

Todd Weiler proposes the following substitute bill:

Initiative and Referendum Signature Gathering and Removal Amendments

2026 GENERAL SESSION

STATE OF UTAH

Chief Sponsor: Karen M. Peterson

Senate Sponsor: Calvin R. Musselman

LONG TITLE

General Description:

This bill addresses petition signature gathering and removal.

Highlighted Provisions:

This bill:

- requires an individual who gathers a statement requesting removal of a petition signer's signature to be at least 18 years old;
- requires a paid signature removal statement gatherer to:
 - display a badge disclosing certain information while gathering the statement; and
 - verify, on the statement, certain information about the individual who signs the statement;
- requires a signature removal statement, if collected by a paid gatherer, to include a notice that removing the signer's signature may prevent the initiative or referendum from appearing on the ballot;
- prohibits a person from paying a person to gather a signature removal statement unless the payment is based on an hourly rate;
- prohibits a person from using an initiative or referendum petition signer's email address for any non-petition related purpose;
- expands existing criminal penalties in relation to the initiative and referendum process by prohibiting an individual from:
 - making certain misrepresentations while the individual gathers petition signatures or signature removal statements; or
 - providing or offering to provide money, prepaid postage, or any other direct financial benefit to an individual to remove the individual's signature from an initiative or referendum petition; and
- makes technical and conforming changes.

29 **Money Appropriated in this Bill:**

30 None

31 **Other Special Clauses:**

32 None

33 **Utah Code Sections Affected:**

34 AMENDS:

35 **20A-1-1003**, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2024, Chapter 442

36 **20A-7-105**, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2025, Chapter 448

37 **20A-7-106**, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2025, Chapter 381

38 **20A-7-213**, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2024, Chapter 442

39 **20A-7-312**, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2024, Chapter 442

40 **20A-7-512**, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2024, Chapter 442

41 **20A-7-612**, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2024, Chapter 442

42 ENACTS:

43 **20A-7-104.5**, Utah Code Annotated 1953



45 *Be it enacted by the Legislature of the state of Utah:*

46 Section 1. Section **20A-1-1003** is amended to read:

47 **20A-1-1003 . Signature removal -- Statement required.**

48 (1) A voter who signs a petition may have the voter's signature removed from the petition
49 by submitting to the clerk a statement requesting that the voter's signature be removed.

50 (2)(a)(i) [The] Subject to Subsection (2)(a)(iii), the statement described in Subsection

51 (1) shall include:

52 (A) the name or description of the petition from which the voter seeks to remove
53 the voter's signature;

54 (B) the name of the voter;

55 (C) the resident address at which the voter is registered to vote;

56 (D) except as otherwise provided in Section 20A-7-106, the voter's signature; and

57 (E) the date of the signature described in Subsection (2)(a)(i)(D).

58 (ii) To increase the likelihood of the voter's signature being identified and removed,
59 the statement may include the voter's birth date or age.

60 (iii) If an individual is paid to collect a statement described in Subsection (1), the
61 statement shall include, in addition to the information described in Subsection

62 (2)(a)(i):

63 (A) the following printed notice, appearing immediately adjacent to the voter's
 64 signature: "I understand that by signing this statement, the [name or description
 65 of petition] may not appear on the ballot."; and

66 (B) the following verification to be completed by the individual who collects the
 67 statement:

68 "VERIFICATION OF SIGNATURE REMOVAL STATEMENT

69 GATHERER:

70 I, _____, hereby state, under penalty of perjury, that:

71 I am at least 18 years old;

72 The name that appears on this statement was signed by an individual who
 73 professed to a voter who signed the [name or description of petition]; and

74 The individual signed the individual's name on this statement in my
 75 presence or, in the case of an individual with a qualifying disability, I have
 76 signed this statement on the individual's behalf, at the direction of the
 77 individual and in the individual's presence, by entering the initials "AV" as the
 78 individual's signature.

79 _____

80 (Name) (Date)."

81 (b) Except as provided in Subsection 20A-7-216(5)(a), 20A-7-314(5)(a),
 82 20A-7-515(4)(b), or 20A-7-615(4)(b), a voter may not submit a statement described
 83 in Subsection (1) by email or other electronic means.

84 (c) In order for the signature to be removed, the clerk must receive the statement
 85 described in Subsection (1) no later than the deadline described in the provision of
 86 law governing the petition.

