

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1040

As Passed House

January 16, 1998

Title: An act relating to the order of candidates on ballots.

Brief Description: Determining the order of candidates on ballots.

Sponsors: By House Committee on Government Administration (originally sponsored by Representatives D. Schmidt, Scott, Thompson and D. Sommers).

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Government Administration: 1/21/97, 2/5/97, 2/7/97 [DP].

Floor Activity:

Passed House: 2/21/97, 81-15;

Passed House: 1/16/98, 85-4.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATION

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 12 members: Representatives D. Schmidt, Chairman; D. Sommers, Vice Chairman; Scott, Ranking Minority Member; Gardner, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Doumit; Dunn; Dunshee; Reams; Smith; L. Thomas; Wensman and Wolfe.

Staff: Bronwyn Mauldin (786-7093).

Background: The filing officer determines by lot the order of candidates on the ballot for primary elections. The same order is used on all sample and absentee ballots.

On primary ballots, the order of candidates for federal, state, and county partisan offices, for the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, and for judicial offices, is rotated. Each candidate's name appears in every possible position for the office. An equal number of ballots is printed with each candidate order.

Summary of Bill: The order of candidates' names on all primary ballots is no longer rotated. The filing officer determines the order of candidates' names by lot.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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

Testimony For: Eliminating rotation of candidates names will save money, both in the cost of printing ballots and staff time. It will also reduce confusion on the part of voters and candidates, and reduce the chance of errors in printing and processing ballots.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Bob Terwilliger, Snohomish County Auditor; Barbara Sandahl, Washington Association of County Officials; and Doug Cochran, Yakima County Auditor.