

**SENATE BILL REPORT**

**SB 5169**

**AS OF JANUARY 18, 1993**

**Brief Description:** Changing presidential preference primary provisions.

**SPONSORS:** Senators Barr, Haugen, Bluechel, McCaslin, Snyder, Owen, von Reichbauer, Sellar and Oke

**SENATE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS**

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

**Hearing Dates:** January 26, 1993

**BACKGROUND:**

In 1989, Initiative 99 to the Legislature was approved, establishing a presidential preference primary on the fourth Tuesday in May of each year when a president of the United States is to be elected. The Secretary of State may change the date to accommodate a regional primary. The Secretary of State shall place on a ballot for each major political party the names of any individual who's candidacy is generally advocated, is recognized in the national news media, or is supported by a petition signed by 1,000 registered voters.

At the primary, voters must write their address and sign a ballot request form declaring the party primary in which he or she wishes to participate. These request forms are retained for a period of time for public inspection.

Delegates to national party conventions must be selected to reflect the results of the primary except as otherwise provided by national party rules.

The costs of the primary are assumed by the state. Following the election, county auditors file certified claims with the Secretary of State who then submits a request for funds to the next succeeding Legislature. Counties must wait for the Legislature to convene and approve a budget prior to receiving reimbursement.

One primary has been conducted under this law. Prior to the primary, controversy arose with regard to the degree of party allegiance a voter must evidence when requesting a ballot and one major political party refused to recognize the primary results when selecting delegates to its national convention. Some voters expressed dissatisfaction with having to state any party allegiance. There was a 13.48 percent turnout of registered voters at the primary.

**SUMMARY:**

Voters participating in a presidential preference primary make an oral request for the party ballot they wish to vote and no record may be made of which party's ballot a voter received.

The Secretary of State includes the cost of a presidential preference primary in his general request to the Legislature for anticipated election costs. Claims of county auditors for payment of costs of the presidential preference primary are paid from this appropriation.

**Appropriation:** none

**Revenue:** none

**Fiscal Note:** requested January 19, 1993