
SUBSTITUTE HOUSE BILL 2499

State of Washington

69th Legislature

2026 Regular Session

By House State Government & Tribal Relations (originally sponsored by Representatives Gregerson, Pollet, Reeves, Hill, Stearns, Macri, Obras, and Reed)

READ FIRST TIME 02/04/26.

1 AN ACT Relating to modernizing conservation district election
2 procedures and requiring financial disclosures from district
3 supervisors and candidates for district supervisor; amending RCW
4 89.08.160, 89.08.190, 89.08.200, 29A.04.330, 29B.20.070, 29B.55.010,
5 29B.05.020, and 29B.25.010; reenacting and amending RCW 29B.55.020;
6 and providing an effective date.

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

8 **Sec. 1.** RCW 89.08.160 and 1973 1st ex.s. c 184 s 17 are each
9 amended to read as follows:

10 (1) If the commission finds the project practicable, it shall
11 appoint two supervisors (~~(, one of whom shall be a landowner or~~
12 ~~operator of a farm,)~~) who shall be qualified by training and
13 experience to perform the specialized skilled services required of
14 them. They, with the three elected supervisors, (~~(two of whom shall~~
15 ~~be landowners or operators of a farm,)~~) shall constitute the
16 governing board of the district.

17 (2) The two appointed supervisors shall file with the secretary
18 of state a sworn application, reciting that a petition was filed with
19 the commission for the creation of the district; that all required
20 proceedings were had thereon; that they were appointed by the
21 commission as such supervisors; and that the application is being

1 filed to complete the organization of the district. It shall contain
2 the names and residences of the applicants, a certified copy of their
3 appointments, the name of the district, the location of the office of
4 the supervisors and the term of office of each applicant.

5 (3) The application shall be accompanied by a statement of the
6 commission, reciting that a petition was filed, notice issued, and
7 hearing held thereon as required; that it determined the need for the
8 district and defined the boundaries thereof; that notice was given
9 and an election held on the question of creating the district; that a
10 majority vote favored the district, and that the commission had
11 determined the district practicable; and shall set forth the
12 boundaries of the district.

13 **Sec. 2.** RCW 89.08.190 and 2002 c 43 s 3 are each amended to read
14 as follows:

15 (1) Within thirty days after the issuance of the certificate of
16 organization, unless the time is extended by the commission,
17 petitions shall be filed with the commission to nominate candidates
18 for the three elected supervisors. The petition shall be signed by
19 not less than twenty-five district electors, and a district elector
20 may sign petitions nominating more than one person.

21 (2) In the case of a new district, the commission shall give due
22 notice to elect the three supervisors. All provisions pertaining to
23 elections on the creation of a district shall govern this election so
24 far as applicable. The names of all nominees shall appear on the
25 ballot in alphabetical order, together with instructions to vote for
26 three. The three candidates receiving the most votes shall be
27 declared elected supervisors, the one receiving the most being
28 elected for a three-year term, the next for two and the last for one
29 year. An alternate method of dividing the district into three zones
30 may be used when requested by the board of supervisors and approved
31 by the commission. In such case, instructions will be to vote for one
32 in each zone. The candidate receiving the most votes in a zone shall
33 be declared elected.

34 ~~((Each year after))~~ (3) After the creation of the first board of
35 supervisors, ~~((the))~~ a district board that conducts elections for
36 supervisors under this chapter shall by resolution and by giving due
37 notice, set a date during the first quarter of each calendar year
38 that an elected supervisor term expires at which time it shall
39 conduct an election(~~(, except that for elections in 2002 only, the~~

1 ~~board shall set the date during the second quarter of the calendar~~
2 ~~year at which time it shall conduct an election))~~ for that position.
3 Names of candidates nominated by petition shall appear in
4 alphabetical order on the ballots, together with an extra line
5 wherein may be written in the name of any other candidate. The
6 commission shall establish procedures for elections, canvass the
7 returns and announce the official results thereof. Election results
8 may be announced by polling officials at the close of the election
9 subject to official canvass of ballots by the commission. Supervisors
10 elected shall take office at the first board meeting following the
11 election.

