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**HOUSE BILL 1545**

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**State of Washington**

**66th Legislature**

**2019 Regular Session**

**By** Representatives Mead, Hudgins, Morgan, Ramos, Gregerson, Wylie, Appleton, Bergquist, Doglio, Jenkins, and Pollet

Read first time 01/24/19. Referred to Committee on State Government & Tribal Relations.

1 AN ACT Relating to curing ballots to assure that votes are  
2 counted; and amending RCW 29A.60.165.

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

4 **Sec. 1.** RCW 29A.60.165 and 2013 c 11 s 63 are each amended to  
5 read as follows:

6 (1) If the voter neglects to sign the ballot declaration, the  
7 auditor shall notify the voter by first-class mail and advise the  
8 voter of the correct procedures for completing the unsigned  
9 declaration. If the ballot is received within three business days of  
10 the final meeting of the canvassing board, or the voter has been  
11 notified by first-class mail and has not responded at least three  
12 business days before the final meeting of the canvassing board, then  
13 the auditor shall attempt to notify the voter by telephone, using the  
14 voter registration record information.

15 (2)(a) If the handwriting of the signature on a ballot  
16 declaration is not the same as the handwriting of the signature on  
17 the registration file, the auditor shall notify the voter by first-  
18 class mail, enclosing a copy of the declaration, and advise the voter  
19 of the correct procedures for updating his or her signature on the  
20 voter registration file. If the ballot is received within three  
21 business days of the final meeting of the canvassing board, or the

1 voter has been notified by first-class mail and has not responded at  
2 least three business days before the final meeting of the canvassing  
3 board, then the auditor shall attempt to notify the voter by  
4 telephone, using the voter registration record information.

5 (b) If the signature on a ballot declaration is not the same as  
6 the signature on the registration file because the name is different,  
7 the ballot may be counted as long as the handwriting is clearly the  
8 same. The auditor shall send the voter a change-of-name form under  
9 RCW 29A.08.440 and direct the voter to complete the form.

10 (c) If the signature on a ballot declaration is not the same as  
11 the signature on the registration file because the voter used  
12 initials or a common nickname, the ballot may be counted as long as  
13 the surname and handwriting are clearly the same.

14 (3) A voter may not cure a missing or mismatched signature for  
15 purposes of counting the ballot in a recount.

16 (4) A record must be kept of all ballots with missing and  
17 mismatched signatures. The record must contain the date on which the  
18 voter was contacted or the notice was mailed, as well as the date on  
19 which the voter submitted updated information. The record must be  
20 updated each day that ballots are processed under RCW 29A.60.160,  
21 each time a voter was contacted or the notice was mailed, and when  
22 the voter submitted updated information. That record is a public  
23 record under chapter 42.56 RCW and (~~may~~) must be disclosed (~~to~~  
24 ~~interested parties on written request~~) no later than forty-eight  
25 hours after an update is made.

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