
HOUSE BILL 2054

State of Washington 58th Legislature 2003 Regular Session

By Representatives Darneille, Pettigrew, O'Brien, Upthegrove, Chase, Flannigan, Wood, Hudgins, Sullivan, Santos and Edwards

Read first time 02/21/2003. Referred to Committee on State Government.

1 AN ACT Relating to restoring voting rights to felons upon
2 completion of supervision; adding a new section to chapter 29.07 RCW;
3 and creating new sections.

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

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature finds that:

6 (1) Washington currently denies the right to vote to all persons
7 who have not fully paid legal financial obligations, even though they
8 have completed all other requirements of their felony sentences;

9 (2) Voting is part of the fabric of our democracy and, by
10 increasing voter participation, restoring the right to vote to ex-
11 felons both strengthens democracy and reintegrates ex-felons into
12 society;

13 (3) The current disenfranchisement law has a disproportionate
14 impact on male African-American Washingtonians, disenfranchising
15 approximately one-fourth of all African-American males otherwise
16 eligible to vote in this state;

17 (4) Crime victims have a strong interest in repayment of legal
18 financial obligations; and

1 (5) Restoring the right to vote before legal financial obligations
2 have been paid does not lessen, void, or nullify the continuing
3 obligation of ex-felons to pay legal financial obligations, their
4 motivation to do so, or the state's ability to collect the debt.

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** The purpose of this act is to strengthen the
6 state's democratic institutions by increasing participation in
7 elections, and to promote the health and safety of Washington citizens
8 by fostering ex-felons becoming fully productive members of society.

9 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** A new section is added to chapter 29.07 RCW
10 to read as follows:

11 (1) Except as provided in subsection (2) of this section, persons
12 convicted of a felony will have their civil right to the elective
13 franchise restored if they have completed all the requirements of all
14 of their sentences, except for legal financial obligations as defined
15 in RCW 9.94A.030.

16 (2) This section does not impair an offender's ability to obtain a
17 certificate of discharge prior to completion of community supervision
18 if eligible under RCW 9.94A.637(3).

19 (3) This section does not affect or prevent the enforcement of
20 legal financial obligations or the offender's obligation to comply with
21 an order issued under chapter 10.99 RCW or any other legal authority
22 that excludes or prohibits the offender from having contact with a
23 specified person, or coming within a set distance of any specified
24 location, that was contained in the judgment and sentence.

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