

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5160

As Passed Senate, March 15, 1997

Title: An act relating to the presidential primary.

Brief Description: Eliminating the presidential primary.

Sponsors: Senator McCaslin.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Government Operations: 1/23/97, 3/4/97 [DP].
Passed Senate, 3/15/97, 38-10.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators McCaslin, Chair; Hale, Vice Chair; Anderson, Haugen and Patterson.

Staff: Eugene Green (786-7405)

Background: In 1989, Initiative 99 to the Legislature was approved, establishing a presidential primary on the fourth Tuesday in May of each year when a president of the United States is elected. The Secretary of State must place on a ballot for each major political party the names of any individual whose candidacy is generally advocated, is recognized in the national news media, or is supported by a petition signed by 1,000 registered voters. Whenever requested by a major political party, a separate ballot containing only the candidates of that party must be provided for a voter who requests a ballot of that party.

A major political party may, under national or state party rules, base the allocation of delegates from this state to the national nominating convention of that party in whole or in part on the participation in precinct caucuses and conventions conducted under the rules of that party.

The costs (or prorated costs) of the presidential primary are assumed by the state. County auditors file claims with the Secretary of State who then submits a request for funds to the next succeeding Legislature.

Summary of Bill: The presidential primary is repealed.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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

Testimony For: This is a needless exercise that costs us \$3 million.

Testimony Against: This primary brings national politicians into the state, gives us economic development exposure, and the people very much want this primary.

Testified: Senator McCaslin, prime sponsor (pro); Ralph Munro, Secretary of State (con).