

# HOUSE BILL REPORT

## HJM 4001

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### As Reported by House Committee On:

Select Committee on Elections

**Brief Description:** Requesting continuation of the blanket primary.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Hatfield, Pennington, Eickmeyer, Benson, Wood, Doumit, Simpson, DeBolt, Bush, Cooper, Linville, Morris, Reardon, Darneille, Mielke, Lovick, Kessler, Dunshee, Kirby, Hurst, Campbell, Ogden, Grant, Keiser, O'Brien, Edwards, Haigh, Kagi, Alexander and Jackley.

### Brief History:

#### Committee Activity:

Select Committee on Elections: 2/14/01 [DP].

#### Brief Summary of Bill

- Memorializes Congress and the President to pass a constitutional amendment allowing blanket primaries to nominate candidates for partisan office.

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### HOUSE COMMITTEE ON SELECT COMMITTEE ON ELECTIONS

**Majority Report:** Do pass. Signed by 6 members: Representatives Ogden, Democratic Co-Chair; D. Schmidt, Republican Co-Chair; Fisher, Democratic Vice Chair; Ballasiotes, Morris and Romero.

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

### Background:

A blanket primary system has existed in Washington State since 1935 when the Legislature enacted Initiative to the Legislature No. 2.

The United States Supreme Court recently held California's blanket primary law unconstitutional as a violation of political parties' rights of free association.

Washington State has a blanket primary law that is similar to the California blanket primary law.

The Washington State Democratic Party and the Republican State Committee of Washington filed a lawsuit in federal district court seeking to enjoin the use of the blanket primary in this state. A preliminary injunction was issued against the state conducting a blanket primary after 2000 using the blanket primary unless the political parties consent to the use of the blanket primary. The political parties are directed to file proposed permanent injunctions by March 1, 2001. The Secretary of State is directed to respond no later than 30 days after adjournment of the regular session in 2001, or 30 days after enactment of legislation addressing the United States Supreme Court decision, whichever is earlier, but in no case earlier than 30 days after the political parties file their proposed permanent injunctions.

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**Summary of Bill:**

Memorializes Congress and the President to amend the United States Constitution to allow blanket primaries to nominate candidates for partisan office.

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**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Not Requested.

**Testimony For:** Let's send a message to Washington, D.C. showing our support for the blanket primary and our voter's right of choice. Messages sometimes are important. Everyone I talk to supports the blanket primary.

**Testimony Against:** None.

**Testified:** Representative Hatfield, prime sponsor; and Chuck Sauvage, Common Cause (Washington State).