

SB 1509 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Senate Committee On Rules

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Meeting Dates: 2/10

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Authorizes county clerk to employ personnel as necessary to remove contents from envelopes, rather than just open envelopes. Authorizes county clerk to, not sooner than seventh day before the date of an election, to begin to remove contents from return identification and secrecy envelopes of ballots delivered to the county clerk, rather than just open envelopes. Specifies that amendments apply to return identification and secrecy envelopes of ballots received by the county clerk after the effective date. Becomes effective on 91st day after adjournment sine die.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

No amendment.

BACKGROUND:

In 1987, the Legislative Assembly enacted House Bill 2164 (1987), which allowed county clerks to conduct elections other than a recall or emergency election, held on any other date than a primary or general election, by mail. In 1998, Oregon voters enacted Ballot Measure 60, which requires primary and general elections to be conducted by mail. Current statute authorizes a county clerk to: 1) employ personnel as necessary to open envelopes, prepare ballots for counting, and count ballots; and, 2) not sooner than the seventh day before the date of an election, begin opening return identification and secrecy envelopes of ballots. These statutes do not explicitly authorize the county clerk or personnel employed by the county clerk to remove the contents from those envelopes.

Senate Bill 1509 amends current statute to explicitly allow a county clerk and personnel employed by a county clerk to remove contents from envelopes as required to complete their election duties.