
SUBSTITUTE HOUSE BILL 1279

State of Washington

63rd Legislature

2014 Regular Session

By House Government Operations & Elections (originally sponsored by Representatives Bergquist, Riccelli, S. Hunt, Sawyer, Farrell, Stonier, Reykdal, Fitzgibbon, Lytton, Lias, Maxwell, Orwall, Jinkins, Upthegrove, Pedersen, Ryu, Carlyle, Roberts, Tharinger, Hudgins, Fey, Morrell, Santos, Pollet, Hansen, and Ormsby)

READ FIRST TIME 01/23/14.

1 AN ACT Relating to motor voter preregistration for sixteen and
2 seventeen year olds; amending RCW 46.20.155 and 29A.08.710; reenacting
3 and amending RCW 42.56.250; creating new sections; and providing an
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 form
10 of voter registration, motor voter. More than forty percent of new
11 voters are registered through motor voter, but this easy and popular
12 form of voter registration is not available to young people if they
13 obtained their driver's license at the age of sixteen or seventeen.
14 Denial of motor voter to so many young voters has contributed to lower
15 voter registration levels in the youngest voter age groups. In
16 Washington, according to the United States census bureau, only 50.8
17 percent of eligible citizens between the ages of eighteen and twenty-
18 four are registered to vote, compared to sixty-eight to eighty percent
19 for other age groups. Studies show that young adults who vote are

1 likely to continue to do so throughout adulthood. The legislature
2 recognizes that these representational disparities in registration
3 rates and voting rates within the youth electorate will improve by
4 enacting election policies that engage all young citizens. Therefore,
5 the legislature declares that this act, allowing eligible youth at
6 least sixteen years of age to preregister to vote, is intended to
7 increase voter turnout in young adults.

8 **Sec. 2.** RCW 46.20.155 and 2009 c 369 s 42 are each amended to read
9 as follows:

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

15 "Do you want to preregister or register to vote or transfer your
16 voter registration?"

17 If the applicant chooses to preregister, register, or transfer a
18 registration, the agent shall ask the following:

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

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

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

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

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

34 (1) The county auditor shall have custody of the original voter
35 registration records for each county. The original voter registration

1 form must be filed without regard to precinct and is considered
2 confidential and unavailable for public inspection and copying. An
3 automated file of all registered voters must be maintained pursuant to
4 RCW 29A.08.125. An auditor may maintain the automated file in lieu of
5 filing or maintaining the original voter registration forms if the
6 automated file includes all of the information from the original voter
7 registration forms including, but not limited to, a retrievable
8 facsimile of each voter's signature.

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

18 **Sec. 4.** RCW 42.56.250 and 2010 c 257 s 1 and 2010 c 128 s 9 are
19 each reenacted and amended to read as follows:

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

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

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

27 (3) The residential addresses, residential telephone numbers,
28 personal wireless telephone numbers, personal electronic mail
29 addresses, social security numbers, and emergency contact information
30 of employees or volunteers of a public agency, and the names, dates of
31 birth, residential addresses, residential telephone numbers, personal
32 wireless telephone numbers, personal electronic mail addresses, social
33 security numbers, and emergency contact information of dependents of
34 employees or volunteers of a public agency that are held by any public
35 agency in personnel records, public employment related records, or
36 volunteer rosters, or are included in any mailing list of employees or

1 volunteers of any public agency. For purposes of this subsection,
2 "employees" includes independent provider home care workers as defined
3 in RCW 74.39A.240;

4 (4) Information that identifies a person who, while an agency
5 employee: (a) Seeks advice, under an informal process established by
6 the employing agency, in order to ascertain his or her rights in
7 connection with a possible unfair practice under chapter 49.60 RCW
8 against the person; and (b) requests his or her identity or any
9 identifying information not be disclosed;

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

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

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

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

27 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 5.** This act may be known and cited as the young
28 voter registration equality act.

29 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 6.** This act takes effect January 1, 2015.

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