87 (d) A voter may only remove a signature from a petition in accordance with this section
 88 and the provision of law governing the petition.

89 (e) A clerk shall analyze a signature, for purposes of removing a signature from a
 90 petition, in accordance with Subsection (3).

91 (3) Except to the extent otherwise required under Section 20A-7-106, the clerk shall use the
 92 following procedures to determine whether to remove an individual's signature from a
 93 petition after receiving a timely, valid statement requesting removal of the signature:

94 (a) if the signer's name and address shown on the statement and the petition exactly
 95 match a name and address shown on the official register and the individual's

96 signature on the statement is reasonably consistent with the individual's signature on

- 97 the statewide voter registration database, the clerk shall remove the signature from
98 the petition;
- 99 (b) if there is no exact match of an address and a name, the clerk shall remove the
100 signature from the petition if:
- 101 (i) the address on the statement and the address provided by the individual with the
102 individual's petition signature match the address of an individual on the official
103 register with a substantially similar name; and
- 104 (ii) the individual's signature on the statement is reasonably consistent with the
105 signature on the statewide voter registration database of the individual described
106 in Subsection (3)(b)(i); and
- 107 (c) if there is no match of an address and a substantially similar name, the clerk shall
108 remove the signature from the petition if:
- 109 (i) the birth date or age on the statement and the birth date or age provided by the
110 individual with the individual's petition signature match the birth date or age of an
111 individual on the official register with a substantially similar name; and
- 112 (ii) the individual's signature on the statement is reasonably consistent with the
113 signature on the statewide voter registration database of the individual described
114 in Subsection (3)(b)(i).
- 115 (4) If a signature does not qualify for removal under Subsection (3)(a), (b), or (c), or, if
116 applicable, Section 20A-7-106, the clerk may not remove the signature from the petition.

117 Section 2. Section **20A-7-104.5** is enacted to read:

118 **20A-7-104.5 . Signature removal statement gatherers -- Badge -- Information --**

119 **Payment.**

- 120 (1) An individual who gathers a statement described in Section 20A-1-1003 requesting
121 removal of a signature from an initiative petition or referendum petition shall be at least
122 18 years old.
- 123 (2) An individual described in Subsection (1) who is paid to gather a statement shall, while
124 gathering a statement, display a badge on the front of the individual's torso that complies
125 with the following, ensuring that the information on the badge is clearly visible to the
126 individual from whom the statement is sought:
- 127 (a) the badge shall be printed in black ink on white cardstock and laminated; and
- 128 (b) the information on the badge shall be in at least 24-point type and include the
129 following information:
- 130 (i) an identification number that is unique to the individual gathering the statement,

- 131 assigned by:
- 132 (A) for a statewide initiative or referendum, the lieutenant governor; or
- 133 (B) for a local initiative or referendum, the local clerk;
- 134 (ii) the title of the initiative or referendum petition to which the statement relates;
- 135 (iii) the words "Paid Signature Removal Statement Gatherer"; and
- 136 (iv) the name of the person or entity paying the individual to gather the statement.
- 137 (3) A person may not pay an individual to gather a signature removal statement under this
- 138 chapter unless the payment is based on an hourly rate.

139 Section 3. Section **20A-7-105** is amended to read:

140 **20A-7-105 . Manual petition processes -- Obtaining signatures -- Verification --**

141 **Submitting the petition -- Certification of signatures -- Transfer to lieutenant governor --**

142 **Removal of signature.**

- 143 (1) This section applies only to the manual initiative process and the manual referendum
- 144 process.
- 145 (2) As used in this section:
- 146 (a) "Local petition" means:
- 147 (i) a manual local initiative petition described in Part 5, Local Initiatives - Procedures;
- 148 or
- 149 (ii) a manual local referendum petition described in Part 6, Local Referenda -
- 150 Procedures.
- 151 (b) "Packet" means an initiative packet or referendum packet.
- 152 (c) "Petition" means a local petition or statewide petition.
- 153 (d) "Statewide petition" means:
- 154 (i) a manual statewide initiative petition described in Part 2, Statewide Initiatives; or
- 155 (ii) a manual statewide referendum petition described in Part 3, Statewide Referenda.
- 156 (3)(a) A Utah voter may sign a statewide petition if the voter is a legal voter.
- 157 (b) A Utah voter may sign a local petition if the voter:
- 158 (i) is a legal voter; and
- 159 (ii) resides in the local jurisdiction.
- 160 (4)(a) The sponsors shall ensure that the individual in whose presence each signature
- 161 sheet was signed:
- 162 (i) is at least 18 years old;
- 163 (ii) verifies each signature sheet by completing the verification printed on the last
- 164 page of each packet; and

