

SENATE BILL REPORT

HB 2398

As Reported by Senate Committee On:
Government Operations & Elections, February 23, 2010

Title: An act relating to election notices.

Brief Description: Modifying election notice provisions.

Sponsors: Representatives Hunt and Armstrong.

Brief History: Passed House: 2/05/10, 97-0.

Committee Activity: Government Operations & Elections: 2/23/10 [DPA, w/oRec].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS & ELECTIONS

Majority Report: Do pass as amended.

Signed by Senators Fairley, Chair; Oemig, Vice Chair; McDermott and Swecker.

Minority Report: That it be referred without recommendation.

Signed by Senator Roach, Ranking Minority Member.

Staff: Alison Mendiola (786-7483)

Background: At least 35 days before each primary or general election, the county auditor is to give notice of the registration deadlines by one publication in a newspaper of general circulation in the county.

Also, not more than ten days nor less than three days before the primary, the county auditor must publish notice of the primary in one or more newspapers of general circulation within the county. The notice must include a list of persons who have filed a declaration of candidacy for that primary, instructions for voting the applicable ballot, the poll's hours, and a list of precinct polling places. The names of all candidates for nonpartisan office must be published separately. This is the only notice required for the holding of any primary. A similar notice requirement applies to any state, county, district, or municipal election, whether special or general.

As soon as practicable before the primary, special election, or general election, the county auditor, or city clerk of a first-class or code city, as appropriate, must mail the local voters' pamphlet to every residence in each jurisdiction that has included information in the

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.

pamphlet. If more economical and better distribution would result, the county auditor or city clerk may choose to mail the pamphlet to each registered voter in each jurisdiction that has included information in the pamphlet.

Summary of Bill (Recommended Amendments): The timing for notice for any state, county, district, or municipal primary or election (special or general) is changed. Notice must be given not more than 15 nor less than five days prior to the date of closing of the registration rolls online or mail-in registrations by the county auditor or officer conducting the election.

The notice must be published in at least one newspaper of general circulation and must contain, at a minimum:

1. the last date to register online or through the mail;
2. the last date to transfer or update an existing registration;
3. the last date to register in-person for first-time voters;
4. information on where a person can register;
5. the type of election;
6. the date of election;
7. whether the election will be conducted entirely by mail or with polling places;
8. a list of all jurisdictions involved in the election including positions and short title for ballot measures appearing on the ballot;
9. the times and dates of any public meetings associated with the election; and
10. where additional information regarding the election may be obtained.

If the county or city chooses to mail a local voters' pamphlet to each residence, the notice required need only include the last date to register online or through the mail, the last date to transfer or update an existing registration, the last date to register in person for first-time voters, information on where a person can register, and the times and dates of any public meetings associated with the election.

EFFECT OF CHANGES MADE BY GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS & ELECTIONS COMMITTEE (Recommended Amendments): A technical correction is made. A reference to "rolls" is incorrectly spelled "roles".

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: PRO: Counties, like the state, are looking for ways to save money. By publishing only one notice instead of three, many counties will save money but this also consolidates the process and makes it more efficient. Also a requirement is added that the publication contact information as to where additional information regarding the election may be obtained. This is not currently required.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Representative Sam Hunt, prime sponsor; Carolyn Weikel, Snohomish County Auditor.