
SENATE BILL 5140

State of Washington

64th Legislature

2015 Regular Session

By Senators Billig, Miloscia, Lias, Rolfes, Cleveland, Darneille, Habib, Keiser, Conway, Jayapal, Chase, Mullet, Pedersen, and Hasegawa

Read first time 01/14/15. Referred to Committee on Government Operations & State Security.

1 AN ACT Relating to motor voter preregistration for sixteen and
2 seventeen year olds; amending RCW 46.20.155, 29A.08.710, and
3 42.56.250; creating new sections; and providing a contingent
4 effective date.

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

6 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature is committed to granting
7 equal access to voter registration for all voters. The legislature
8 recognizes the importance of fostering lifelong civic participation.
9 Currently, many young people are denied access to the most popular
10 form of voter registration, motor voter. More than forty percent of
11 new voters are registered through motor voter, but this easy and
12 popular form of voter registration is not available to young people
13 if they obtained their driver's license at the age of sixteen or
14 seventeen. Denial of motor voter to so many young voters has
15 contributed to lower voter registration levels in the youngest voter
16 age groups. In Washington, according to the United States census
17 bureau, only 50.8 percent of eligible citizens between the ages of
18 eighteen and twenty-four are registered to vote, compared to sixty-
19 eight to eighty percent for other age groups. Studies show that young
20 adults who vote are likely to continue to do so throughout adulthood.
21 The legislature recognizes that these representational disparities in

1 registration rates and voting rates within the youth electorate will
2 improve by enacting election policies that engage all young citizens.
3 Therefore, the legislature declares that this act, allowing eligible
4 youth at least sixteen years of age to preregister to vote, is
5 intended to increase voter turnout in young adults.

6 **Sec. 2.** RCW 46.20.155 and 2013 c 11 s 90 are each amended to
7 read as follows:

8 (1) Before issuing an original license or identicard or renewing
9 a license or identicard under this chapter, the licensing agent shall
10 determine if the applicant wants to preregister or register to vote
11 or update his or her voter registration by asking the following
12 question:

13 "Do you want to preregister or register to vote or update your
14 voter registration?"

15 If the applicant chooses to preregister, register, or update a
16 registration, the agent shall ask the following:

17 (1) "Are you a United States citizen?"

18 (2) "Are you (~~or will you be eighteen~~) at least sixteen years
19 of age (~~on or before the next election~~)?"

20 If the applicant answers in the affirmative to both questions,
21 the agent shall then submit the preregistration, registration, or
22 update. If the applicant answers in the negative to either question,
23 the agent shall not submit (~~a voter registration~~) an application.
24 Information provided for preregistration under this section is exempt
25 from public inspection and copying pursuant to RCW 42.56.250.

26 (2) The department shall establish a procedure that substantially
27 meets the requirements of subsection (1) of this section when
28 permitting an applicant to renew a license or identicard by mail or
29 by electronic commerce.

30 **Sec. 3.** RCW 29A.08.710 and 2005 c 246 s 17 are each amended to
31 read as follows:

32 (1) The county auditor shall have custody of the original voter
33 registration records for each county. The original voter registration
34 form must be filed without regard to precinct and is considered
35 confidential and unavailable for public inspection and copying. An
36 automated file of all registered voters must be maintained pursuant

1 to RCW 29A.08.125. An auditor may maintain the automated file in lieu
2 of filing or maintaining the original voter registration forms if the
3 automated file includes all of the information from the original
4 voter registration forms including, but not limited to, a retrievable
5 facsimile of each voter's signature.

6 (2) The following information contained in voter registration
7 records or files regarding a voter or a group of voters is available
8 for public inspection and copying, except as provided in RCW
9 40.24.060: The voter's name, address, political jurisdiction, gender,
10 date of birth, voting record, date of registration, and registration
11 number. The information contained in voter preregistration
12 applications under RCW 46.20.155 is exempt from public inspection and
13 copying. No other information from voter registration records or
14 files is available for public inspection or copying.

15 **Sec. 4.** RCW 42.56.250 and 2014 c 106 s 1 are each amended to
16 read as follows:

17 The following employment and licensing information is exempt from
18 public inspection and copying under this chapter:

19 (1) Test questions, scoring keys, and other examination data used
20 to administer a license, employment, or academic examination;

21 (2) All applications for public employment, including the names
22 of applicants, resumes, and other related materials submitted with
23 respect to an applicant;

24 (3) The following information held by any public agency in
25 personnel records, public employment related records, volunteer
26 rosters, or included in any mailing list of employees or volunteers
27 of any public agency: Residential addresses, residential telephone
28 numbers, personal wireless telephone numbers, personal electronic
29 mail addresses, social security numbers, driver's license numbers,
30 identicard numbers, and emergency contact information of employees or
31 volunteers of a public agency, and the names, dates of birth,
32 residential addresses, residential telephone numbers, personal
33 wireless telephone numbers, personal electronic mail addresses,
34 social security numbers, and emergency contact information of
35 dependents of employees or volunteers of a public agency. For
36 purposes of this subsection, "employees" includes independent
37 provider home care workers as defined in RCW 74.39A.240;

38 (4) Information that identifies a person who, while an agency
39 employee: (a) Seeks advice, under an informal process established by

1 the employing agency, in order to ascertain his or her rights in
2 connection with a possible unfair practice under chapter 49.60 RCW
3 against the person; and (b) requests his or her identity or any
4 identifying information not be disclosed;

5 (5) Investigative records compiled by an employing agency
6 conducting an active and ongoing investigation of a possible unfair
7 practice under chapter 49.60 RCW or of a possible violation of other
8 federal, state, or local laws prohibiting discrimination in
9 employment;

10 (6) Criminal history records checks for board staff finalist
11 candidates conducted pursuant to RCW 43.33A.025;

12 (~~(7) ((Except as provided in RCW 47.64.220, salary and benefit~~
13 ~~information for maritime employees collected from private employers~~
14 ~~under RCW 47.64.220(1) and described in RCW 47.64.220(2))~~)
15 Information contained in voter preregistration records under RCW
16 46.20.155; and

17 (8) Photographs and month and year of birth in the personnel
18 files of employees and workers of criminal justice agencies as
19 defined in RCW 10.97.030. The news media, as defined in RCW
20 5.68.010(5), shall have access to the photographs and full date of
21 birth. For the purposes of this subsection, news media does not
22 include any person or organization of persons in the custody of a
23 criminal justice agency as defined in RCW 10.97.030.

24 NEW SECTION. Sec. 5. This act may be known and cited as the
25 young voter registration equality act.

26 NEW SECTION. Sec. 6. This act takes effect upon implementation
27 of uniform voter registration software in the state of Washington and
28 a majority of counties. The secretary of state must provide notice of
29 the effective date of this act to affected parties, the chief clerk
30 of the house of representatives, the secretary of the senate, the
31 office of the code reviser, and others as deemed appropriate by the
32 secretary of state.

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