S-2802.1

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**SENATE BILL 5956**

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**State of Washington 65th Legislature 2017 2nd Special Session**

**By** Senators Hasegawa, Baumgartner, and Chase

AN ACT Relating to prohibiting the use of superdelegates; amending RCW 29A.56.050; and creating a new section.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  The legislature finds that the presidential election, including the selection process leading up to it, is one of the most important opportunities for citizens across the state and the country to engage in the American democratic experience. During this quadrennial process, civic engagement in government and public policy is at its highest, as voters carefully deliberate over which candidate is best qualified to lead our nation. However, the legislature finds that this process risks being subverted by the advent of so-called superdelegates. These unpledged electoral convention delegates are chosen by virtue of their position or political connections, and their vote is removed from any connection or accountability to the will of the people. Such unchecked authority risks the candidate of the party elites being nominated over the clear preference of everyday voters. The legislature thus finds that the ability of superdelegates to command influence over the final selection of a political party's presidential candidate represents an undemocratic end run around the political process.

Therefore, it is the legislature's intent that all delegates be bound to the results of the party's caucus or primary process and that superdelegates be prohibited.

**Sec.**  RCW 29A.56.050 and 2003 c 111 s 1405 are each amended to read as follows:

(1) A major political party ((~~may, under national or state party rules,~~)) must base the allocation of all delegates from this state to the national nominating convention of that party in whole ((~~or in part~~)) on either the ((~~participation in~~)) results of precinct caucuses and conventions conducted under the rules of that party or the results of the presidential preference primary under RCW 29A.56.020.

(2) If requested by a major political party, the secretary of state shall adopt rules under RCW 29A.04.620 to provide for any declaration required by that party.

(3) Voters who subscribe to a specific political party declaration under this section must be given ballots that are readily distinguishable from those given to other voters. Votes cast by persons making these declarations must be tabulated and reported separately from other votes cast at the primary and may be used by a major political party in its allocation of delegates under the rules of that party.

(4) For a political party that requires a specific voter declaration under this section, the secretary of state shall prescribe rules for providing, to the state and county committees of that political party, a copy of the declarations or a list of the voters who participated in the presidential nominating process of that party.

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