

HB

132

Alaska State Legislature

REPRESENTATIVE
JERRY MACKIE



House of Representatives

ALASKA STATE CAPITOL
JUNEAU, ALASKA 99801-1182
(907) 465-4925

PO. BOX 793
CRAIG, ALASKA 99921
(907) 326-3008 OFFICE
(907) 326-2930 HOME

SPONSOR STATEMENT

ON

HB 132

I introduced HB 132 to bring parity to the state's election process. The principle provision of the bill is the requirement that all candidates for state elective office must enter the primary election contest.

Currently, any Alaskan citizen eligible for elective office may bypass the state's primary election and be placed directly on the general election ballot by a nominating petition. In my view, this causes two inequities. First, the voters are denied full knowledge at the onset of all contestants seeking election to a particular office. Voter access to financial disclosure information of petition candidates is delayed until just 2 months before the general election. Furthermore, voter exposure to petition candidates' views and positions on issues of public interest is limited and compressed.

The second inequity is that the petition process provides a short cut avenue to the general election ballot. It thus acts as an incentive for citizens to get directly on the general election ballot, because it saves money and the campaign scrutiny by the electorate is short. While independent candidates have occasionally won elective office, they more often act as spoilers to the competition between primary election winners. In effect then, the two ballot, primary-general election system, designed to winnow the many candidates down to contests between the few, is subverted. The infusion of petition candidates onto the general election ballot can make it an election system of few primary contests transcending into contests among the many in the general election.

HB 132 would place all candidates before the electorate on an equal footing. This is accomplished by requiring all candidates to be in the primary election. Just as the top vote getter of each political group will move on to the general election ballot, so too will the top vote getter among all independent candidates for a particular elective office. In this manner, the electorate will have an equal opportunity to view and assess all candidates for an elective office. And each candidate will be equally challenged by the election process.

SECTIONAL ANALYSIS
OF
HB 132

Section 1 This section changes the filing date for candidates for elective office who are being nominated by petition to June 1. This date coincides with the primary filing deadline for candidates of a political party [AS 15.24.040 (a)(1)].

Section 2. Deleted is the provision that petitions for governors and lieutenant governor must file jointly. This necessity for the general election ballot is contained in section 8.

Section 3. The requirements for the nominating petition must include the request that the candidate's name be placed on the primary election ballot in subsection (10). The provision for joint filing of governor and lieutenant governor candidates is deleted.

Section 4. AS 15.25.180(b) is amended to change financial disclosure requirements of petition candidates to coincide with those of political party candidates filing for the primary.

Section 5. A new section is added which governs challenges to the eligibility of a candidate being nominated by petition. AS 15.25.042 and AS 15.25.043 cite the authority and the manner with which the director of elections shall resolve questions of a candidate's eligibility.

Sections 6 and 7. These sections make general election to primary election conforming changes.

Section 8. A new section is added which places the names of the top vote getter of each party or political group on the general election ballot. In subsection (b) the party or political groups' governor and lieutenant governor candidates are paired up. In subsection (c), all nominating petition candidates will be treated as a political group. Hence, top vote getter for a particular office among competing petition candidates shall be placed on the general election ballot.

FISCAL NOTE **DRAFT**

BILL NO. HB 132

STATE OF ALASKA
 19946 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Revision Date: _____
 Title: Candidates for Statewide Ballot
 Sponsor: Representative Mackle
 Requestor: _____

Department Affected: Office of the Governor
 BRU: Division of Elections
 Component: General and Primary
 COMPONENT SERIAL NO. 22

EXPENDITURES/REVENUES:

OPERATING	FY 98	FY 97	FY 96	FY 95	FY 94	FY 93
PERSONAL SERVICES	0	0	0	0	0	0
TRAVEL	0	0	0	0	0	0
CONTRACTUAL	0	0	0	0	0	0
SUPPLIES	0	0	0	0	0	0
EQUIPMENT	0	0	0	0	0	0
LAND & STRUCTURES	0	0	0	0	0	0
GRANTS, CLAIMS	0	0	0	0	0	0
MISCELLANEOUS	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL OPERATING	0	0	0	0	0	0

CAPITAL	0	0	0	0	0	0
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REVENUE FUND SOURCE:	0	0	0	0	0	0
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FUNDING:

1002 Federal Receipts	0	0	0	0	0	0
1003 GF Match	0	0	0	0	0	0
1004 GF	0	0	0	0	0	0
1005 GF/Program Receipts	0	0	0	0	0	0
1006 GF/MHTIA	0	0	0	0	0	0
OTHER	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	0	0	0	0	0	0

POSITIONS:

FULL-TIME	0	0	0	0	0	0
PART-TIME	0	0	0	0	0	0
TEMPORARY	0	0	0	0	0	0

Estimate of current year (FY95) impact: _____

ANALYSIS: (Attach a separate page if necessary.)

Prepared by: David Kolvonn, Acting Director
 Division: Division of Elections

Phone: 465-4611
 Date: 2-2-95

Approved by Commissioner: Fran Ulmer, Lieutenant Governor
 Agency: Office of the Governor

Date: _____

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