

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1285

As Reported By House Committee On:

State Government

Title: An act relating to filing for office.

Brief Description: Clarifying where declarations of candidacy are filed.

Sponsors: Representatives D. Schmidt, McMorris, Romero, Scott, Wensman, Esser, Carrell, Benson, Doumit, D. Sommers, Dunn and Lambert.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

State Government: 2/2/99, 3/2/99 [DPS].

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

· Allows candidates for the Legislature the option of filing their declarations of candidacy with their county auditors or the Secretary of State.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON STATE GOVERNMENT

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 8 members: Representatives McMorris, Republican Co-Chair; Romero, Democratic Co-Chair; Campbell, Republican Vice Chair; Miloscia, Democratic Vice Chair; Dunshee; Haigh; Lambert and D. Schmidt.

Staff: Steve Lundin (786-7127).

Background:

Declarations of candidacy for the state Legislature from a district containing territory in more than one county are filed with the Secretary of State. Declarations of candidacy for the state Legislature from a district containing territory in a single county are filed with the county auditor of that county.

Summary of Substitute Bill:

A candidate for the Legislature from a district containing territory in more than one county has the option of filing a declaration of candidacy for that office with either the Secretary of State or the county auditor of the county in which the candidate resides. It is clarified where declarations of candidacy for other offices are filed.

Each county auditor with whom a declaration of candidacy for the Legislature is filed must notify the Secretary of State about this filing within one hour of the close of business on the day the declaration is filed. The filing fee accompanying a declaration of candidacy for the Legislature that is paid to a county auditor is divided among counties in the same manner as if it were filed with the Secretary of State.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill: The option of filing declarations of candidacy with a county auditor, that currently must be filed with the Secretary of State, is only given to candidates for the Legislature.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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

Testimony For: (Original bill) A lot of candidates, particularly in eastern Washington, want to file with the local county auditor.

Testimony Against: (Comments) The original bill did not provide for news media to find out who has filed for office by just contacting the Secretary of State's office rather than all county auditor offices.

Testified: (In favor) Representative D. Schmidt, prime sponsor; and Suzanne Sinclair, Washington State Association of Counties.

(Comments) Rowland Thompson, Allied Daily Newspapers; and Gary McIntosh, Office of the Secretary of State.