

# FINAL BILL REPORT

## ESB 6313

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Synopsis as Enacted

**Brief Description:** Increasing opportunities for young voters.

**Sponsors:** Senators Liias, Kuderer, Hunt, Randall, Mullet, Keiser, Billig, Saldaña, Darneille, Hasegawa, Takko, Rolfes, McCoy, Stanford, Das, Dhingra, Lovelett, Nguyen and Wilson, C.

**Senate Committee on State Government, Tribal Relations & Elections**  
**House Committee on State Government & Tribal Relations**  
**House Committee on Appropriations**

**Background:** Registering to Vote. Persons who are age 18 or older and who are United States citizens that have lived in the state, county, and precinct for 30 days immediately preceding an election are entitled to vote. The National Voter Registration Act requires states to provide the opportunity to register to vote for federal elections.

Washington adopted the Motor Voter Act, requiring the Department of Licensing (DOL) to provide voter registration services. Before issuing an original license, identification card, or license renewal, the licensing agent must determine if the applicant wants to register to vote or transfer an existing voter registration. If so, the agent provides the applicant with a voter registration form with instructions, and records the applicant's request to register to vote. In addition to DOL, the following agencies and programs offer voter registration:

- the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) Community Services Division;
- the DSHS Aging and Long-Term Support Administration;
- the DSHS Division of Vocational Rehabilitation;
- the DSHS Developmental Disabilities Administration;
- the DSHS Aging and Disabilities Service Administration;
- the Department of Services for the Blind;
- the Health Care Authority; and
- the Health Benefits Exchange (HBE).

Automatic Voter Registration. In 2018, the Legislature passed E2SHB 2595, which provides for an automatic voter registration process at two state agencies. At DOL, an applicant for an enhanced driver's license or identicard, or for a change of address on an existing enhanced driver's license or identicard, is automatically registered to vote or update an existing registration if the applicant is over 18 years of age and United States citizenship is verified unless the applicant opts not to register. HBE transmits the name, address, and date of birth of each consenting applicant who is a citizen and at least 18 years old to the Secretary of

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*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.*

State (SOS) for the purpose of the applicant being registered to vote. The Governor and SOS may require other agencies to provide automatic voter registration.

Sign-up to Register to Vote. In 2018, the Legislature also passed 2SHB 1513, which allows certain minors to sign up to register to vote. A person who is at least 16 years of age and who meets all other voter registration requirements may register to vote electronically, or at any location where voter registration is permitted, but is not added to the state voter list until such time as the person will be 18 years of age by the next election.

**Summary:** Eligibility to Vote in Primary Elections. A person may vote in a primary election if they are 17 years old, but will be 18 by the general election. Conforming amendments are made to the voter registration application and prompts for voter registration at state agencies. Candidates for precinct committee officer must be 18 years old by the date of the election for precinct committee officer.

Automatic Sign-up to Register to Vote. DOL must provide an automated process for 16 and 17 year olds to sign up to register to vote when receiving or renewing an enhanced driver's license or identicaid or changing the address on an existing enhanced driver's license or identicaid. Applicants must meet the requirements for voter registration, other than age, and the DOL record must include a signature image. A person automatically signing up to register to vote is not added to the statewide voter registration database until such time as the person is eligible to vote in the next election.

Student Engagement Hubs. Each public university must open a nonpartisan student engagement hub which allows students to download exact copies of their ballot. Upon request of the student government, the student engagement hub at a public four-year university must allow voters to register in person and provide ballots and voter registration materials. Student engagement hubs may be open during business hours in the eight days before an election, and up to 8 p.m. on election night. Each university must contract with the county auditor for the operation of student engagement hubs. State and local voters' pamphlets must list the location of student engagement hubs. SOS may provide grants to county auditors to implement student engagement hubs, subject to appropriations.

Other Provisions. The Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, in collaboration with the Association of County Auditors and a 501(c)(3) nonprofit engaged in voter outreach and increasing participation, must identify and make available civics materials for high school courses.

**Votes on Final Passage:**

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|--------|----|----|--------------------|
| Senate | 28 | 19 |                    |
| House  | 56 | 41 | (House amended)    |
| Senate | 27 | 21 | (Senate concurred) |

**Effective:** June 11, 2020  
January 1, 2022 (Sections 3, 5, 6, and 13 through 17)  
September 1, 2023 (Sections 7, 8, 18, 20, and 21)