PRESIDENTIAL BALLOT ACCESS: A PRIMER

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NATIONAL CONFERENCE OF STATE LEGISLATURES
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WHAT DOES NCSL DO?

- Answers questions
- Publishes The Canvass (*please subscribe!*)
- Tracks legislative trends
- Encourages connections with election officials
Hatched states indicate that the pres. primaries or caucuses will be held in more than one month. The states are categorized by the earliest date.
3 WAYS TO GET ON THE BALLOT

- Minor Party
- Major Party
- Individual Candidate

General Election Ballot
“MAJOR” PARTIES
“Major political party” means a political party qualified ... whose candidate for **governor received 25% or more of the popular vote** cast in the preceding gubernatorial election....

(1) An affiliation of electors becomes a major political party ... when a number of electors equal to **at least five percent of the number of electors registered in this state** are registered as members of the party ....
Colorado § 1-4-1302

(1) A petition to qualify as a minor political party shall be signed by at least ten thousand registered electors and shall be submitted to the secretary of state no later than the second Friday in the January of the election year for which the minor political party seeks to qualify.

Nevada § 293.171

1. To be organized as a minor political party, an organization must file with the Secretary of State a certificate of existence which includes the:
   (a) Name of the political party;
   (b) Names of its officers;
   (c) Names of the members of its executive committee; and
   (d) Name of the person authorized to file the list of its candidates for partisan office with the Secretary of State.
“MINOR” PARTIES: NOMINATION METHODS

- Primary
  - State Run
  - Party Run
- Party Convention
- Other Party Process
INDIVIDUAL CANDIDATES

Candidates

Viewing 767 filtered results for:

- 2020
- President
Primary Dates

- 47 bills in 21 states
- 6 bills enacted in 6 states
- Examples
  - Arizona SB 1154 – First Tuesday in August for any general or special election
  - New York AB 779 – Fourth Tuesday in June, also combined the federal and state primaries

Primary Types

- 50 bills in 23 states
- 1 bill enacted in Kentucky
- HB 325 Requires:
  - Dec. 31 party registration deadline prior to primary
  - Continuously registered until primary
  - New registrations after Dec. 31, require continuous registration until primary
STATE LEGISLATIVE ACTION II

Presidential Primaries

- 32 bills in 17 states
- 5 enacted bills in 5 states

Examples

- Maine SB 523 – State parties must certify whether they will hold a primary for presidential candidates or not. Primaries must be held the first Tuesday after the first Monday in March
- Utah SB 242 – Removes Utah from the Western State Pres. Primary and requires a Pres. Primary the first Tuesday in March

Miscellaneous

- 56 bills in 17 states
- 6 bills enacted in 5 states

Topics include:

- Required procedures for political parties
- Circulation of primary petitions
- Primary Absentee Ballots
Iowa, Nevada to launch caucus voting by phone for 2020

By MICHELLE L. PRICE AND THOMAS BEAUMONT, ASSOCIATED PRESS

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QUESTIONS & RESOURCES

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- NCSL’s Webpage: www.ncsl.org/research/elections-and-campaigns
- NCSL’s The Canvass
- NCSL’s Election Legislation Database