

# HOUSE BILL REPORT

## ESSB 5645

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**As Reported by House Committee On:**  
State Government, Elections & Information Technology

**Title:** An act relating to withdrawal of candidacy.

**Brief Description:** Concerning withdrawal of candidacy.

**Sponsors:** Senate Committee on State Government (originally sponsored by Senator Honeyford).

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:**

State Government, Elections & Information Technology: 3/17/17, 3/21/17, 3/22/17 [DP].

**Brief Summary of Engrossed Substitute Bill**

- Extends the candidate filing period for 72 hours after the deadline to withdraw a declaration, when an incumbent candidate timely withdraws his or her declaration for reelection.

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### HOUSE COMMITTEE ON STATE GOVERNMENT, ELECTIONS & INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

**Majority Report:** Do pass. Signed by 9 members: Representatives Hudgins, Chair; Dolan, Vice Chair; Koster, Ranking Minority Member; Volz, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Appleton, Gregerson, Irwin, Kraft and Pellicciotti.

**Staff:** Sean Flynn (786-7124).

**Background:**

Candidates for elected office must file a declaration of candidacy in order to appear on the election ballot. The candidate must declare the position he or she is seeking, that he or she is a registered voter in the proper jurisdiction for elected position, and declare that he or she will support federal and state laws. A candidate may only file for one office.

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*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.*

Candidates for statewide and congressional offices file declarations with the Office of the Secretary of State (OSOS). Candidates for state legislative office, the court of appeals, or superior court, must file declarations and filing fees with the OSOS when the district of the office covers two or more counties. All other candidacy declarations are filed with the county auditor.

The filing fee is the equivalent of 1 percent of the annual salary of the office that the candidate is seeking, or a flat \$10 for an office with an annual salary under \$1,000. A candidate may file a petition if he or she lacks sufficient income to pay the required filing fee.

The filing period for candidate declarations is the five-day period beginning on the Monday two weeks before Memorial Day, and ending at the close of business on the following Friday. A candidate may withdraw a declaration of candidacy and request his or her name not appear on the ballot up to the close of business on the Monday following the last day of the filing period. The withdrawal must be submitted to the same office where the declaration was filed. The filing fee is not refunded to a candidate who withdraws.

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**Summary of Bill:**

If a candidate seeking reelection timely withdraws his or her declaration of candidacy, the filing period for that office is extended for 72 hours from the close of business of the last day for candidates to withdraw declarations of candidacy.

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**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Not requested.

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

**Staff Summary of Public Testimony:**

(In support) This bill addresses a contingency where an incumbent candidate withdraws and other candidates have not filed by the deadline for the declaration of candidacy. By extending the deadline, other candidates will have the opportunity to declare once they know the incumbent has dropped out.

(Opposed) None.

**Persons Testifying:** Senator Honeyford, prime sponsor.

**Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying:** None.