

INITIATIVE 828

I, Sam Reed, Secretary of State of the State of Washington and custodian of its seal, hereby certify that, according to the records on file in my office, the attached copy of Initiative Measure No. 828 to the People is a true and correct copy as it was received by this office.

1 AN ACT Relating to eliminating the postage cost of submitting an
2 absentee ballot return envelope through the United States postal
3 service; and amending RCW 29.36.290.

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

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7 **Sec. 1.** RCW 29.36.290 and 2001 c 241 s 8 are each amended to
8 read as follows:

9 The county auditor shall send each absentee voter a ballot, a
10 security envelope in which to seal the ballot after voting, a larger
11 envelope, bearing the words "NO POSTAGE NECESSARY" in the upper right
12 hand corner of the side bearing the "OFFICIAL ELECTION MAIL" seal, in
13 which to return the security envelope, and instructions on how to
14 mark the ballot and how to return it to the county auditor. The
15 larger return envelope shall not require a voter to pay postage and
16 must contain a declaration by the absentee voter reciting his or her
17 qualifications and stating that he or she has not voted in any other

1 jurisdiction at this election, together with a summary of the
2 penalties for any violation of any of the provisions of this chapter.
3 The return envelope must provide space for the voter to indicate the
4 date on which the ballot was voted and for the voter to sign the
5 oath. A summary of the applicable penalty provisions of this chapter
6 must be printed on the return envelope immediately adjacent to the
7 space for the voter's signature. The signature of the voter on the
8 return envelope must affirm and attest to the statements regarding
9 the qualifications of that voter and to the validity of the ballot.
10 For out-of-state voters, overseas voters, and service voters, the
11 signed declaration on the return envelope constitutes the equivalent
12 of a voter registration for the election or primary for which the
13 ballot has been issued. The voter must be instructed to either
14 return the ballot to the county auditor by whom it was issued (~~or~~
15 ~~attach sufficient first class postage, if applicable, and~~) or mail
16 the ballot to the appropriate county auditor (~~no later than~~) by the
17 day of the election or primary for which the ballot was issued.

18 If the county auditor chooses to forward absentee ballots, he or
19 she must include with the ballot a clear explanation of the
20 qualifications necessary to vote in that election and must also
21 advise a voter with questions about his or her eligibility to contact
22 the county auditor. This explanation may be provided on the ballot
23 envelope, on an enclosed insert, or printed directly on the ballot
24 itself. If the information is not included, the envelope must
25 clearly indicate that the ballot is not to be forwarded and that
26 return postage is guaranteed.

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