

**SENATE BILL REPORT**

**SB 6368**

**AS REPORTED BY COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS,  
JANUARY 26, 1994**

**Brief Description:** Revising times for filing declarations and withdrawals of candidacy.

**SPONSORS:** Senators Haugen and Winsley

**SENATE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS**

**Majority Report:** That Substitute Senate Bill No. 6368 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Haugen, Chairman; Drew, Vice Chairman; Loveland, McCaslin, Oke, Owen and Winsley.

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

**Hearing Dates:** January 20, 1994; January 26, 1994

**BACKGROUND:**

To become a candidate for elective office, general election law provides procedures for individuals to file declarations of candidacy with the appropriate county auditor or Secretary of State. For positions open at a state general election in any particular November, the time for filing a declaration of candidacy is the five week days commencing on the preceding fourth Monday of July.

A declared candidate may withdraw his or her declaration by a signed request filed no later than the Thursday following the close of the regular filing period (the first or second Thursday of August). No withdrawal is permitted for declarations of candidacy made during a special filing period.

A void in candidacy for a nonpartisan office occurs when no person has filed during the regular filing period or the persons who did file have died or been disqualified. A void in candidacy prior to the fourth Tuesday preceding a primary or general election will trigger a special three day filing period for the primary or election. If no person files a declaration of candidacy during a special three day filing period, the position is deemed lapsed, the office stricken from the ballot and no write-in votes counted. The incumbent remains in office until a successor is elected at the next election.

Should a place on the ticket of a major political party be vacant because no person has filed for nomination, the county central committee, for positions elected within a county, or state central committee, for positions elected from more than one county, may select and certify a candidate no later than

the first Friday after the last day allowed for candidates to withdraw.

No later than the day following the last day for major political party central committees to select and certify candidates for vacant positions on a ticket, the Secretary of State shall certify to each county auditor a list of the candidates who have filed declarations in his or her office for a primary.

**SUMMARY:**

The time for filing declarations of candidacy for state general elections shall commence on the third Monday of July preceding the election and close on the tenth business day thereafter. A candidate may withdraw his or her declaration by filing a signed request no later than the last day for filing a declaration of candidacy.

The failure of any person to file a declaration of candidacy during the regular filing period shall not constitute a void in candidacy and no special three day filing period shall be scheduled.

The authority of the major political party county and state central committees to select and certify candidates where there is a vacancy on the ticket after the last day for candidates to withdraw is repealed.

No later than the day following the last day for persons to file declarations of candidacy for state general elections, the Secretary of State shall certify to each county auditor a list of the candidates who have filed declarations in his or her office for a primary.

**EFFECT OF PROPOSED SUBSTITUTE:**

The substitute eliminates all changes made by the original bill, except that the filing period is advanced by one week. Current law regarding withdrawal, special filing periods and political party authority to fill vacant positions on a ticket remain in effect.

**Appropriation:** none

**Revenue:** none

**Fiscal Note:** none requested

**TESTIMONY FOR (original bill):**

Will ease the time pressure on county auditors in preparing for primaries. The longer filing period eliminates the need for special withdrawal periods, special provisions for party nominations, or additional three-day filing periods.

**TESTIMONY AGAINST:** None

**TESTIFIED:** Sam Reed, Thurston County Auditor; John Pearson, Dep.  
Dir. of Elections, Office of Secretary of State