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## State Government & Tribal Relations Committee

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### SB 5153

**Brief Description:** Concerning uniform disclosure of records related to future voters and making conforming amendments related to participation of future voters in state primaries.

**Sponsors:** Senators Valdez, Hunt, Nguyen and Wilson, C..

#### Brief Summary of Bill

- Provides that the information of a 16- or 17-year-old who has registered to vote as a "future voter" may be disclosed when they are eligible to participate in a primary or general election.

**Hearing Date:** 3/22/23

**Staff:** Jason Zolle (786-7124).

#### Background:

##### Future Voter Registration.

To be eligible to vote in a general election in Washington, a person must be 18 years old. However, a 16- or 17-year-old may register to vote as part of the Future Voter Program. Those "future voters" are considered pending until they will be 18 years old by the next election. However, a 17-year-old is eligible to vote in a primary or presidential primary if they will be 18-years-old by the general election.

##### The Public Records Act.

The Public Records Act (PRA) generally requires state and local governmental entities to make many government records available to the public upon request. There are, however, over 500 statutory exemptions for certain records or information contained in records.

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One exemption is for information in government records about 16- and 17-year-olds who are registered to vote; this information may not be disclosed under the PRA until the person reaches 18 years of age, except for the purpose of processing or delivering ballots.

Illegal Voter Registration.

A person who registers to vote while knowing that they do not possess the legal qualifications of a voter is guilty of a class C felony. However, the statute specifies that this crime is not committed by 16- and 17-year-olds who register to vote as future voters.

**Summary of Bill:**

Modification for Disclosure of Information About Future Voters.

The exemption to disclosure of information about future voters is modified: information may now be disclosed at the time that a future voter is eligible to participate in a primary or general election.

Modification of Illegal Voter Registration.

Language is added to state that a qualified elector who votes in a primary does not commit the crime of illegal voter registration.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Not requested.

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