

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## SB 5096

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As of February 20, 2007

**Title:** An act relating to primary elections costs.

**Brief Description:** Requiring costs associated with partisan primaries to be borne by the political parties.

**Sponsors:** Senators McCaslin, Marr, Sheldon, Hatfield and Rasmussen.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:** Government Operations & Elections: 1/25/07.

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS & ELECTIONS

**Staff:** Mac Nicholson (786-7445)

**Background:** Cities, towns, and districts are liable for their proportionate share of election costs, or all election costs if the election is on an isolated date. In even numbered years, the remainder of the election costs are borne by the county.

In odd numbered years, if state officers or measures are voted upon at a primary or general election, the state must pay a prorated share of the election costs. The state must also pay a prorated share of costs associated with elections held to fill a vacancy in the United States Senate or House of Representatives.

**Summary of Bill:** Election costs associated with partisan primaries must be divided equally among the major political parties.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

**Committee/Commission/Task Force Created:** No.

**Effective Date:** Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

**Staff Summary of Public Testimony:** CON: Nomination of candidates can happen either in public or private. If parties pay for the primary, then the parties will nominate in private, and the public will not have a voice. The effect of this bill would be to turn over the entire nominating process to the parties.

**Persons Testifying:** CON: Katie Blinn, Office of the Secretary of State; Don Whiting, Washington State Grange.

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