

# HOUSE BILL REPORT

## HB 2241

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**As Reported By House Committee On:**  
Government Administration

**Title:** An act relating to major political parties.

**Brief Description:** Establishing procedures for organization of new major political parties.

**Sponsors:** Representative D. Schmidt.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:**

Government Administration: 3/5/97 [DP].

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### HOUSE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATION

**Majority Report:** Do pass. Signed by 12 members: Representatives D. Schmidt, Chairman; D. Sommers, Vice Chairman; Scott, Ranking Minority Member; Gardner, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Doumit; Dunshee; Murray; Reams; Smith; L. Thomas; Wensman and Wolfe.

**Minority Report:** Without recommendation. Signed by 1 member: Representative Dunn.

**Staff:** Steve Lundin (786-7127).

**Background:** A major political party is defined as a party that had at least one nominee for president, United States senator, or a statewide office who received at least 5 percent of the total vote cast for office at the last preceding state general election.

Each county central committee of a major political party consists of precinct committee officers of the party from the precincts in the county. By no later than the second Saturday in January following each even-numbered general election, a county central committee meets for the purpose of organizing and elects a chair and vice chair.

The state central committee of each major political party consists of one committeeman and one committeewoman from each county who are elected by the

county committee at its organizational meeting. The state central committee meets in January of each odd-numbered year to organize and elect its chair and other officers.

**Summary of Bill:** The definition of a major political party is corrected to clarify that the even-year state general election when the percentage of votes is used to determine whether a political party is a major political party is the last general election at which either the president, a U.S. Senator, or a statewide elected officer was elected, rather than the last general election.

A political party that initially meets the definition of a major political party may not exercise the powers of a major political party until it has organized as follows:

- A convention is held in each county at which precinct committee officers are elected and the elected precinct committee officers elect a county central committee.
- The state central committee holds an organizational meeting on or before July 31 of the year after the new major political party becomes a major political party, which takes the place of the state central committee meeting that otherwise would occur in January of each odd-numbered year.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Not requested.

**Effective Date:** The bill contains an emergency clause and takes effect immediately.

**Testimony For:** There is no process for a new major political party to elect precinct committee officers, a county central committee, and a state central committee like existing major political parties.

**Testimony Against:** None.

**Testified:** Representative Dave Schmidt, prime sponsor; and Don Whiting, Office of Secretary of State.