12 (4) After the creation of the first board of supervisors, a
13 district board may choose to conduct elections of supervisors subject
14 to Title 29A RCW. Such change by the district board of supervisors
15 must be made by a vote of a majority of the district supervisors
16 following public notice and a hearing on the proposal. The district
17 shall notify the commission of the proposed motion and public notice
18 of the action. In the event a district chooses to conduct the
19 election subject to Title 29A RCW, rules and guidance developed by
20 the commission for the conduct of supervisor elections under
21 subsection (3) of this section do not apply and the district shall
22 comply with all provisions of Title 29A RCW.

23 **Sec. 3.** RCW 89.08.200 and 2013 c 23 s 550 are each amended to
24 read as follows:

25 (1) The term of office of each supervisor shall be (~~three~~) four
26 years and until his or her successor is appointed or elected and
27 qualified, except that the supervisors first appointed shall serve
28 for one and two years respectively from the date of their
29 appointments, as designated in their appointments.

30 (2) In the case of elected supervisors, the term of office of
31 each supervisor shall be (~~three~~) four years and until his or her
32 successor is elected and qualified, except that for the first
33 election, the one receiving the largest number of votes shall be
34 elected for three years; the next largest two years; and the third
35 largest one year. Successors shall be elected for (~~three-year~~)
36 four-year terms.

37 (3) Vacancies in the office of appointed supervisors shall be
38 filled by the state conservation commission. Vacancies in the office

1 of elected supervisors shall be filled by appointment made by the
2 remaining supervisors for the unexpired term.

3 (4) A majority of the supervisors shall constitute a quorum and
4 the concurrence of a majority is required for any official action or
5 determination.

6 (5) Supervisors shall serve without compensation, but they shall
7 be entitled to expenses, including traveling expenses, necessarily
8 incurred in discharge of their duties. A supervisor may be removed by
9 the state conservation commission upon notice and hearing, for
10 neglect of duty or malfeasance in office, but for no other reason.

11 (6) The governing board shall designate a chair from time to
12 time.

13 **Sec. 4.** RCW 29A.04.330 and 2015 c 146 s 2 are each amended to
14 read as follows:

15 (1) All city, town, and district general elections shall be held
16 throughout the state of Washington on the first Tuesday following the
17 first Monday in November in the odd-numbered years.

18 This section shall not apply to:

19 (a) Elections for the recall of any elective public officer;

20 (b) Public utility districts, conservation districts using
21 chapter 89.08 RCW to conduct their supervisor elections, or district
22 elections at which the ownership of property within those districts
23 is a prerequisite to voting, all of which elections shall be held at
24 the times prescribed in the laws specifically applicable thereto;

25 (c) Consolidation proposals as provided for in RCW 28A.315.235
26 and nonhigh capital fund aid proposals as provided for in chapter
27 28A.540 RCW; and

28 (d) Special flood control districts consisting of three or more
29 counties.

30 (2) The county auditor, as ex officio supervisor of elections,
31 upon request in the form of a resolution of the governing body of a
32 city, town, or district, presented to the auditor prior to the
33 proposed election date, shall call a special election in such city,
34 town, or district, and for the purpose of such special election he or
35 she may combine, unite, or divide precincts. Such a special election
36 shall be held on one of the following dates as decided by the
37 governing body:

38 (a) The second Tuesday in February;

39 (b) The fourth Tuesday in April;

1 (c) The day of the primary election as specified by RCW
2 29A.04.311; or

3 (d) The first Tuesday after the first Monday in November.

