

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6322

As Reported by Senate Committee On:
Government Operations & Elections, January 21, 2010

Title: An act relating to election notices.

Brief Description: Modifying election notice provisions.

Sponsors: Senators McDermott, Parlette and Kohl-Welles.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Government Operations & Elections: 1/21/10 [DP].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS & ELECTIONS

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Fairley, Chair; Oemig, Vice Chair; Roach, Ranking Minority Member; McDermott, Pridemore and Swecker.

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 polls 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 pamphlet. If more economical and better distribution would result, the county auditor or city

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.

clerk may choose to mail the pamphlet to each registered voter in each jurisdiction that has included information in the pamphlet.

Summary of Bill: 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 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.

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: This bill eliminates obsolete references since most elections are done by mail and streamlines the current process. Currently, three different publications are required during one election cycle and this bill streamlines the publication required to once per election cycle. This represents a cost saving measure for counties - it will save Snohomish County \$800 a year.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Senator McDermott, prime sponsor; Carolyn Weikel, Washington State Association of County Auditors.