

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Olympia, Washington

Bill Analysis

Bill No. HB 1592

Updating write-in laws.

Brief title

Hearing Date 2/10/99

Reps Schmid, Bush and Miloscia

Sponsor(s)

Staff Steve Andin

State Government Committee

Phone 786-7127

BACKGROUND:

Eligible persons may file a declaration of candidacy for an office during a regular period during an extended filing period or candidate for that office during a regular period if no one has filed a declaration of candidacy for a party's office as a nominee of a major political party during the filing period. A major political party may select a candidate to be nominated for a party for the partisan office. The county central committee of a major political party makes the selection for the district represented by the party's office with a single county. The state central committee of a major political party makes the selection in the instance of the names of the candidates printed on ballots for the primary general election when the office is placed before voters.

Write-in voting is allowed in this state. Eligible persons may file a declaration of candidacy as a declared write-in candidate at least one day before the primary general election. A write-in vote may be cast for a write-in vote for a declared write-in candidate for a person who has not filed a declaration of candidacy. However, the requirements for a write-in vote for a person who has not filed a declaration of candidacy are somewhat greater than for a write-in vote for a person who has filed a declaration of candidacy. A write-in candidate if the person more receives write-in votes than a declared write-in candidate, the vote for that person is counted. The vote for a person who has not filed a declaration of candidacy is counted only if the voter writes the person's name in the appropriate place on the ballot and also designates the office sought and position number of the political party applicable.

Statutes in conflict state whether a person who files a declaration of candidacy as a write-in candidate must pay the normal filing fee for the office sought.

Write-in votes are counted separately from votes and do not tally if assumed if the write-in votes were cast for the same person. The write-in votes would have altered the outcome of the primary election.

SUMMARY:

A variety of changes are made relating to write voting.

If an optical system of voting is used, voters desiring to cast a write vote must complete the proper mark next to the write line for that office.

It is clarified that persons who file a declaration of candidacy as a write candidate must pay the regular filing fee for the office.

The number of write votes cast for each office must be recorded and reported with the canvass of the election.

In the case of offices where the district compasses more than single county, write votes for an individual candidate be tallied by the secretary of state, and in multi-county districts, notify the county auditor that appears the write votes could affect the outcome of the primary election.

In the case of offices where the district compasses more than single county, the auditor must tally the write votes cast for an office if the total number of write votes cast for that office greater than the number of votes cast for a candidate apparently elected qualified and the auditor must notify the secretary of state and the county auditor that the write votes should be tallied.

FISCAL NOTE: Not requested.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill passed.