

**SENATE BILL REPORT**

**SB 5619**

**AS PASSED SENATE, MARCH 13, 1991**

**Brief Description:** Concerning candidates filing fees.

**SPONSORS:** Senators McCaslin and Madsen; by request of Secretary of State.

**SENATE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENTAL OPERATIONS**

**Majority Report:** Do pass.

Signed by Senators McCaslin, Chairman; Roach, Vice Chairman; Matson, and Sutherland.

**Staff:** Rod McAulay (786-7754)

**Hearing Dates:** February 21, 1991; February 25, 1991

**BACKGROUND:**

When filing a declaration of candidacy for an elective position, a candidate who lacks sufficient assets or income to pay the required filing fee may submit a nominating petition in lieu of the fee. This petition must be signed by a number of persons registered to vote in the jurisdiction of the office for which the candidate is filing equal to the number of dollars of the filing fee. Filing officers have no procedural mechanism to validate the claims of candidates who assert that they cannot afford the filing fees.

**SUMMARY:**

When a candidate claims lack of sufficient assets or income to pay a required filing fee, additional information supporting the claim must be provided. The Secretary of State shall specify by rule the additional information required and forms to be used. The completed form must be submitted at the time of filing or within five calendar days of filing. If the filing officer finds the information sufficient, the fee will be waived and the filing accepted.

When information is incomplete, the filing officer will request additional information. If this is not supplied or the filing officer determines that the information does not support the claim of inability to pay, the filing officer shall request payment of the filing fee. If the fee is not paid within five days of the request, the filing officer shall reject the filing.

**Appropriation:** none

**Revenue:** none

**Fiscal Note:** none requested

**TESTIMONY FOR:**

Provides tool to prevent abuse of indigent filing provisions.

**TESTIMONY AGAINST:** None

**TESTIFIED:** Ralph Munro, Secretary of State (pro); Sam Reed,  
Washington Auditors' Association (pro)