- 165 (iii) is informed that each signer is required to read and understand:
- 166 (A) for an initiative petition, the law proposed by the initiative; or
- 167 (B) for a referendum petition, the law that the referendum seeks to overturn.
- 168 (b) An individual may not sign the verification printed on the last page of a packet if the
- 169 individual signed a signature sheet in the packet.
- 170 (5)(a) The sponsors, or an agent of the sponsors, shall submit a signed and verified
- 171 packet to the county clerk of the county in which the packet was circulated before 5
- 172 p.m. no later than the earlier of:
- 173 (i) for a statewide initiative:
- 174 (A) the first business day that is at least 30 calendar days after the day on which
- 175 the first individual signs the initiative packet;
- 176 (B) the last business day that is no more than 316 calendar days after the day on
- 177 which the application for the initiative petition is filed; or
- 178 (C) the February 15 immediately before the next regular general election
- 179 immediately after the application is filed under Section 20A-7-202;
- 180 (ii) for a statewide referendum:
- 181 (A) the first business day that is at least 30 calendar days after the day on which
- 182 the first individual signs the referendum packet; or
- 183 (B) the first business day that is at least 40 calendar [-]days after the day on which
- 184 the legislative session at which the law passed ends;
- 185 (iii) for a local initiative:
- 186 (A) the first business day that is at least 30 calendar days after the day on which
- 187 the first individual signs the initiative packet;
- 188 (B) the last business day that is no more than 316 calendar days after the day on
- 189 which the application is filed;
- 190 (C) the April 15 immediately before the next regular general election immediately
- 191 after the application is filed under Section 20A-7-502, if the local initiative is a
- 192 county initiative; or
- 193 (D) the April 15 immediately before the next municipal general election
- 194 immediately after the application is filed under Section 20A-7-502, if the local
- 195 initiative is a municipal initiative; or
- 196 (iv) for a local referendum:
- 197 (A) the first business day that is at least 30 calendar days after the day on which
- 198 the first individual signs the referendum packet; or

199 (B) the first business day that is at least 45 calendar days after the day on which
 200 the sponsors receive the items described in Subsection 20A-7-604(3) from the
 201 local clerk.

202 (b) A person may not submit a packet after the applicable deadline described in
 203 Subsection (5)(a).

204 (c) Before delivering an initiative packet to the county clerk under this Subsection (5),
 205 the sponsors shall send an email to each individual who provides a legible, valid
 206 email address on the signature sheet that includes the following:

207 (i) the subject of the email shall include the following statement, "Notice Regarding
 208 Your Petition Signature"; and

209 (ii) the body of the email shall include the following statement in 12-point type:

210 "You signed a petition for the following initiative:

211 [insert title of initiative]

212 To access a copy of the initiative petition, the initiative, the fiscal impact statement, and
 213 information on the deadline for removing your signature from the petition, please visit the
 214 following link: [insert a uniform resource locator that takes the individual directly to the page
 215 on the lieutenant governor's or county clerk's website that includes the information referred to
 216 in the email]."

217 (d) For a statewide initiative, the sponsors shall, no later than 5 p.m. on the day on which
 218 the sponsors submit the last initiative packet to the county clerk, submit to the
 219 lieutenant governor:

220 (i) a list containing:

221 (A) the name and email address of each individual the sponsors sent, or caused to
 222 be sent, the email described in Subsection (5)(c); and

223 (B) the date the email was sent;

224 (ii) a copy of the email described in Subsection (5)(c); and

225 (iii) the following written verification, completed and signed by each of the sponsors:

226 "Verification of initiative sponsor State of Utah, County of _____ I, _____,
 227 of _____, hereby state, under penalty of perjury, that:

228 I am a sponsor of the initiative petition entitled _____; and

229 I sent, or caused to be sent, to each individual who provided a legible, valid email
 230 address on a signature sheet submitted to the county clerk in relation to the initiative petition,
 231 the email described in Utah Code Subsection 20A-7-105(5)(c).

