

SENATE BILL REPORT

SSB 6489

As Passed Senate, February 11, 1998

Title: An act relating to district court elections.

Brief Description: Specifying that there will be no primary for a district court position when there are no more than two candidates filed for the position.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Government Operations (originally sponsored by Senators McCaslin, Long, Hargrove, Fairley, Goings, Hale, Kline, Thibaudeau, Prince, Patterson, Winsley, Kohl, Oke and Haugen).

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Government Operations: 2/2/98 [DPS].
Passed Senate, 2/11/98, 43-0.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 6489 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators McCaslin, Chair; Haugen, Horn, Patterson and T. Sheldon.

Staff: Eugene Green (786-7405)

Background: No primary is held for any position in any city, town or special purpose district if there are no more than two candidates for the position. No primary is held for the office of commissioner of a park and recreation district or for the office of cemetery district commissioner.

Even if only one candidate files for a position, a primary is held for offices of Superintendent of Public Instruction, judge of the Supreme Court, judge of the Court of Appeals, judge of the superior court (in a county with a population under 100,000) and judge of the district court.

Summary of Bill: No primary is held for the office of judge of the district court if there are no more than two candidates filed for the position.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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

Testimony For: The primary is costly and time consuming. Very, very few candidates for district court judge lose the primary but win the election.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Judge Steve Dwyer, DMCJA (pro).