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HOUSE BILL 2499

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State of Washington

69th Legislature

2026 Regular Session

By Representatives Gregerson, Pollet, Reeves, Hill, Stearns, Macri, Obras, and Reed

Read first time 01/15/26. Referred to Committee on State Government & Tribal Relations.

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. Within one week  
21 of the filing of a petition, the commission shall transmit the name  
22 and contact information of the candidate to the public disclosure  
23 commission.

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

37 (3) Each year after the creation of the first board of  
38 supervisors, the board shall by resolution and by giving due notice,  
39 set a date during the first quarter of each calendar year at which

1 time it shall conduct an election, except that for elections in 2002  
2 only, the board shall set the date during the second quarter of the  
3 calendar year at which time it shall conduct an election. Names of  
4 candidates nominated by petition shall appear in alphabetical order  
5 on the ballots, together with an extra line wherein may be written in  
6 the name of any other candidate. The commission shall establish  
7 procedures for elections, canvass the returns and announce the  
8 official results thereof. Election results may be announced by  
9 polling officials at the close of the election subject to official  
10 canvass of ballots by the commission. Supervisors elected shall take  
11 office at the first board meeting following the election.

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

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

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

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

36 (3) Vacancies in the office of appointed supervisors shall be  
37 filled by the state conservation commission. Vacancies in the office  
38 of elected supervisors shall be filled by appointment made by the  
39 remaining supervisors for the unexpired term.

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

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

9       (6) The governing board shall designate a chair from time to  
10 time.

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

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

16       This section shall not apply to:

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

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

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

26       (d) Special flood control districts consisting of three or more  
27 counties.

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

36       (a) The second Tuesday in February;

37       (b) The fourth Tuesday in April;

38       (c) The day of the primary election as specified by RCW  
39 29A.04.311; or

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

37 (2) The reporting provisions of this title apply in any exempt  
38 political subdivision from which a "petition for disclosure"  
39 containing the valid signatures of 15 percent of the number of

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

4 (8) The personal financial affairs reporting requirements of this  
5 title apply to an appointed or elected supervisor and a candidate for  
6 supervisor for a conservation district board that holds its election  
7 under chapter 89.08 RCW with fewer than 2,000 registered voters as of  
8 the date of the most recent general election in the jurisdiction.

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

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

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

18 (1) The chief administrative law judge, the director of  
19 agriculture, the director of the department of services for the  
20 blind, the secretary of children, youth, and families, the director  
21 of the state system of community and technical colleges, the director  
22 of commerce, the director of Washington technology solutions, the  
23 secretary of corrections, the director of ecology, the commissioner  
24 of employment security, the chair of the energy facility site  
25 evaluation council, the director of enterprise services, the  
26 secretary of the state finance committee, the director of financial  
27 management, the director of fish and wildlife, the executive  
28 secretary of the forest practices appeals board, the director of the  
29 gambling commission, the secretary of health, the administrator of  
30 the Washington state health care authority, the executive secretary  
31 of the health care facilities authority, the executive secretary of  
32 the higher education facilities authority, the executive secretary of  
33 the horse racing commission, the executive secretary of the human  
34 rights commission, the executive secretary of the indeterminate  
35 sentence review board, the executive director of the state investment  
36 board, the director of labor and industries, the director of  
37 licensing, the director of the lottery commission, the director of  
38 the office of minority and women's business enterprises, the director  
39 of parks and recreation, the executive director of the public

1 disclosure commission, the executive director of the Puget Sound  
2 partnership, the director of the recreation and conservation office,  
3 the director of retirement systems, the director of revenue, the  
4 secretary of social and health services, the chief of the Washington  
5 state patrol, the executive secretary of the board of tax appeals,  
6 the secretary of transportation, the secretary of the utilities and  
7 transportation commission, the director of veterans affairs, the  
8 president of each of the regional and state universities and the  
9 president of The Evergreen State College, and each district and each  
10 campus president of each state community college;

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

11 Elections of conservation district supervisors held pursuant to  
12 chapter 89.08 RCW shall not be considered general or special  
13 elections for purposes of the campaign disclosure and personal  
14 financial affairs reporting requirements of this title. (~~Elected~~  
15 ~~conservation district supervisors are not considered elected~~  
16 ~~officials for purposes of the annual personal financial affairs~~  
17 ~~reporting requirement of this title.)) Conservation district  
18 supervisors elected under chapter 89.08 RCW must comply with the  
19 annual personal financial affairs reporting requirement pursuant to  
20 RCW 29B.55.010.~~

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

23 The provisions of this title relating to the financing of  
24 election campaigns shall apply in all election campaigns other than  
25 (1) for precinct committee officer; (2) for a federal elective  
26 office; (~~and~~) (3) for conservation district supervisors in  
27 elections held pursuant to chapter 89.08 RCW; and (4) for an office  
28 of a political subdivision of the state that does not encompass a  
29 whole county and that contains fewer than 5,000 registered voters as  
30 of the date of the most recent general election in the subdivision,  
31 unless required by RCW 29B.20.070 (2) through (5) and (7).

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

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