

# Initiative Measure No. 1505

Filed April 1, 2022

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BILL REQUEST - CODE REVISER'S OFFICE

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BILL REQ. #: I-4482.1/22

ATTY/TYPIST: KS:akl

BRIEF DESCRIPTION:

# Initiative Measure No. 1505

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AN ACT Relating to election audits that enhance election integrity; adding a new section to chapter 29A.60 RCW; and creating a new section.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** It is the intent of the people of Washington to ensure an accurate vote count and to assure all voters that only legitimate votes are counted in Washington state elections.

NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 29A.60 RCW to read as follows:

(1) Prior to certification of each general election, the following shall occur within each county: A company shall oversee a statistically significant manual hand count audit of ballots tabulated for a minimum of three agreed upon races and/or ballot issues, of no less than five percent of the total county vote, including duplicated and adjudicated ballots, in 12 voting precincts in the county. The three races and precincts selected for the audit shall be chosen by the leadership of the major political parties defined in RCW 29A.04.086, with each party choosing six precincts. If one of the party's representatives do not participate in the process, the other party's leadership shall choose the minimum of three races and/or ballot issues and all 12 of the precincts.

(2) For purposes of this section, "company" means an impartial, independent company selected to oversee the audit of a county's election as described in this section. The company must have experience in the election process or experience as professional auditors, or both. The company shall be selected by the leadership

of the major political parties defined in RCW 29A.04.086 from a list of four recommendations with two companies being recommended by each party. If the two major parties cannot agree on a company to audit the county's election results, the company shall be chosen by the county canvassing board.

(3) The auditing method shall be a manual hand count of the physical ballots, performed by the county election department officials examining the votes marked on the ballots for each of the minimum of three agreed upon races and/or ballot issues selected for the individual precincts. The results of the manual hand count will be compared with the county's election results. If the leadership of the major political parties cannot agree on a minimum of three races and/or ballot issues, then the impartial company shall choose the races and/or ballot issues that are not agreed upon.

(4) In addition to the official party observers, public election observers must be allowed to observe all processes of the audit, including locating the ballots for each precinct, sorting and counting ballots, and access to any final reports of the audit done by the company. Observers must also be permitted to examine duplicated and adjudicated ballots from the precincts subject to the audit. The review of duplicated and adjudicated ballots must include an inspection of the original documents that show each voter's choices.

(5) By December 31st in the same year as the election, the company must submit a report to the legislature detailing the findings of the audit and any recommendations to improve ballot integrity in future elections.

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