
Appropriations Committee

HB 2379

Brief Description: Canceling the 2008 presidential primary.

Sponsors: Representatives Hunt, Dunshee, Hudgins, McDermott, Appleton, Darneille, Green, Linville, Williams and Chase.

Brief Summary of Bill
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cancels the presidential primary for the 2008 election.

Hearing Date: 3/15/07

Staff: Owen Rowe (786-7391).

Background:

Political parties in Washington historically selected their nominee for President and allocated their delegates to the national nominating conventions through party caucuses. In 1989, the Legislature approved an Initiative to the Legislature which established the presidential primary. The Secretary of State must conduct a primary each presidential election year to allow citizens the opportunity to express their preferences as to the major political party candidates for President. Following the primary, the state and county committees of each major political party are provided lists of voters who participated in their party's presidential primary.

The original legislation required delegates to the party national conventions to be allocated to each candidate for President based on the results of the preference primary. Votes cast for a particular presidential candidate were considered votes cast for delegate positions committed to that candidate. The selection of actual individuals as delegates remained a party function. In 1995, the Legislature amended the law to allow party delegates to be allocated in whole or in part based on the results of party precinct caucuses, rather than the preference primary. The 1995 legislation also requires the Office of the Secretary of State to amend its administrative rules to comply with the major political parties' national and state rules.

The presidential primary is scheduled to take place on the fourth Tuesday in May of each year in which a President is to be nominated and elected. However, there is a process for the Secretary of

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State, or the state committee of any major political party, to propose an alternative date for the primary. The estimated cost of the 2008 presidential primary is \$9.7 million.

Summary of Bill:

The presidential primary is cancelled for the 2008 election. The presidential primary is reinstated at the end of 2008.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.