

Fiscal: No Fiscal Impact

Revenue: No Revenue Impact

Action Date: 06/03/15

Action: Do Pass As Amended And Be Printed Engrossed.

Meeting Dates: 04/29, 06/03

Vote:

Yeas: 5 - Barnhart, Hoyle, Nosse, Rayfield, Smith Warner

Nays: 4 - Gilliam, Kennemer, McLane, Wilson

Prepared By: Erin Seiler, Committee Administrator

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Establishes procedures for electing precinct committeepersons (PCP). Requires one PCP for every 250 electors, rather than for every 500 electors, registered in precinct. Provides that write-in candidate may be eligible for election to PCP position if there is no other candidate. Requires write-in candidate to accept successful write-in candidacy before primary election, rather than after election. Prohibits person appointed to position of PCP from voting at election of county central committee officers at organizational meeting for first 60 days after selection.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Current process for electing and filling vacant PCP position
- Number of PCP positions filled and unfilled
- Utilization of write-in process for individuals seeking election as PCP
- Cost and staff time necessary to count write-in nominations for PCPs
- Education of voters and political parties on changes to PCP election process
- Election of PCP as tool for civic engagement and entrée into political process
- Operation of organizational process of central committee of political party

EFFECT OF COMMITTEE AMENDMENT:

Prohibits person appointed to position of precinct committeeperson (PCP) from voting at election of county central committee officers at organizational meeting for first 60 days after selection.

BACKGROUND:

A precinct is the smallest political unit in the country. A precinct cannot be divided by legislative, congressional or supervisor district. A precinct committeeperson (PCP) is a representative of a political party in the precinct in which he or she resides. Currently, Oregon's election law requires for every 500 registered voters in a precinct, there should be one PCP of each gender; Senate Bill 29-A removes from statute the gender requirement and specifies one PCP for every 250 electors.

A political party member may file for election as a PCP in the May Primary Election or may be a write-in candidate, where upon receipt of at least three write-in votes, a person is elected as a PCP. A county clerk is required to include PCP elections on primary election ballots regardless if the PCP positions are contested. If there are PCP vacancies after the election, the positions may be filled by appointment between elections at a political party central committee meeting. SB 29-A changes the PCP election process in several ways, with the objective of streamlining the process and producing cost-savings for counties. The measure requires that when the number of candidates for PCP is greater than the number of PCP positions, they will all be on the ballot. If the number of candidates is equal to or less than the positions available, those positions will be closed. The remaining vacant positions will be available for write in, and no later than the 8th day before election date, a person must file

a request and declaration of intent for their write-in votes to be counted. If no person files a request, the position would be considered vacant.