

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 2162

As Reported By House Committee On:

Government Operations

Title: An act relating to the rotation of names on primary and general election ballots.

Brief Description: Revising the method for determining the order of names on election ballots.

Sponsors: Representatives Benton, Kremen, Carlson, Wolfe, Koster, Tokuda, Campbell, Morris, Smith, D. Schmidt, Lambert, Blanton, Elliot, Buck, Mulliken, Goldsmith, Pelesky and Thompson.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Government Operations: 1/19/96, 1/23/96 [DPS].

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 12 members: Representatives Reams, Chairman; Cairnes, Vice Chairman; Goldsmith, Vice Chairman; Rust, Ranking Minority Member; Scott, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Hargrove; Honeyford; Hymes; Mulliken; Scheurman; D. Schmidt and Wolfe.

Minority Report: Do not pass. Signed by 2 members: Representatives Conway and R. Fisher.

Staff: Scott White (786-7153).

Background: With regards to election procedures, the filing officer is required to determine the order in which the names of candidates will appear on all ballots. Names are selected by lot after the close of business on the last day for candidates to file for office. This determination shall be open to the public, including the media and any candidate. The filing officer may be either the Secretary of State or a county auditor.

Summary of Substitute Bill: The county auditor will determine by lot on the last day for candidates to withdraw, instead of the last day to file for candidacy, the order in which names of candidates will appear on all ballots for any partisan or non-

partisan office to be voted upon in the county at the primary. In conjunction with this new provision, the bill repeals the mandated procedure requiring county auditors to prepare additional sets of ballots for primary elections, in which the names of candidates for federal, state, and county partisan offices, the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, and judicial offices are rotated.

The requirement that ballots for the office of president and vice-president list those candidates of the major political parties in order based on who received the most votes from the electors of Washington State in the last presidential election is eliminated.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original: The substitute bill amends the original bill by requiring the Secretary of State to determine the single order of names, by lot, for publication in the state candidate's pamphlet.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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

Testimony For: Drawing by lot is the fairest way to list names on the ballots. This simplifies procedures and eliminates confusing old laws. The order of names of non-partisan candidates are already selected by lot.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Representative Benton, prime sponsor; and Sam Reed, Thurston County Auditor.