
Labor & Workplace Standards Committee

SSB 6060

Brief Description: Concerning the acceptance of electronic signatures by the public employment relations commission for new organizing petitions.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Labor & Commerce (originally sponsored by Senators Nguyen, Hasegawa, Keiser, Saldaña, Stanford, Valdez and Wilson, C.).

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Requires the Public Employment Relations Commission to accept electronic signatures for new organization petitions to form a new bargaining unit of unrepresented workers or to add unrepresented workers to an existing bargaining unit.

Hearing Date: 2/14/24

Staff: Trudes Tango (786-7384).

Background:

Under state collective bargaining laws, employees may select, change, or remove a labor organization as their exclusive bargaining representative for collective bargaining. To initiate a representation proceeding, the petitioner must submit to the Public Employment Relations Commission (PERC) showing of interest cards demonstrating that a certain percentage of the employees in the bargaining unit support the petition. Showing of interest cards must be signed by employees.

If there is sufficient showing of interest, the PERC will conduct either a mail ballot election or a card check, also known as a cross-check. A card check requires the PERC to compare the

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

employee's signature on the showing of interest card against the employee's signature on employer-held documents. If the signature matches, the employee who signed the showing of interest card is considered to be in support of the petition. The PERC rules allow employees to withdraw their showing of interest card for the purposes of a card check.

Summary of Bill:

The PERC must accept electronic signatures for any new organization petitions to form a new bargaining unit of currently unrepresented workers or to add unrepresented workers to an existing bargaining unit. The PERC must accept electronic signatures subject to rules adopted by the PERC, regardless of whether the election is by mail ballot or cross-check.

At a minimum, electronic signature submissions must include the:

- signer's name;
- signer's phone number, email address, or social media account;
- exact authorization language to which the signer assents;
- date of submission of the electronic signature; and
- name of the signer's employer.

The petitioning party must provide a declaration that:

- identifies the technology used to obtain and verify the signature;
- provides the methods used to ensure the authenticity of the signature; and
- confirms the information transmitted to the signer was the same information to which the signer assented.

A provision in the Public Employee's Collective Bargaining Act requiring the PERC to determine the bargaining representative by comparing signatures on authorization cards for cross-check is removed.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.