

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5014

As Reported by Senate Committee On:
State Government & Elections, January 20, 2021

Title: An act relating to clarifying the state offices for which elections to fill a vacancy may appear on the ballot in odd-numbered years.

Brief Description: Clarifying the state offices for which elections to fill a vacancy may appear on the ballot in odd-numbered years.

Sponsors: Senators Hunt, Das and Wilson, C..

Brief History:

Committee Activity: State Government & Elections: 1/15/21, 1/20/21 [DP, w/oRec].

Brief Summary of Bill

- Allows elections to fill a vacancy in the offices of the Governor or Insurance Commissioner to appear on the ballot in odd-numbered years.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON STATE GOVERNMENT & ELECTIONS

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Hunt, Chair; Kuderer, Vice Chair; Hasegawa and Hawkins.

Minority Report: That it be referred without recommendation.

Signed by Senator Wilson, J., Ranking Member.

Staff: Samuel Brown (786-7470)

Background: Under the state Constitution, if a vacancy occurs in the Office of the Governor, the Lieutenant Governor fulfills the duties of the office. If, during the first two years of a Governor's term, the office is vacated more than thirty days before the next scheduled general election, the state Constitution mandates that an election to fill that

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vacancy occur at the general election.

Under statute, only certain matters may appear on a statewide general election ballot in odd-numbered years:

- election of municipal officers;
- election to fill the remainder of an unexpired term in the United States Senate or House of Representatives;
- election to fill the remainder of an unexpired term in the state legislature, the offices of Lieutenant Governor, Secretary of State, Treasurer, Auditor, Attorney General, Superintendent of Public Instruction, Commissioner of Public Lands, Supreme Court justice, Court of Appeals judge, or Superior Court judge;
- election of county officers in charter counties, if applicable; and
- state constitutional amendments, initiatives and referenda.

Summary of Bill: Elections to fill a vacancy in the Office of the Governor or the Office of the Insurance Commissioner may appear on the ballot in an odd-numbered year.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Creates Committee/Commission/Task Force that includes Legislative members: No.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: This bill will bring statute in conformity with the state Constitution.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Senator Sam Hunt, Prime Sponsor.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: No one.