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HOUSE BILL NO. 6

Offered January 8, 2014

Prefiled November 18, 2013

A BILL to amend and reenact §§ 24.2-518 and 24.2-545 of the Code of Virginia, relating to elections; costs of primaries.

Patrons—Ware and Peace

Referred to Committee on Privileges and Elections

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. That §§ 24.2-518 and 24.2-545 of the Code of Virginia are amended and reenacted as follows:

§ 24.2-518. County and city treasurers to pay primary expenses; reimbursement by party committee; certain uses of machinery by party.

The treasurer of the county or city in which the elections are held shall pay the costs of primary elections. *Each county and city shall be reimbursed in full by the proper political party committee for the costs of primary elections conducted by the locality at the direction of the Commonwealth.*

A political party may hold an election to select the members of its party committee at the same time and in the same places as a primary election without *additional* fee or charge for making use of the electoral machinery, provided that a primary to nominate the party's candidate for an office is in fact conducted on that primary date. Such elections for party committee members may be conducted by paper ballots or by voting machines in the discretion of the local electoral board.

The proper political party committee shall pay the costs of using the election machinery at any other time for the purpose of conducting other nominating procedures adopted pursuant to the rules of that party, if such use is authorized by the officials having custody of the machinery.

§ 24.2-545. Presidential primary.

A. The duly constituted authorities of the state political party shall have the right to determine the method by which the state party will select its delegates to the national convention to choose the party's nominees for President and Vice President of the United States including a presidential primary or another method determined by the party. The state chairman shall notify the State Board of the party's determination at least 90 days before the primary date. If the party has determined that it will hold a presidential primary, each registered voter of the Commonwealth shall be given an opportunity to participate in the presidential primary of the political party, as defined in § 24.2-101, subject to requirements determined by the political party for participation in its presidential primary. The requirements may include, but shall not be limited to, the signing of a pledge by the voter of his intention to support the party's candidate when offering to vote in the primary. The requirements applicable to a party's primary shall be determined at least 90 days prior to the primary date and certified to, and approved by, the State Board.

B. Any person seeking the nomination of the national political party for the office of President of the United States, or any group organized in the Commonwealth on behalf of, and with the consent of such person, may file with the State Board petitions signed by at least 5,000 qualified voters, including at least 200 qualified voters from each congressional district in the Commonwealth, who attest that they intend to participate in the primary of the same political party as the candidate for whom the petitions are filed. Such petitions shall be filed with the State Board by the primary filing deadline. The petitions shall be on a form prescribed by the State Board and shall be sealed in one or more containers to which is attached a written statement giving the name of the presidential candidate and the number of signatures on the petitions contained in the containers. Such person or group shall also attach a list of the names of persons who would be elected delegates and alternate delegates to the political party's national convention if the person wins the primary and the party has determined that its delegates will be selected pursuant to the primary. The slate of delegates and alternates shall comply with the rules of the national and state party.

The State Board shall transmit the material so filed to the state chairman of the party of the candidate immediately after the primary filing deadline. The sealed containers containing the petitions for a candidate may be opened only by the state chairman of the party of the candidate. The state chairman of the party shall, by the deadline set by the State Board, furnish to the State Board the names of all candidates who have satisfied the requirements of this section. In furnishing the name of each such candidate, the state chairman shall certify that a review of the filed candidate petitions found the required minimum number of signatures of qualified voters for that office to have been met. Whenever only one candidate for a party's nomination for President of the United States has met the requirements

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HB6

9/7/22 1:34

to have his name on the ballot, he will be declared the winner and no presidential primary for that party will be held.

C. The names of all candidates in the presidential primary of each political party shall appear on the ballot in an order determined by lot by the State Board.

D. The State Board shall certify the results of the presidential primary to the state chairman. If the party has determined that its delegates and alternates will be selected pursuant to the primary, the slate of delegates and alternates of the candidate receiving the most votes in the primary shall be deemed elected by the state party unless the party has determined another method for allocation of delegates and alternates. If the party has determined to use another method for selecting delegates and alternates, those delegates and alternates shall be bound to vote on the first ballot at the national convention for the candidate receiving the most votes in the primary unless that candidate releases those delegates and alternates from such vote.

E. The election, or binding of votes, of delegates to a political party's national convention for the nomination of that party's candidates for President and Vice President of the United States through the presidential primary process shall be considered to be equivalent to a primary for the nomination of a party's candidate.

F. ~~The cost~~ *Each county and city shall be reimbursed in full by the proper political party committee for the costs* of the presidential primary ~~shall be paid by the Commonwealth pursuant to the provisions of the appropriation act~~.