232 _____

- 233 (Name) (Residence Address) (Date)_"[:]
- 234 (e) For a local initiative, the sponsors shall, no later than 5 p.m. on the day on which the
- 235 sponsors submit the last initiative packet to the local clerk, submit to the local clerk
- 236 the items described in Subsection (5)(d).
- 237 (f) Signatures gathered for an initiative petition are not valid if the sponsors do not
- 238 comply with Subsection (5)(c), (d), or (e).
- 239 (6)(a) Within 21 calendar days after the day on which the county clerk receives the
- 240 packet, the county clerk shall:
- 241 (i) use the procedures described in Section 20A-1-1002, or 20A-7-106 if applicable,
- 242 to determine whether each signer is a legal voter and, as applicable, the
- 243 jurisdiction where the signer is registered to vote;
- 244 (ii) for a statewide initiative or a statewide referendum:
- 245 (A) certify on the petition whether each name is that of a legal voter;
- 246 (B) post the name, voter identification number, and date of signature of each legal
- 247 voter certified under Subsection (6)(a)(ii)(A) on the lieutenant governor's
- 248 website, in a conspicuous location designated by the lieutenant governor; and
- 249 (C) deliver the verified packet to the lieutenant governor;
- 250 (iii) for a local initiative or a local referendum:
- 251 (A) certify on the petition whether each name is that of a legal voter who is
- 252 registered in the jurisdiction to which the initiative or referendum relates;
- 253 (B) post the name, voter identification number, and date of signature of each legal
- 254 voter certified under Subsection (6)(a)(iii)(A) on the lieutenant governor's
- 255 website, in a conspicuous location designated by the lieutenant governor; and
- 256 (C) deliver the verified packet to the local clerk.
- 257 (b) For a local initiative or local referendum, the local clerk shall post a link in a
- 258 conspicuous location on the local government's website to the posting described in
- 259 Subsection (6)(a)(iii)(B):
- 260 (i) for a local initiative, during the period of time described in Subsection
- 261 20A-7-507(3)(a); or
- 262 (ii) for a local referendum, during the period of time described in Subsection
- 263 20A-7-607(2)(a)(i).
- 264 (7) The county clerk may not certify a signature under Subsection (6):
- 265 (a) on a packet that is not verified in accordance with Subsection (4); or
- 266 (b) that does not have a date of signature next to the signature.

- 267 (8)(a) A voter who signs a statewide initiative petition may have the voter's signature
268 removed from the petition by, in accordance with Section 20A-1-1003, submitting to
269 the county clerk a statement requesting that the voter's signature be removed no later
270 than 5 p.m. the earlier of:
- 271 (i) for an initiative packet received by the county clerk before December 1:
 - 272 (A) the first business day that is at least 30 calendar days after the day on which
 - 273 the voter signs the signature removal statement; or
 - 274 (B) the first business day that is at least 90 calendar days after the day on which
 - 275 the lieutenant governor posts the voter's name under Subsection 20A-7-207(2);
 - 276 or
 - 277 (ii) for an initiative packet received by the county clerk on or after December 1:
 - 278 (A) the first business day that is at least 30 calendar days after the day on which
 - 279 the voter signs the signature removal statement; or
 - 280 (B) the first business day that is at least 45 calendar days after the day on which
 - 281 the lieutenant governor posts the voter's name under Subsection 20A-7-207(2).
- 282 (b) A voter who signs a statewide referendum petition may have the voter's signature
283 removed from the petition by, in accordance with Section 20A-1-1003, submitting to
284 the county clerk a statement requesting that the voter's signature be removed no later
285 than 5 p.m. the earlier of:
- 286 (i) the first business day that is at least 30 calendar days after the day on which the
 - 287 voter signs the statement requesting removal; or
 - 288 (ii) the first business day that is at least 45 calendar days after the day on which the
 - 289 lieutenant governor posts the voter's name under Subsection 20A-7-307(2).
- 290 (c) A voter who signs a local initiative petition may have the voter's signature removed
291 from the petition by, in accordance with Section 20A-1-1003, submitting to the
292 county clerk a statement requesting that the voter's signature be removed no later than
293 5 p.m. the earlier of:
- 294 (i) the first business day that is at least 30 calendar days after the day on which the
 - 295 voter signs the signature removal statement;
 - 296 (ii) the first business day that is at least 90 calendar days after the day on which the
 - 297 local clerk posts the voter's name under Subsection 20A-7-507(2);
 - 298 (iii) the last business day that is no more than 316 calendar days after the day on
 - 299 which the application is filed; or
 - 300 (iv)(A) for a county initiative, April 15 immediately before the next regular