4 (3) A resolution calling for a special election on a date set
5 forth in subsection (2)(a) and (b) of this section must be presented
6 to the county auditor at least sixty days prior to the election date.
7 A resolution calling for a special election on a date set forth in
8 subsection (2)(c) of this section must be presented to the county
9 auditor no later than the Friday immediately before the first day of
10 regular candidate filing. A resolution calling for a special election
11 on a date set forth in subsection (2)(d) of this section must be
12 presented to the county auditor no later than the day of the primary.

13 (4) In addition to subsection (2)(a) through (d) of this section,
14 a special election to validate an excess levy or bond issue may be
15 called at any time to meet the needs resulting from fire, flood,
16 earthquake, or other act of God, except that no special election may
17 be held between the first day for candidates to file for public
18 office and the last day to certify the returns of the general
19 election other than as provided in subsection (2)(c) and (d) of this
20 section. Such special election shall be conducted and notice thereof
21 given in the manner provided by law.

22 (5) This section shall supersede the provisions of any and all
23 other statutes, whether general or special in nature, having
24 different dates for such city, town, and district elections, the
25 purpose of this section being to establish mandatory dates for
26 holding elections.

27 **Sec. 5.** RCW 29B.20.070 and 2024 c 164 s 413 are each amended to
28 read as follows:

29 (1) Except as provided in subsections (2), (3), ~~((and))~~ (7), and
30 (8) of this section, the reporting provisions of this title do not
31 apply to:

32 (a) Candidates, elected officials, and agencies in political
33 subdivisions with fewer than 2,000 registered voters as of the date
34 of the most recent general election in the jurisdiction;

35 (b) Political committees formed to support or oppose candidates
36 or ballot propositions in such political subdivisions; or

37 (c) Persons making independent expenditures in support of or
38 opposition to such ballot propositions.

1 (2) The reporting provisions of this title apply in any exempt
2 political subdivision from which a "petition for disclosure"
3 containing the valid signatures of 15 percent of the number of
4 registered voters, as of the date of the most recent general election
5 in the political subdivision, is filed with the commission. The
6 commission shall by rule prescribe the form of the petition. After
7 the signatures are gathered, the petition shall be presented to the
8 auditor or elections officer of the county, or counties, in which the
9 political subdivision is located. The auditor or elections officer
10 shall verify the signatures and certify to the commission that the
11 petition contains no less than the required number of valid
12 signatures. The commission, upon receipt of a valid petition, shall
13 order every known affected person in the political subdivision to
14 file the initially required statement and reports within 14 days of
15 the date of the order.

16 (3) The reporting provisions of this title apply in any exempt
17 political subdivision that by ordinance, resolution, or other
18 official action has petitioned the commission to make the provisions
19 applicable to elected officials and candidates of the exempt
20 political subdivision. A copy of the action shall be sent to the
21 commission. If the commission finds the petition to be a valid action
22 of the appropriate governing body or authority, the commission shall
23 order every known affected person in the political subdivision to
24 file the initially required statement and reports within 14 days of
25 the date of the order.

26 (4) The commission shall void any order issued by it pursuant to
27 subsection (2) or (3) of this section when, at least four years after
28 issuing the order, the commission is presented a petition or official
29 action so requesting from the affected political subdivision. Such
30 petition or official action shall meet the respective requirements of
31 subsection (2) or (3) of this section.

32 (5) Any petition for disclosure, ordinance, resolution, or
33 official action of an agency petitioning the commission to void the
34 exemption in RCW 29B.25.010(3) shall not be considered unless it has
35 been filed with the commission:

36 (a) In the case of a ballot proposition, at least 60 days before
37 the date of any election in which campaign finance reporting is to be
38 required;

1 (b) In the case of a candidate, at least 60 days before the first
2 day on which a person may file a declaration of candidacy for any
3 election in which campaign finance reporting is to be required.

4 (6) Any person exempted from reporting under this title may at
5 the person's option file the statement and reports.

6 (7) The reporting provisions of this title apply to a candidate
7 in any political subdivision if the candidate receives or expects to
8 receive five thousand dollars or more in contributions.

