

# FINAL BILL REPORT

## SSB 5182

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**Brief Description:** Concerning procedures and deadlines for candidate filing.

**Sponsors:** Senate Committee on State Government & Elections (originally sponsored by Senators Nguyen, Hunt, Boehnke, Keiser, MacEwen, Nobles, Shewmake, Trudeau, Wilson, C. and Wilson, J.).

**Senate Committee on State Government & Elections**  
**House Committee on State Government & Tribal Relations**

**Background:** Candidate Filing. Candidates for elective office must file a declaration of candidacy to appear on the ballot. The filing period begins at the opening of business on the Monday two weeks before Memorial Day and ends at the close of business that Friday. Candidate may mail declarations of candidacy in up to ten days before the beginning of the filing period. Electronic declarations of candidacy may be filed from 9:00 a.m. the day the filing week begins until 4:00 p.m. the day filing week ends.

Candidates for statewide office, federal office file declarations of candidacy with the Secretary of State, as do candidates for legislative, appellate court, and superior court districts which span multiple counties. Candidates for other offices file declarations with the local county auditor.

Voters' Pamphlets. The Secretary of State must print and distribute a voters' pamphlet to each household in the state, public libraries, and other locations the Secretary of State deems appropriate whenever a statewide ballot measure or office is scheduled to appear on the general election ballot. Candidates for statewide office may include a photograph and information to contact their campaign.

Each county auditor must produce a local voters' pamphlet for the entire county at each election. County auditors must adopt and publish administrative rules for production of local voters' pamphlets, including deadlines for submission of statements and arguments. Local voters' pamphlets must be sent to every residence in each jurisdiction that has included information in the pamphlet.

Precinct Boundaries. Each county is divided into election precincts for administrative

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purposes. The county legislative authority divides the county into election precincts and establishes precinct boundaries. Except for temporary modifications to reflect an annexation or incorporation, precinct boundaries must be fixed from 14 days before candidates file to run in the primary election until the day of the general election. Precincts are limited to 1500 active, registered voters, although the county legislative authority may establish a lower maximum size for its precincts.

**Summary: Candidate Filing.** The candidate filing period is moved to the week beginning the first Monday in May. Regular business hours during candidate filing week, including for the acceptance of electronically filed declarations of candidacy, are standardized at between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. All candidates for the Legislature, state courts of appeals, and superior courts must file declarations of candidacy with the Secretary of State. The Secretary of State must establish contingency plans to support candidate filing for state legislative candidates where a localized or system-wide internet outage or disruption to the online filing website occurs during the two hours immediately preceding the filing deadline and immediately process all filings received in accordance with the contingency plan.

**Voters' Pamphlets.** The Secretary of State and county auditors may, by rule, set a deadline for submission of candidate statements and photographs in the statewide and local voters' pamphlets, respectively. The deadline for submission of candidate statements for voters' pamphlets must be at least 11 days after the end of the candidate filing period.

**Precinct Boundary Adjustments.** County auditors may adjust precinct boundaries up to seven days before the beginning of the candidate filing period.

**Votes on Final Passage:**

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|--------|----|----|--------------------|
| Senate | 48 | 0  |                    |
| House  | 61 | 36 | (House amended)    |
| Senate | 46 | 0  | (Senate concurred) |

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