- 301 general election immediately after the application is filed under Section
302 20A-7-502; or
- 303 (B) for a municipal initiative, April 15 immediately before the next municipal
304 general election immediately after the application is filed under Section
305 20A-7-502.
- 306 (d) A voter who signs a local referendum petition may have the voter's signature
307 removed from the petition by, in accordance with Section 20A-1-1003, submitting to
308 the county clerk a statement requesting that the voter's signature be removed no later
309 than 5 p.m. the earlier of:
- 310 (i) the first business day that is at least 30 calendar days after the day on which the
311 voter signs the statement requesting removal; or
- 312 (ii) the first business day that is at least 45 calendar days after the day on which the
313 local clerk posts the voter's name under Subsection 20A-7-607(2)(a).
- 314 (e) In order for the signature to be removed, the county clerk must receive the statement
315 described in this Subsection (8) before 5 p.m. no later than the applicable deadline
316 described in this Subsection (8).
- 317 (f) A county clerk shall analyze a signature, for purposes of removing a signature from a
318 petition, in accordance with Subsection 20A-1-1003(3).
- 319 (9)(a) If the county clerk timely receives a statement requesting signature removal under
320 Subsection (8) and determines that the signature should be removed from the petition
321 under Subsection 20A-1-1003(3), the county clerk shall:
- 322 (i) ensure that the voter's name, voter identification number, and date of signature are
323 not included in the posting described in Subsection (6)(a)(ii)(B) or (iii)(B); and
- 324 (ii) remove the voter's signature from the signature packets and signature packet
325 totals.
- 326 (b) The county clerk shall comply with Subsection (9)(a) before the later of:
- 327 (i) the deadline described in Subsection (6)(a); or
- 328 (ii) two business days after the day on which the county clerk receives a statement
329 requesting signature removal under Subsection (8).
- 330 (10) A person may not retrieve a packet from a county clerk, or make any alterations or
331 corrections to a packet, after the packet is submitted to the county clerk.
- 332 (11) A person may not use an email address provided by the signer of an initiative petition
333 or a referendum petition for any purpose other than a purpose described in this chapter.
- 334 Section 4. Section **20A-7-106** is amended to read:

335 **20A-7-106 . Petition signature or removal for an individual with a disability.**

- 336 (1) If a voter who desires to sign a petition is, due to a qualifying disability under the
 337 Americans with Disabilities Act, unable to fill out the signature sheet or to sign the
 338 voter's name consistently, the voter may:
- 339 (a) inform the individual gathering signatures that, due to a qualifying disability under
 340 the Americans with Disabilities Act, the voter is unable to fill out the signature sheet
 341 or to sign the voter's name consistently; and
- 342 (b) direct the individual gathering signatures to:
- 343 (i) fill out the form on the signature sheet with the information provided by the voter;
 344 and
- 345 (ii) in place of the registered voter's signature:
- 346 (A) place the initials "AV" to indicate that the county clerk must use an alternate
 347 verification process to verify the validity of the voter's signature; and
- 348 (B) place next to the initials described in Subsection (1)(b)(ii)(A) a phone number,
 349 email address, or other method that the county clerk may use to contact the
 350 voter to verify the identity of the voter.

- 351 (2) If a voter who desires to remove the voter's signature from a petition is, due to a
 352 qualifying disability under the Americans with Disabilities Act, unable to sign the
 353 voter's name consistently, the voter may, instead of signing the statement described in
 354 Section 20A-1-1003:

- 355 (a) place the initials "AV" to indicate that the county clerk must use an alternate
 356 verification process to verify the validity of the voter's signature; and
- 357 (b) include in the statement a phone number, email address, or other method that the
 358 county clerk may use to contact the voter to verify the identity of the voter.

- 359 (3) An individual who, in the course of gathering a signature under Subsection (1) or
 360 gathering a statement requesting removal of a signature under Subsection (2), obtains a
 361 voter's email address may not use the email address for any purpose.

