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HOUSE BILL 2205

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State of Washington

62nd Legislature

2012 Regular Session

By Representatives Billig, Zeiger, Fitzgibbon, Hudgins, Hunt, Green, Sells, McCoy, Maxwell, Probst, Jinkins, Pettigrew, Darneille, Eddy, Upthegrove, Hope, Ormsby, Blake, Miloscia, Hansen, Goodman, Carlyle, Kagi, Van De Wege, Pedersen, Tharinger, Kenney, Orwall, Moeller, Wylie, Appleton, Ladenburg, Lytton, Reykdal, Stanford, Pollet, and Hasegawa

Prefiled 12/15/11. Read first time 01/09/12. Referred to Committee on State Government & Tribal Affairs.

1 AN ACT Relating to voter registration for sixteen and seventeen  
2 year olds; amending RCW 29A.08.210, 29A.08.330, and 46.20.155; adding  
3 a new section to chapter 29A.08 RCW; and creating a new section.

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

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature recognizes the importance of  
6 fostering lifelong civic participation. Young voters remain  
7 underrepresented in the United States electorate. Nationally, fifty-  
8 nine percent of eligible eighteen to twenty-nine year olds are  
9 registered to vote, compared to seventy-one percent in the general  
10 population. Registration supports voter turnout among young adults:  
11 Eighty-three percent of registered eighteen to twenty-nine year olds in  
12 the United States voted in 2008. Studies show that young adults who  
13 vote are likely to continue to do so throughout adulthood. The  
14 legislature recognizes that these representational disparities in  
15 registration rates and voting rates within the youth electorate will  
16 improve by enacting election policies that engage all young citizens.  
17 Therefore, the legislature declares that this act, allowing eligible  
18 youth at least sixteen years of age to register to vote, is intended to  
19 increase voter turnout in young adults.

1        NEW SECTION.    **Sec. 2.**    A new section is added to chapter 29A.08 RCW  
2 to read as follows:

3        (1) A person who is at least sixteen years of age and who meets all  
4 requirements to vote except age may register to vote with the office of  
5 the secretary of state.

6        (2) The voter's registration will be held from entry in the  
7 statewide voter registration database until such time as the voter will  
8 be eighteen years of age and eligible to vote in the next election.

9        (3) A confirmation notice will be sent to the voter's address at  
10 the time the voter's registration is entered into the statewide voter  
11 registration database.

12       (4) The secretary of state is authorized to adopt rules to  
13 implement this section.

14       **Sec. 3.**    RCW 29A.08.210 and 2009 c 369 s 16 are each amended to  
15 read as follows:

16       An applicant for voter registration shall complete an application  
17 providing the following information concerning his or her  
18 qualifications as a voter in this state:

19       (1) The former address of the applicant if previously registered to  
20 vote;

21       (2) The applicant's full name;

22       (3) The applicant's date of birth;

23       (4) The address of the applicant's residence for voting purposes;

24       (5) The mailing address of the applicant if that address is not the  
25 same as the address in subsection (4) of this section;

26       (6) The sex of the applicant;

27       (7) The applicant's Washington state driver's license number,  
28 Washington state identification card number, or the last four digits of  
29 the applicant's social security number if he or she does not have a  
30 Washington state driver's license or Washington state identification  
31 card;

32       (8) A check box allowing the applicant to indicate that he or she  
33 is a member of the armed forces, national guard, or reserves, or that  
34 he or she is an overseas voter;

35       (9) ~~((A))~~ Two check boxes allowing the applicant to confirm ~~((that~~  
36 ~~he or she))~~ one of the following:

1       (a) The applicant is at least eighteen years of age or will be  
2 eighteen years of age by the next election;

3       (b) The applicant is at least sixteen years of age, meets all  
4 requirements to vote except age, and understands that the registration  
5 will be held until such time as the applicant is eligible to vote at  
6 the next election;

7       (10) Clear and conspicuous language, designed to draw the  
8 applicant's attention, stating that the applicant must be a United  
9 States citizen in order to register to vote;

10       (11) A check box and declaration confirming that the applicant is  
11 a citizen of the United States;

12       (12) The following warning:

13       "If you knowingly provide false information on this voter  
14 registration form or knowingly make a false declaration about your  
15 qualifications for voter registration you will have committed a class  
16 C felony that is punishable by imprisonment for up to five years, a  
17 fine of up to ten thousand dollars, or both."

18       (13) The oath required by RCW 29A.08.230 and a space for the  
19 applicant's signature; and

20       (14) Any other information that the secretary of state determines  
21 is necessary to establish the identity of the applicant and prevent  
22 duplicate or fraudulent voter registrations.

23       This information shall be recorded on a single registration form to  
24 be prescribed by the secretary of state.

25       **Sec. 4.** RCW 29A.08.330 and 2009 c 369 s 20 are each amended to  
26 read as follows:

27       (1) The secretary of state shall prescribe the method of voter  
28 registration for each designated agency. The agency shall use either  
29 the state voter registration by mail form with a separate declination  
30 form for the applicant to indicate that he or she declines to register  
31 at this time, or the agency may use a separate form approved for use by  
32 the secretary of state.

33       (2) The person providing service at the agency shall offer voter  
34 registration services to every client whenever he or she applies for  
35 service or assistance and with each renewal, recertification, or change  
36 of address. The person providing service shall give the applicant the  
37 same level of assistance with the voter registration application as is

1 offered to fill out the agency's forms and documents, including  
2 information about age and citizenship requirements for voter  
3 registration.

4 (3) The person providing service at the agency shall determine if  
5 the prospective applicant wants to register to vote or transfer his or  
6 her voter registration by asking the following question:

7 "Do you want to register to vote or transfer your voter  
8 registration?"

9 If the applicant chooses to register or transfer a registration,  
10 the service agent shall ask the following:

11 (a) "Are you a United States citizen?"

12 (b) "Are you (~~or will you be eighteen~~) at least sixteen years of  
13 age (~~on or before the next election~~)?"

14 If the applicant answers in the affirmative to both questions, the  
15 agent shall then provide the applicant with a voter registration form  
16 and instructions and shall record that the applicant has requested to  
17 register to vote or transfer a voter registration. If the applicant  
18 answers in the negative to either question, the agent shall not provide  
19 the applicant with a voter registration form.

20 (4) If an agency uses a computerized application process, it may,  
21 in consultation with the secretary of state, develop methods to capture  
22 simultaneously the information required for voter registration during  
23 a person's computerized application process.

24 (5) Each designated agency shall transmit the applications to the  
25 secretary of state or appropriate county auditor within three business  
26 days.

27 **Sec. 5.** RCW 46.20.155 and 2009 c 369 s 42 are each amended to read  
28 as follows:

29 (1) Before issuing an original license or identicard or renewing a  
30 license or identicard under this chapter, the licensing agent shall  
31 determine if the applicant wants to register to vote or transfer his or  
32 her voter registration by asking the following question:

33 "Do you want to register to vote or transfer your voter  
34 registration?"

1        If the applicant chooses to register or transfer a registration,  
2 the agent shall ask the following:

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

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

6        If the applicant answers in the affirmative to both questions, the  
7 agent shall then submit the registration or transfer. If the applicant  
8 answers in the negative to either question, the agent shall not submit  
9 a voter registration application.

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

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