
SENATE BILL 6035

State of Washington

69th Legislature

2026 Regular Session

By Senators Kauffman, Frame, Lias, Nobles, Riccelli, Slatter, Stanford, Trudeau, and Valdez

Prefiled 01/08/26. Read first time 01/12/26. Referred to Committee on State Government, Tribal Affairs & Elections.

1 AN ACT Relating to ensuring access to voting services for
2 military, overseas, Native American, and disabled voters; adding a
3 new chapter to Title 29A RCW; and providing an expiration date.

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

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** (1) To the extent practicable, each county
6 auditor shall schedule the following meetings with each Indian tribe
7 located in whole or in part within the county:

8 (a) Not later than August 1st of each odd-numbered year, a
9 meeting to discuss the details for the next regularly scheduled
10 election cycle. Such a meeting may address, without limitation:

11 (i) The establishment and operation of voting centers or ballot
12 drop boxes within an Indian reservation and the size requirements for
13 any such voting centers or ballot drop boxes;

14 (ii) The dates and times of the upcoming elections for which
15 voting centers or ballot drop boxes may be established;

16 (iii) The deadlines relating to the next regularly scheduled
17 election cycle for the Indian tribe to submit a request for the
18 establishment of voting centers or ballot drop boxes;

19 (iv) Responsibilities for the recruitment of election officers;
20 and

1 (v) Any other information relating to the establishment and
2 operation of voting centers and ballot drop boxes;

3 (b) Not later than September 1st of each odd-numbered year, a
4 meeting to confirm any details relating to the establishment and
5 operation of voting centers or ballot drop boxes. Such a meeting may
6 address, without limitation:

7 (i) Whether the Indian tribe will request or has requested to
8 establish any voting centers or ballot drop boxes within an Indian
9 reservation and the size requirements for any such voting centers and
10 ballot drop boxes;

11 (ii) The days and hours of any voting center or ballot drop box
12 established within an Indian reservation;

13 (iii) Election officers for any voting center or ballot drop box
14 established within an Indian reservation; and

15 (iv) The deadlines relating to the next regularly scheduled
16 election cycle for the Indian tribe to submit a request for the
17 establishment of voting centers or ballot drop boxes; and

18 (c) A meeting on an ongoing basis during the year of an election
19 if an Indian tribe elects to establish any voting centers or ballot
20 drop boxes within an Indian reservation.

21 (2) If a county auditor:

22 (a) Is unable to make contact with an Indian tribe to carry out
23 the requirements of subsection (1) of this section, the county
24 auditor shall contact the secretary of state to facilitate contact;
25 or

26 (b) Has not contacted an Indian tribe, a representative of the
27 Indian tribe may contact the secretary of state to facilitate
28 contact.

29 (3) The tribal liaison designated by the secretary of state may
30 assist the county auditor or an Indian tribe to facilitate any
31 contact required pursuant to this section.

32 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** Each biennium, the secretary of state must
33 meet with Indian tribes of the state to provide a forum for
34 discussing and addressing barriers to voting, including but not
35 limited to:

36 (1) Education and outreach tools for tribal voters;

37 (2) The use of tribal identification card data for online voter
38 registration;

39 (3) Assistance with tribal-led voter registration drives;

- 1 (4) Establishment of ballot mailing sites on tribal land for
- 2 voters with nontraditional mailing addresses;
- 3 (5) Installation of ballot drop boxes on or near tribal lands;
- 4 (6) Providing students with information about voting and
- 5 opportunities to register or preregister to vote;
- 6 (7) Personalized voter registration links, emails with election
- 7 date reminders, and meetings or presentations on various elections
- 8 topics; and
- 9 (8) Any other policy issues or tribal concerns.

10 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** (1) The secretary of state may employ an
11 electronic ballot portal to be available for the following registered
12 voters:

- 13 (a) Service voters as defined in RCW 29A.04.163;
- 14 (b) Overseas voters as defined in RCW 29A.04.109;
- 15 (c) Disabled voters as defined in RCW 29A.04.037; and
- 16 (d) Any elector who is a member of an Indian tribe and resides on
17 an Indian reservation.

18 (2) Only the voters described in subsection (1) of this section
19 shall be permitted to use an approved portal to return voted ballots.

20 (3) Prior to use in conducting any primary or election for voters
21 described in subsection (1) of this section in returning voted
22 ballots, the secretary of state must approve any electronic ballot
23 portal used in the conduct of elections.

24 (a) The secretary of state shall make reasonable rules to develop
25 and test electronic methods of ballot return for voters described in
26 subsection (1) of this section that are secure against electronic
27 monitoring and incursion or interference, provide the maximum level
28 of voter secrecy and privacy available, and ensure that only a single
29 vote is cast by any voter.

30 (b) The secretary of state shall make reasonable rules governing
31 the use of any approved portal that include times of availability,
32 storage of ballots, and establishing the circumstance in which a
33 voter described in subsection (1) of this section may use the portal
34 to return a voted ballot.

35 (c) The secretary of state shall make reasonable rules related to
36 the standards and procedures for the examination and testing of any
37 portal to be used by voters described in subsection (1) of this
38 section.

1 (d) Each county election office using an approved portal for the
2 return of voted ballots must keep a record of every attempt at ballot
3 return, successful and unsuccessful, and prepare a report at the
4 conclusion of each voting period listing the number of ballots
5 returned using the portal and confirming that only voters described
6 in subsection (1) of this section used the portal. The report must be
7 submitted to the secretary of state using the deadlines contained in
8 RCW 29A.60.190.

9 (e) The secretary of state shall prepare a statewide report
10 annually aggregating the information provided by each county.

11 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 4.** (1) The secretary of state may rely on the
12 results of independent design, engineering, and performance
13 evaluations for the purposes of this act and the source and scope of
14 these independent evaluations are specified by rule.

15 (2) The secretary of state may contract with experts to assist in
16 examining an electronic ballot portal.

17 (3) The secretary of state may consult with experts to assist in
18 drafting reasonable rules, including:

19 (a) County auditors;

20 (b) Representatives from the University of Washington Evans
21 school of public policy and governance; and

22 (c) Representatives with expertise in electronic voting methods.

23 (4) This section expires January 1, 2034.

24 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 5.** The definitions in this section apply
25 throughout this chapter unless the context clearly requires
26 otherwise.

27 "Indian tribe" means any federally recognized Indian tribe whose
28 traditional lands and territories included parts of Washington.

29 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 6.** The provisions of this chapter must be
30 implemented by January 1, 2029.

31 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 7.** Sections 1 through 6 of this act
32 constitute a new chapter in Title 29A RCW.

--- END ---