- 362 [~~3~~] (4) The alternate verification process described in this section includes:

- 363 (a) the process described in Subsection 20A-3a-401(9)(b); or
- 364 (b) another process established by rule, made by the director of elections within the
 365 Office of the Lieutenant Governor, in accordance with Title 63G, Chapter 3, Utah
 366 Administrative Rulemaking Act.

367 Section 5. Section **20A-7-213** is amended to read:

368 **20A-7-213 . Misconduct of electors and officers -- Penalty.**

- 369 (1) It is unlawful for an individual to:
- 370 (a) sign any name other than the individual's own to an initiative petition or a statement
371 described in Subsection 20A-7-105(8) or 20A-7-216(4);
- 372 (b) knowingly sign the individual's name more than once for the same initiative at one
373 election;
- 374 (c) knowingly indicate that an individual who signed an initiative petition signed the
375 initiative petition on a date other than the date that the individual signed the initiative
376 petition;
- 377 (d) sign an initiative petition knowing the individual is not a legal voter; or
- 378 [~~(e) on behalf of a voter described in Section 20A-7-106, place the initials "AV" or enter
379 any information on a signature sheet or statement described in Section 20A-7-106, if
380 the individual:]~~
- 381 [~~(i) does not obtain the voluntary direction or consent of the voter;]~~
- 382 [~~(ii) believes or has reason to believe that the voter lacks the mental capacity to give
383 the voter's direction or consent;]~~
- 384 [~~(iii) believes or has reason to believe that the voter does not understand the purpose
385 or nature of the action taken by the individual on behalf of the voter;]~~
- 386 [~~(iv) intentionally or knowingly deceives the voter into providing the direction or
387 consent of the voter; or]~~
- 388 [~~(v) intentionally or knowingly enters false information on the signature sheet or
389 statement; or]~~
- 390 [~~(f)~~] (e) knowingly and willfully violate any provision of this part.
- 391 (2) It is unlawful for an individual to sign the verification for an initiative packet, or to
392 electronically sign the verification for a signature under Subsection 20A-21-201(10),
393 knowing that:
- 394 (a) the signature date associated with the individual's signature for the initiative petition
395 is not the date that the individual signed the initiative petition;
- 396 (b) the individual has not witnessed the signatures of those individuals whose signatures
397 the individual collects or submits; or
- 398 (c) one or more individuals who signed the initiative petition are not registered to vote in
399 Utah.
- 400 (3) It is unlawful for an individual to:
- 401 (a) pay an individual to sign an initiative petition;
- 402 [~~(b) pay an individual to remove the individual's signature from an initiative petition;]~~

- 403 (b) pay an individual, or provide or offer to provide money, prepaid postage, or any
 404 other direct financial benefit to an individual, to remove the individual's signature
 405 from an initiative petition;
- 406 (c) accept payment to sign an initiative petition;[-or]
- 407 (d) accept payment to have the individual's name removed from an initiative petition[-] ;
- 408 (e) misrepresent that the individual is affiliated with, or acting on behalf of, a
 409 governmental entity while the individual gathers or attempts to gather:
 410 (i) a signature for an initiative petition; or
 411 (ii) a statement described in Section 20A-1-1003 requesting removal of a signature
 412 from an initiative petition; or
- 413 (f) on behalf of a voter described in Section 20A-7-106, place the initials "AV" or enter
 414 any information on a signature sheet or statement described in Section 20A-7-106, if
 415 the individual:
 416 (i) does not obtain the voluntary direction or consent of the voter;
 417 (ii) believes or has reason to believe that the voter lacks the mental capacity to give
 418 the voter's direction or consent;
 419 (iii) believes or has reason to believe that the voter does not understand the purpose
 420 or nature of the action taken by the individual on behalf of the voter;
 421 (iv) intentionally or knowingly deceives the voter into providing the direction or
 422 consent of the voter; or
 423 (v) intentionally or knowingly enters false information on the signature sheet or
 424 statement.

425 (4) A violation of this section is a class A misdemeanor.

