

SENATE BILL REPORT

SHB 2435

As Reported by Senate Committee On:
Government Operations & Security, February 25, 2016

Title: An act relating to enhancing election reconciliation reports.

Brief Description: Enhancing election reconciliation reports.

Sponsors: House Committee on General Government & Information Technology (originally sponsored by Representatives Hudgins, S. Hunt, Tarleton, Stanford, McBride and Bergquist).

Brief History: Passed House: 2/17/16, 98-0.

Committee Activity: Government Operations & Security: 2/25/16, 2/25/16 [DP].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS & SECURITY

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Roach, Chair; Pearson, Vice Chair; Dansel, Habib, McCoy and Takko.

Staff: Samuel Brown (786-7470)

Background: Each county auditor conducts all general and elections within the county and is responsible for processing ballots. The county canvassing board canvasses the ballot returns and certifies election results. The results must be certified 14 days after a primary or special election and 21 days after a general election.

An election reconciliation report must be prepared by the county auditor and submitted at the time of the election certification. The report must be available on the auditor's website and include the following information:

- the number of registered voters;
- the number of ballots issued, received, counted, and rejected, including provisional, federal write-in, and overseas ballots; and
- the number of voters credited with voting.

Summary of Bill: Each county auditor must submit election reconciliation reports to the Secretary of State in the form requested by the Secretary of State. The Secretary of State must collect all county reconciliation reports.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

The Secretary of State must prepare a statewide reconciliation report for each primary or general election within two months after the last county's election results are certified. The statewide report may be in the form designated by the Secretary of State and must be published on the Secretary of State's website.

The statewide report must compare rates of votes received, counted, and rejected for all ballots, including provisional, write-in, and overseas ballots, among all counties. The comparison data may be organized to measure performance, such as by rankings or percentages.

The statewide report also must analyze the data to gain a better understanding of election administration and policy. The analysis should combine dates over multiple years to provide broader comparisons and reveal trends in voter registration, turnout, and ballot counting. National election statistics should be incorporated into the report to the extent available.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: Yes.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: Our office already does some analysis. This would require more, but we are in favor of that, because we can do more with additional information. Amendments have cut down the fiscal note.

Persons Testifying: PRO: David Elliott, Office of the Secretary of State.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: No one.