9 (8) The personal financial affairs reporting requirements of this
10 title apply to an appointed or elected supervisor for a conservation
11 district board that holds its elections for supervisors under chapter
12 89.08 RCW with fewer than 2,000 registered voters as of the date of
13 the most recent supervisor election in the jurisdiction.

14 (9) The personal financial affairs reporting requirements of this
15 title do not apply to supervisors appointed to a conservation
16 district board that holds its elections for supervisors under Title
17 29A RCW in a district with fewer than 2,000 registered voters as of
18 the date of the most recent general election in the jurisdiction.

19 **Sec. 6.** RCW 29B.55.020 and 2024 c 164 s 487 and 2024 c 54 s 40
20 are each reenacted and amended to read as follows:

21 For the purposes of RCW 29B.55.010, "executive state officer"
22 includes:

23 (1) The chief administrative law judge, the director of
24 agriculture, the director of the department of services for the
25 blind, the secretary of children, youth, and families, the director
26 of the state system of community and technical colleges, the director
27 of commerce, the director of Washington technology solutions, the
28 secretary of corrections, the director of ecology, the commissioner
29 of employment security, the chair of the energy facility site
30 evaluation council, the director of enterprise services, the
31 secretary of the state finance committee, the director of financial
32 management, the director of fish and wildlife, the executive
33 secretary of the forest practices appeals board, the director of the
34 gambling commission, the secretary of health, the administrator of
35 the Washington state health care authority, the executive secretary
36 of the health care facilities authority, the executive secretary of
37 the higher education facilities authority, the executive secretary of
38 the horse racing commission, the executive secretary of the human
39 rights commission, the executive secretary of the indeterminate

1 sentence review board, the executive director of the state investment
2 board, the director of labor and industries, the director of
3 licensing, the director of the lottery commission, the director of
4 the office of minority and women's business enterprises, the director
5 of parks and recreation, the executive director of the public
6 disclosure commission, the executive director of the Puget Sound
7 partnership, the director of the recreation and conservation office,
8 the director of retirement systems, the director of revenue, the
9 secretary of social and health services, the chief of the Washington
10 state patrol, the executive secretary of the board of tax appeals,
11 the secretary of transportation, the secretary of the utilities and
12 transportation commission, the director of veterans affairs, the
13 president of each of the regional and state universities and the
14 president of The Evergreen State College, and each district and each
15 campus president of each state community college;

16 (2) Each professional staff member of the office of the governor;

17 (3) Each professional staff member of the legislature; and

18 (4) Central Washington University board of trustees, the boards
19 of trustees of each community college and each technical college,
20 each member of the state board for community and technical colleges,
21 state convention and trade center board of directors, Eastern
22 Washington University board of trustees, Washington economic
23 development finance authority, Washington energy northwest executive
24 board, The Evergreen State College board of trustees, executive
25 ethics board, fish and wildlife commission, forest practices appeals
26 board, forest practices board, gambling commission, Washington health
27 care facilities authority, student achievement council, higher
28 education facilities authority, horse racing commission, state
29 housing finance commission, human rights commission, indeterminate
30 sentence review board, board of industrial insurance appeals, state
31 investment board, commission on judicial conduct, legislative ethics
32 board, life sciences discovery fund authority board of trustees,
33 state liquor and cannabis board, lottery commission, Pacific
34 Northwest electric power and conservation planning council, parks and
35 recreation commission, Washington personnel resources board, board of
36 pilotage commissioners, pollution control hearings board, public
37 disclosure commission, public employees' benefits board, recreation
38 and conservation funding board, salmon recovery funding board,
39 shorelines hearings board, board of tax appeals, transportation
40 commission, University of Washington board of regents, utilities and

1 transportation commission, Washington State University board of
2 regents, (~~and~~) Western Washington University board of trustees, and
3 supervisors appointed to a conservation district board.

