

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5645

As Reported by Senate Committee On:
State Government, February 17, 2017

Title: An act relating to withdrawal of candidacy.

Brief Description: Addressing incumbent officeholder withdrawal of candidacy provisions.
[Revised for 1st Substitute: Concerning withdrawal of candidacy.]

Sponsors: Senator Honeyford.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: State Government: 2/15/17, 2/17/17 [DPS].

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Moves the deadline for a candidate to withdraw a declaration of candidacy to the end of the candidate filing period.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON STATE GOVERNMENT

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 5645 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Miloscia, Chair; Zeiger, Vice Chair; Hunt, Ranking Minority Member; Kuderer and Pearson.

Staff: Samuel Brown (786-7470)

Background: Candidates for elective office must file a declaration of candidacy in order to appear on the ballot. Candidates for statewide and federal offices must file their declarations with the Secretary of State, as must candidates in districts of multiple counties for appellate and superior courts and the state Legislature. For all other offices, the declaration of candidacy must be filed with the county auditor.

A filing fee is paid to the same officer with whom the declaration of candidacy is filed. For any office with a fixed annual salary of \$1,000 or less, the filing fee is \$10. For all other offices, the filing fee is 1 percent of the annual salary of the office. Candidates may submit petitions to have the filing fee waived.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

The filing period begins at the opening of business on the Monday two weeks before Memorial Day and ends at the close of business that Friday. A candidate can withdraw their declaration of candidacy by filing a signed request with the same officer with whom the declaration was filed. The period available to see that one's name does not appear on the ballot ends at the close of business hours on the Monday following the filing period.

Summary of Bill (First Substitute): The deadline for a candidate to withdraw a declaration of candidacy is moved to the end of the candidate filing period.

EFFECT OF CHANGES MADE BY STATE GOVERNMENT COMMITTEE (First Substitute): Provisions reopening the filing period if an incumbent officeholder withdraws a declaration of candidacy are removed. The deadline for a candidate to withdraw a declaration of candidacy is moved to the end of the candidate filing period.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Creates Committee/Commission/Task Force that includes Legislative members: No.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony on Original Bill: *The committee recommended a different version of the bill than what was heard.* PRO: This is a good government measure. There's a current oversight in our system that prevents parties from nominating or replacing a candidate who withdraws in the window after the filing period closes.

CON: This creates a cavalcade of filing periods that crunch time frames for ballot preparation and printing.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Senator Jim Honeyford, Prime Sponsor.

CON: Monty Cobb, WA Association of County Auditors.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: No one.