

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5119

As of January 19, 2011

Title: An act relating to cancellation of the 2012 presidential primary.

Brief Description: Canceling the 2012 presidential primary.

Sponsors: Senators Pridemore and Kline; by request of Secretary of State and Governor Gregoire.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Government Operations, Tribal Relations & Elections: 1/18/11.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS, TRIBAL RELATIONS & ELECTIONS

Staff: Diane Smith (786-7410)

Background: Following the 1988 presidential election, an issue with the process for selecting delegates to the national political party conventions at which presidential candidates are nominated, prompted an initiative which was adopted by the Legislature establishing a presidential preference primary.

Presidential preference primaries were held in 1992, 1996, 2000, and 2008. The 2004 presidential preference primary was cancelled.

Unless the date is changed by statutory process, the presidential preference primary for the 2012 presidential election will be held on the fourth Tuesday in May, 2012.

Summary of Bill: No presidential primary is held in 2012.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 14, 2011.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

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

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: Political parties don't represent the interests of the citizens; they want us to adopt the national model rather than our non-partisan model. If this bill is not passed, it will lead to the demise of the top 2 system. While this primary has many merits, it costs \$10 Million. In these times of budgetary crisis, the cost should be avoided. The bill suspends the primary; it is reinstated after 2012.

CON: This bill is contrary to the will of the people expressed in an initiative. Without this primary, military and overseas, elderly, and working voters are disenfranchised because they can't participate in the caucuses. The Republicans always use this primary to choose at least a portion of their delegates. This primary is not a frill. People often do not participate in caucuses and this, the presidential preference primary, offers them a way to participate.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Julie Anderson, Peirce County Auditor.

CON: Luke Esser, Chairman, Washington State Republican Party; Tom Niewulis, Jr., citizen.