is a gross misdemeanor.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.