AN ACT Relating to equalizing access to permanent ballot drop boxes; and adding a new section to chapter 29A.40 RCW.

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

NEW SECTION. Sec. 1. A new section is added to chapter 29A.40 RCW to read as follows:

(1) Whereas more than half of the state's counties provide at least one permanent ballot drop box for every fifteen thousand county residents, the legislature intends to standardize this practice across counties. Therefore, by November 1, 2017, the county auditor of each county must ensure that a minimum of one permanent ballot drop box for every fifteen thousand county residents is available for the secure deposit of paper ballots. The auditor may round down to the nearest fifteen thousand county residents when determining the number of drop boxes needed.

(2) The county auditor may determine, in consultation with the advisory committee established under RCW 29A.04.223(2), the location of each ballot drop box within the county in order to maximize accessibility for all county residents.

(3) County officials are encouraged to purchase permanent ballot drop boxes produced or provided in whole or in part from class II
inmate work programs operated by the department of corrections as identified in chapter 72.60 RCW.

(4) Permanent ballot drop boxes must comply with all applicable state and federal requirements as adopted in rule by the secretary of state.

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