

S.117

Introduced by Senators Ayer, Bartlett, Carris and Racine

Referred to Committee on Government Operations

Date: March 17, 2009

Subject: Elections; primary elections

Statement of purpose: This bill proposes to move the date of the primary election from the second Tuesday in September to the second Tuesday in August.

An act relating to the date of the primary election

It is hereby enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Vermont:

~~Sec. 1. 17 V.S.A. § 2351 is amended to read:~~

~~§ 2351. PRIMARY ELECTION~~

~~A primary election shall be held on the second Tuesday of September in August in each even numbered year for the nomination of candidates of major political parties for all offices to be voted for at the succeeding general election, except candidates for president and vice-president of the United States, their electors, and justices of the peace~~

~~Sec. 1. 17 V.S.A. § 2351 is amended to read:~~

~~§ 2351. PRIMARY ELECTION~~

~~A primary election shall be held on the second fourth Tuesday of September in August in each even numbered year for the nomination of candidates of~~

~~major political parties for all offices to be voted for at the succeeding general election, except candidates for president and vice-president of the United States, their electors, and justices of the peace.~~

Sec. 1. 17 V.S.A. § 2351 is amended to read:

§ 2351. PRIMARY ELECTION

~~A primary election shall be held on the second fourth Tuesday of ~~September~~ in August in each even numbered year for the nomination of candidates of major political parties for all offices to be voted for at the succeeding general election, except candidates for president and vice-president of the United States, their electors, and justices of the peace.~~

Sec. 2. 17 V.S.A. § 2352 is amended to read:

§ 2352. NOMINATION OF CANDIDATES PRIOR TO SPECIAL ELECTION

~~When the governor or any court, pursuant to law, orders a special election to be held for any of the offices covered by section 2351 of this title, a special primary election shall be held on the Tuesday which falls not less than ~~40~~ 60 days nor more than ~~46~~ 66 days prior to the date set for the special election. The nomination of candidates prior to a special election, including nomination both by primary and by other means, shall be governed by the rules applicable to nomination of candidates prior to the general election, except as may be specifically provided in this chapter. The term "general election", as used in this chapter, shall be deemed to include a special election, unless the context requires a different interpretation.~~

Sec. 3. 17 V.S.A. § 2353(a) is amended to read:

~~(a) The name of any person shall be printed upon the primary ballot as a candidate for nomination by any major political party for any office indicated, if petitions containing the requisite number of signatures made by legal voters, in substantially the following form, are filed with the proper official, together with the person's written consent to having his or her name printed on the ballot:~~

~~I join in a petition to place on the primary ballot of the party the name of, whose residence is in the (city), (town) of in the county of, for the office of to be voted for on Tuesday, the day of ~~September~~ August, 20; and I certify that I am at the present time a registered voter and am qualified to vote for a candidate for this office.~~

Sec. 4. 17 V.S.A. § 2356 is amended to read:

§ 2356. TIME FOR FILING PETITIONS

~~Primary petitions and statements of nomination from minor party candidates and independent candidates shall be filed no sooner than the first Monday in June second Monday in May and not later than 5:00 p.m. on the third Monday of July second Thursday after the first Monday in June preceding the primary election prescribed by section 2351 of this title, and not later than 5:00 p.m. of the 42nd 62nd day prior to the day of a special primary election.~~

Sec. 5. 17 V.S.A. § 2369 is amended to read:

§ 2369. DETERMINING WINNER; TIE VOTES

~~Persons who receive a plurality of all the votes cast by a party in a primary shall be candidates of that party for the office designated on the ballot. If two or more candidates of the same party are tied for the same office, the choice among those tied shall be determined:~~

~~(1) Upon five days' notice and not later than 10 days following the primary election, by the state committee of a party, for a state or congressional office; the senatorial district committee for state senate; the county committee for county office; or the representative district committee for a representative to the general assembly shall meet to nominate a candidate from among the tied candidates.~~

~~(2) By run-off election for a county office, for a state senator, or for a representative to the general assembly. The run-off election shall be held on the fourth Tuesday of September and shall be conducted in the same manner as the primary election. The committee chair shall certify the candidate nomination for the general election to the secretary of state within 48 hours of the nomination.~~

Sec. 6. 17 V.S.A. § 2386 is amended to read:

§ 2386. TIME FOR FILING STATEMENTS

~~(a) Statements pursuant to this subchapter, except for vacancies created by the death or withdrawal of a candidate after the primary and statements for minor party candidates and independent candidates, shall be filed not more than 60 days earlier than the second Thursday after the first Monday in June before the day of the general election and not later than 5:00 p.m. on the third day Tuesday following the primary election.~~

~~(b) In the case of the death or withdrawal of a candidate after the primary election, the party committee shall have seven days from the date of the withdrawal to nominate a candidate. In no event, shall a statement be filed later than 40 60 days prior to the election.~~

Sec. 7. 17 V.S.A. § 2402(d) is amended to read:

(d) A statement of nomination and a completed and signed consent form shall be filed not sooner than the ~~first Monday in June~~ second Thursday after the first Monday in June and not later than the third day after the primary election. No public official receiving nominations shall accept a petition unless a completed and signed consent form is filed at the same time.

Sec. 8. 17 V.S.A. § 2413(a) is amended to read:

(a) The party members in each town, on or before the ~~first Tuesday of September~~ fourth Tuesday of August in each even numbered year, upon the call of the town committee, may meet in caucus and nominate candidates for justice of the peace. The committee shall give notice of the caucus as provided in subsection (d) of this section and the chairman and secretary shall file the statements required in sections 2385 through 2387 of this title.

Sec. 9. 17 V.S.A. § 2479 is amended to read:

§ 2479. MANNER OF DISTRIBUTION

Not later than ~~30~~ 45 days before the election, the secretary of state shall furnish the prepared ballots to the clerk of each town. Ballots shall be sent in securely fastened packages by mail or in some other safe manner, with marks on the outside clearly designating the polling place for which they are intended and the number of ballots enclosed. The town clerk shall store the ballots, except for ballots used as early or absentee voter or sample ballots, in a secure place until the day of the election, at which time the town clerk shall deliver them in sufficient quantities to the presiding officer in each polling place, together with any ballots prepared by the town clerk.

Sec. 10. 17 V.S.A. § 2811 is amended to read:

§ 2811. CAMPAIGN REPORTS; CANDIDATES FOR STATE OFFICE, THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, POLITICAL COMMITTEES, AND POLITICAL PARTIES

(a) Each candidate for state office, each candidate for the general assembly who has made expenditures or received contributions of \$500.00 or more, and each political committee and each political party required to register under section 2831 of this title shall file with the secretary of state campaign finance reports ~~40 days before the primary election and on the 25th~~ on July 15th and on the 15th of each month thereafter and continuing to the general election and 10 days after the general election until and including December 15th.

(b) At any time, but not later than ~~40 days~~ December 15th following the general election, a candidate for state office and each candidate for the general assembly who has made expenditures or received contributions of \$500.00 or more shall file with the secretary of state a "final report" which lists a complete accounting of all contributions and expenditures, and

disposition of surplus, and which shall constitute the termination of his or her campaign activities.

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Sec. 11. EFFECTIVE DATE

This act shall take effect upon passage.