

---

**State Government Operations &  
Accountability Committee**

---

**HB 1913**

**Brief Description:** Changing the primary election date.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Hunt, Wallace, Moeller, Morrell and O'Brien.

**Brief Summary of Bill**

- Changes the date of the primary to the third Tuesday in May;
- Changes filing for declarations of candidacy to the fourth Monday in March;
- Requires continuing political committees and candidates successful in the primary to report to the PDC on the 10th day of the first month after the primary; and
- Changes the dates for soliciting or accepting campaign contributions during legislative session.

**Hearing Date:** 2/23/05

**Staff:** Marsha Reilly (786-7135).

**Background:**

Primary date: Nominating primaries for November general elections are held in Washington State on the third Tuesday of the previous September.

Declarations of Candidacy. Declarations of candidacy may be filed no earlier than the fourth Monday in July and no later than the following Friday for: 1) offices scheduled to be voted upon for both full and short terms at, or in conjunction with, a state general election, and 2) offices where a vacancy, other than short term, exists that has not been filled by election and where an election is required at the next state general election.

Campaign Reporting. Candidates and political committees must report all contributions and expenditures to the Public Disclosure Commission (PDC) at the beginning of a campaign and at specified intervals during the campaign, as follows:

- the day the treasurer is named;
- twenty-one days and seven days immediately preceding an election;

- the tenth day of the first month after the election (except for the period following the primary election by a candidate continuing in the general election, or any continuing political committee);
- on the tenth day of each month in which no other reports are required but only if expenditures or contributions were made in the preceding month and that the total contributions or expenditures exceed \$200 since the last report; and
- every Monday beginning on the first day of the fourth month preceding the special or general election for bank deposits.

Post-session Campaign Freeze: No state official may solicit or accept campaign funds during the period beginning 30 days before a legislative session and ending 30 days after a legislative session has concluded.

**Summary of Bill:**

The bill changes the date of the primary and other corresponding dates.

Primary Date. The date of the nominating primary for a general election and the election of precinct committee officers is moved to the third Tuesday in May preceding the general election.

Special Elections. The number of days allowed for a county legislative authority to call a special election is changed from 45 days to 52 days prior to the proposed election date. A special election may no longer be held on the 3rd Tuesday in May.

Declarations of Candidacy. The date for filing a declaration of candidacy is changed from the fourth week in July to the fourth week in March.

Campaign Reporting. Candidates who are successful in the primary election, and any continuing political committees, must file a report of contributions and expenditures to the Public Disclosure Commission on the tenth day of the first month after the primary.

Post-session Campaign Freeze. The periods for which campaign contributions may not be accepted by state officials is changed as follows:

- beginning December 24th before a legislative session convenes in an even numbered year and continuing through the date of adjournment of that session; and
- beginning December 24th before a legislative session convenes in an odd numbered year in which a special election shall occur and continuing through the sixtieth day of that session.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

**Effective Date:** The bill takes effect January 1, 2006.