
SENATE BILL 6325

State of Washington 52nd Legislature 1992 Regular Session

By Senators Madsen, Vognild, McMullen, McCaslin and Rasmussen

Read first time 01/27/92. Referred to Committee on Governmental Operations.

1 AN ACT Relating to solicitation of signatures on initiative and
2 referendum petitions; amending RCW 29.79.490; adding a new section to
3 chapter 29.79 RCW; creating a new section; prescribing penalties; and
4 declaring an emergency.

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

6 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature recognizes that
7 soliciting signatures on an initiative or referendum petition is a
8 constitutionally protected activity and that paying a salary to an
9 individual for soliciting petition signatures may not be prohibited.
10 However, the legislature declares that there is a strong state interest
11 in assuring that there is no fraud practiced in obtaining signatures on
12 initiative and referendum petitions and that compensation paid and
13 received for soliciting petition signatures that is based in whole or

1 in part on the number of signatures collected creates an incentive to
2 misrepresent the content or purpose of the petition.

3 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 29.79 RCW
4 to read as follows:

5 Paying or receiving compensation for soliciting signatures on an
6 initiative or referendum petition is a gross misdemeanor punishable
7 under chapter 9A.20 RCW if any of that compensation is based on the
8 number of signatures collected in the course of or as a result of that
9 solicitation.

10 **Sec. 3.** RCW 29.79.490 and 1975-'76 2nd ex.s. c 112 s 2 are each
11 amended to read as follows:

12 Every person (~~(shall be)~~) is guilty of a gross misdemeanor who:

13 (1) For any consideration or gratuity or promise thereof, signs or
14 declines to sign any initiative or referendum petition; or

15 (2) (~~(Advertises in any manner that for or without consideration,~~
16 ~~he will solicit or procure signatures upon or influence or attempt to~~
17 ~~influence persons to sign or not to sign, to vote or not to vote upon~~
18 ~~an initiative or referendum petition, or to vote for or against any~~
19 ~~initiative or referendum; or~~

20 ~~(3) For any consideration or gratuity or promise thereof solicits~~
21 ~~or procures signatures upon an initiative or referendum petition; or~~

22 ~~(4))~~ Gives or offers any consideration or gratuity to any person
23 to induce him to sign or not to sign(~~(, or to solicit or procure~~
24 ~~signatures upon an initiative or referendum petition,)) or to vote for
25 or against any initiative or referendum measure; or~~

26 (~~(+5))~~ (3) Interferes with or attempts to interfere with the right
27 of any voter to sign or not to sign an initiative or referendum
28 petition or with the right to vote for or against an initiative or

1 referendum measure by threats, intimidation, or any other corrupt means
2 or practice(~~(; or~~
3 ~~(6) Receives, handles, distributes, pays out, or gives away,~~
4 ~~directly or indirectly, money or any other thing of value contributed~~
5 ~~by or received from any person, firm, association, or corporation whose~~
6 ~~residence or principal office is, or the majority of whose members or~~
7 ~~stockholders have their residence outside, the state of Washington, for~~
8 ~~any service rendered for the purpose of aiding in procuring signatures~~
9 ~~upon any initiative or referendum petition or for the purpose of aiding~~
10 ~~in the adoption or rejection of any initiative or referendum measure:~~
11 ~~PROVIDED, That this subsection shall not apply to or prohibit any~~
12 ~~activity which is properly reported in accordance with the applicable~~
13 ~~provisions of chapter 42.17 RCW)).~~

14 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 4.** This act is necessary for the immediate
15 preservation of the public peace, health, or safety, or support of the
16 state government and its existing public institutions, and shall take
17 effect immediately.