426 Section 6. Section **20A-7-312** is amended to read:

427 **20A-7-312 . Misconduct of electors and officers -- Penalty.**

428 (1) It is unlawful for any person to:

- 429 (a) sign any name other than the person's own to a referendum petition;
- 430 (b) knowingly sign the person's name more than once for the same referendum petition
 431 at one election;
- 432 (c) knowingly indicate that a person who signed a referendum petition signed the
 433 referendum petition on a date other than the date that the person signed the petition;
- 434 (d) sign a referendum petition knowing the person is not a legal voter; or
- 435 (e) knowingly and willfully violate any provision of this part.

436 (2) It is unlawful for any person to sign the verification for a referendum packet, or to

- 437 electronically sign the verification for a signature under Subsection 20A-21-201(10)
 438 knowing that:
- 439 (a) the signature date associated with the person's signature for the referendum petition
 440 is not the date that the person signed the referendum petition;
 - 441 (b) the person has not witnessed the signatures of those persons whose signatures the
 442 person collects or submits; or
 - 443 (c) one or more individuals who sign the referendum petition are not registered to vote
 444 in Utah.
- 445 (3) It is unlawful for ~~[any person]~~ an individual to:
- 446 (a) pay ~~[a person]~~ an individual to sign a referendum petition;
 - 447 ~~[(b) pay a person to remove the person's signature from a referendum petition;]~~
 - 448 (b) pay an individual, or provide or offer to provide money, prepaid postage, or any
 449 other direct financial benefit to an individual, to remove the individual's signature
 450 from a referendum petition;
 - 451 (c) accept payment to sign a referendum petition;
 - 452 (d) accept payment to have the ~~[person's]~~ individual's name removed from a referendum
 453 petition;~~[-or]~~
 - 454 (e) misrepresent that the individual is affiliated with, or acting on behalf of, a
 455 governmental entity while the individual gathers or attempts to gather:
 - 456 (i) a signature for a referendum petition; or
 - 457 (ii) a statement described in Section 20A-1-1003 requesting removal of a signature
 458 from a referendum petition; or
 - 459 ~~[(e)]~~ (f) on behalf of a voter described in Section 20A-7-106, place the initials "AV" or
 460 enter any information on a signature sheet or statement described in Section
 461 20A-7-106, if the individual:
 - 462 (i) does not obtain the voluntary direction or consent of the voter;
 - 463 (ii) believes or has reason to believe that the voter lacks the mental capacity to give
 464 the voter's direction or consent;
 - 465 (iii) believes or has reason to believe that the voter does not understand the purpose
 466 or nature of the action taken by the individual on behalf of the voter;
 - 467 (iv) intentionally or knowingly deceives the voter into providing the direction or
 468 consent of the voter; or
 - 469 (v) intentionally or knowingly enters false information on the signature sheet or
 470 statement.

471 (4) Any person violating this section is guilty of a class A misdemeanor.

472 Section 7. Section **20A-7-512** is amended to read:

473 **20A-7-512 . Misconduct of electors and officers -- Penalty.**

474 (1) It is unlawful for any individual to:

- 475 (a) sign any name other than the individual's own name to an initiative petition or a
- 476 statement described in Subsection 20A-7-105(8) or 20A-7-515(4);
- 477 (b) knowingly sign the individual's name more than once for the same initiative at one
- 478 election;
- 479 (c) knowingly indicate that an individual who signed an initiative petition signed the
- 480 initiative petition on a date other than the date that the individual signed the initiative
- 481 petition;
- 482 (d) sign an initiative petition knowing the individual is not a legal voter; or
- 483 (e) knowingly and willfully violate any provision of this part.

484 (2) It is unlawful for an individual to sign the verification for an initiative packet, or to

485 electronically sign the verification for a signature under Subsection 20A-21-201(10),

486 knowing that:

- 487 (a) the signature date associated with the individual's signature for the initiative petition
- 488 is not the date that the individual signed the initiative petition;
- 489 (b) the individual has not witnessed the signatures of the individuals whose signatures
- 490 the individual collects or submits; or
- 491 (c) one or more individuals who signed the initiative petition are not registered to vote in
- 492 Utah.