4 **Sec. 7.** RCW 29B.55.010 and 2024 c 164 s 486 are each amended to
5 read as follows:

6 (1) After January 1st and before April 15th of each year, every
7 elected official and every executive state officer who served for any
8 portion of the preceding year shall electronically file with the
9 commission a statement of financial affairs for the preceding
10 calendar year or for that portion of the year served. Any official or
11 officer in office for any period of time in a calendar year, but not
12 in office as of January 1st of the following year, may electronically
13 file either within 60 days of leaving office or during the January
14 1st through April 15th reporting period of that following year. Such
15 filing must include information for the portion of the current
16 calendar year for which the official or officer was in office.

17 (2) Within two weeks of becoming a candidate, every candidate
18 shall file with the commission a statement of financial affairs for
19 the preceding 12 months.

20 (3) Within two weeks of appointment, every person appointed to a
21 vacancy in an elective office or executive state officer position
22 during the months of January through November shall file with the
23 commission a statement of financial affairs for the preceding 12
24 months, except as provided in subsection (4) of this section. For
25 appointments made in December, the appointee must file the statement
26 of financial affairs between January 1st and January 15th of the
27 immediate following year for the preceding 12-month period ending on
28 December 31st.

29 (4) A statement of a candidate or appointee filed during the
30 period from January 1st to April 15th shall cover the period from
31 January 1st of the preceding calendar year to the time of candidacy
32 or appointment if the filing of the statement would relieve the
33 individual of a prior obligation to file a statement covering the
34 entire preceding calendar year.

35 (5) No individual may be required to file more than once in any
36 calendar year.

37 (6) Each statement of financial affairs filed under this section
38 shall be sworn as to its truth and accuracy.

1 (7) Every elected official and every executive state officer
2 shall file with their statement of financial affairs a statement
3 certifying that they have read and are familiar with RCW 29B.45.010
4 or 42.52.180, whichever is applicable.

5 (8) For the purposes of this section, the term "executive state
6 officer" includes those listed in RCW 29B.55.020.

7 (9) This section does not apply to incumbents or candidates for a
8 federal office or the office of precinct committee officer.

9 (10) A person who is an elected supervisor for a conservation
10 district that holds its elections under chapter 89.08 RCW shall file
11 with the commission a statement of financial affairs in accordance
12 with this section.

13 **Sec. 8.** RCW 29B.05.020 and 2024 c 164 s 402 are each amended to
14 read as follows:

15 Elections of conservation district supervisors held pursuant to
16 chapter 89.08 RCW shall not be considered general or special
17 elections for purposes of the campaign disclosure and personal
18 financial affairs reporting requirements of this title. (~~Elected~~
19 ~~conservation district supervisors are not considered elected~~
20 ~~officials for purposes of the annual personal financial affairs~~
21 ~~reporting requirement of this title.)) Conservation district
22 supervisors elected in a conservation district that elects its
23 supervisors under chapter 89.08 RCW must comply with the annual
24 personal financial affairs reporting requirement pursuant to RCW
25 29B.55.010. Candidates for conservation district supervisors for a
26 conservation district that elects its supervisors under chapter 89.08
27 RCW are exempt from the annual personal financial reporting
28 requirement of this title.~~

29 **Sec. 9.** RCW 29B.25.010 and 2024 c 164 s 418 are each amended to
30 read as follows:

31 The provisions of this title relating to the financing of
32 election campaigns shall apply in all election campaigns other than
33 (1) for precinct committee officer; (2) for a federal elective
34 office; (~~and~~) (3) for conservation district supervisors in
35 elections held pursuant to chapter 89.08 RCW; and (4) for an office
36 of a political subdivision of the state that does not encompass a
37 whole county and that contains fewer than 5,000 registered voters as

1 of the date of the most recent general election in the subdivision,
2 unless required by RCW 29B.20.070 (2) through (5) and (7).

3 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 10.** Sections 5 through 9 of this act take
4 effect January 1, 2027.

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