493 (3) It is unlawful for an individual to:

- 494 (a) pay an individual to sign an initiative petition;
- 495 [~~(b) pay an individual to remove the individual's signature from an initiative petition;~~]
- 496 (b) pay an individual, or provide or offer to provide money, prepaid postage, or any
- 497 other direct financial benefit to an individual, to remove the individual's signature
- 498 from an initiative petition;
- 499 (c) accept payment to sign an initiative petition;
- 500 (d) accept payment to have the individual's name removed from an initiative petition; [~~or~~]
- 501 (e) misrepresent that the individual is affiliated with, or acting on behalf of, a
- 502 governmental entity while the individual gathers or attempts to gather:
- 503 (i) a signature for an initiative petition; or
- 504 (ii) a statement described in Section 20A-1-1003 requesting removal of a signature

- 505 from an initiative petition; or
506 [(e)] (f) on behalf of a voter described in Section 20A-7-106, place the initials "AV" or
507 enter any information on a signature sheet or statement described in Section
508 20A-7-106, if the individual:
509 (i) does not obtain the voluntary direction or consent of the voter;
510 (ii) believes or has reason to believe that the voter lacks the mental capacity to give
511 the voter's direction or consent;
512 (iii) believes or has reason to believe that the voter does not understand the purpose
513 or nature of the action taken by the individual on behalf of the voter;
514 (iv) intentionally or knowingly deceives the voter into providing the direction or
515 consent of the voter; or
516 (v) intentionally or knowingly enters false information on the signature sheet or
517 statement.
518 (4) A violation of this section is a class A misdemeanor.

519 Section 8. Section **20A-7-612** is amended to read:

520 **20A-7-612 . Misconduct of electors and officers -- Penalty.**

- 521 (1) It is unlawful for an individual to:
522 (a) sign a name other than the individual's own name to any referendum petition;
523 (b) knowingly sign the individual's name more than once for the same referendum at one
524 election;
525 (c) knowingly indicate that an individual who signed a referendum petition signed the
526 referendum petition on a date other than the date that the individual signed the
527 referendum petition;
528 (d) sign a referendum petition knowing that the individual is not a legal voter;
529 (e) in connection with circulating a referendum petition, represent that a document is an
530 official government document if the individual knows or has reason to know that the
531 document is not an official government document; or
532 (f) knowingly and willfully violate any provision of this part.
533 (2) It is unlawful for an individual to sign the verification for a referendum packet, or to
534 electronically sign the verification for a signature under Subsection 20A-21-201(10),
535 knowing that:
536 (a) the signature date associated with the individual's signature for the referendum
537 petition is not the date that the individual signed the referendum petition;
538 (b) the individual has not witnessed the signatures the individual collects or submits; or

- 539 (c) one or more individuals whose signatures appear in the referendum packet is not
540 registered to vote in Utah.
- 541 (3) It is unlawful for an individual to:
- 542 (a) pay an individual to sign a referendum petition;
- 543 ~~[(b) pay an individual to remove the individual's signature from a referendum petition;]~~
- 544 (b) pay an individual, or provide or offer to provide money, prepaid postage, or any
545 other direct financial benefit to an individual, to remove the individual's signature
546 from a referendum petition;
- 547 (c) accept payment to sign a referendum petition;
- 548 (d) accept payment to have the individual's name removed from a referendum petition;[
549 or]
- 550 (e) misrepresent that the individual is affiliated with, or acting on behalf of, a
551 governmental entity while the individual gathers or attempts to gather:
- 552 (i) a signature for a referendum petition; or
- 553 (ii) a statement described in Section 20A-1-1003 requesting removal of a signature
554 from a referendum petition; or
- 555 [(e)] (f) on behalf of a voter described in Section 20A-7-106, place the initials "AV" or
556 enter any information on a signature sheet or statement described in Section
557 20A-7-106, if the individual:
- 558 (i) does not obtain the voluntary direction or consent of the voter;
- 559 (ii) believes or has reason to believe that the voter lacks the mental capacity to give
560 the voter's direction or consent;
- 561 (iii) believes or has reason to believe that the voter does not understand the purpose
562 or nature of the action taken by the individual on behalf of the voter;
- 563 (iv) intentionally or knowingly deceives the voter into providing the direction or
564 consent of the voter; or
- 565 (v) intentionally or knowingly enters false information on the signature sheet or
566 statement.
- 567 (4) A violation of this section is a class A misdemeanor.
- 568 (5) The county attorney or municipal attorney shall prosecute any violation of this section.
- 569 **Section 9. Effective Date.**
- 570 This bill takes effect on May 6, 2026.