

SB 386 -- Redline

File No. 227 to APP Joint Favorable -- AN ACT CONCERNING THE USE OF RANKED-CHOICE VOTING IN PARTY CAUCUSES, CONVENTIONS AND PRIMARIES, INCLUDING PRESIDENTIAL PREFERENCE PRIMARIES, AND IN CERTAIN MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS.

Deletions ~~struck~~ · Insertions underlined

~~Senate~~ General Assembly ~~File~~ Substitute Bill No.

~~227~~386 February Session, 2026 ~~Substitute~~AN Senate~~ACT~~ Bill ~~CONCERNING No.~~ THE USE OF RANKED-CHOICE VOTING IN PARTY CAUCUSES, CONVENTIONS AND PRIMARIES, INCLUDING PRESIDENTIAL PREFERENCE PRIMARIES, AND IN CERTAIN MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS.

~~386 Senate, March 30, 2026 The Committee on Government Administration and Elections reported through SEN.~~

~~FLEXER of the 20th Dist., Chairperson of the Committee on the part of the Senate, that the substitute bill ought to pass.~~

~~AN ACT CONCERNING THE USE OF RANKED-CHOICE VOTING IN PARTY CAUCUSES, CONVENTIONS AND PRIMARIES, INCLUDING PRESIDENTIAL PREFERENCE PRIMARIES, AND IN CERTAIN MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS.~~

or (B) two or more candidates are ranked at the same order of preference and no other candidates that are ~~SSB386~~ ranked ~~higher~~ File ~~remain~~ No. as active candidates;

~~227~~(3) "Ranked-choice voting" means a system of casting and tabulating votes under which, with respect to a particular office, (A) each elector is able to rank candidates on the ballot in the order of such elector's preference, (B) one or more rounds of tabulation are used to determine LC0 1 ~~SSB386~~ of File 15 Substitute Bill No.

~~227~~386 ~~ranked~~ active ~~higher~~ candidates ~~remain~~ in as accordance with electors' preferences, and (C) the active ~~candidate~~ candidate with the greatest number of votes after all rounds of tabulation are complete is the winning candidate;

~~(3) "Ranked-choice voting" means a system of casting and tabulating votes under which, with respect to a particular office, (A) each elector is able to rank candidates on the ballot in the order of such elector's preference, (B) one or more rounds of tabulation are used to determine active candidates in accordance with electors' preferences, and (C) the active candidate with the greatest number of votes after all rounds of tabulation are complete is the winning candidate;~~

(b) (1) Except as prohibited by any provision of title 9 of the general ~~SSB386~~ statutes, the File outcome No. of (A) any primary, other than a presidential preference primary, held on or after January 1, 2028, (B) any municipal election held on or after January 1, 2028, or (C) any presidential preference primary held on or after January 1, 2028, may be determined under ranked-choice voting.

~~227~~LC0 2 ~~SSB386~~ of File 15 Substitute Bill No.

~~227~~386 ~~statutes, (2) the outcome of (A) For any primary, primary other than a presidential preference primary, held on or after municipal January election 1, determined 2028, under (B) ranked-choice any voting municipal for election an held office onto or which after electors January nominate 1, 2028, or (C) elect any no presidential more preference than primary one held candidate, on the or provisions after of January subdivision 1, (1) 2028, of may subsection be (d) determined of under this ranked-choice section voting shall apply.~~

~~(2) (A) For any primary or municipal election determined under ranked-choice voting for an office to which electors nominate or elect no more than one candidate, the provisions of subdivision (1) of subsection (d) of this section shall apply.~~

(ii) For any primary, list and identify candidates in the order and ~~SSB386~~ manner ~~provided~~ File in No. subsections (a) to (c), inclusive, and (g) of section 9- 437 of the general statutes, at a minimum;

~~227~~ and (iii) For any municipal election, and for the purposes of sections 9- 249a, 9-372, 9-373b, 9-380, 9-453d and 9-453t of the general statutes, indicate the party under which designation each candidate appears so LC0 3 ~~SSB386~~ of File 15 Substitute Bill No.

~~227~~386 ~~manner as provided to in enable subsections the (a) elector to (c), specify inclusive, the and party (g) designation of section 9- 437 of the general candidate statutes, being at ranked. a minimum;~~

~~and (iii) For any municipal election, and for the purposes of sections 9- 249a, 9-372, 9-373b, 9-380, 9-453d and 9-453t of the general statutes, indicate the party under which designation each candidate appears so as to enable the elector to specify the party designation of the candidate being ranked.~~

(2) (A) If at the completion of tabulation a tie occurs between candidates with the least number of votes and tabulation is unable to proceed until such tie is resolved, the candidate to be eliminated shall be determined by lot in accordance with regulations adopted under ~~SSB386~~ subsection ~~(f)~~ File of No. this section.

~~227~~(B) If at the completion of tabulation a tie occurs between candidates with the greatest number of votes, such tie shall be resolved in accordance with the provision of (i) section 9-446 of the general statutes in the case of a primary other than a presidential preference primary, (ii) LC0 4 ~~SSB386~~ of File 15

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~~227~~386 ~~subsection~~section (f)9-332 of ~~this~~the ~~section~~general statutes in the case of a municipal election, or (iii) chapter 154 of the general statutes in the case of a presidential preference primary.

~~(B) If at the completion of tabulation a tie occurs between candidates with the greatest number of votes, such tie shall be resolved in accordance with the provisions of (i) section 9-446 of the general statutes in the case of a primary other than a presidential preference primary, (ii) section 9-332 of the general statutes in the case of a municipal election, or (iii) chapter 154 of the general statutes in the case of a presidential preference primary.~~

If no person has a plurality of the votes for any of said offices, the General Assembly shall choose such ~~sSB386~~officer. ~~/ File No.~~

~~227~~ 5 ~~sSB386~~ File No.

~~227~~ officer.

but, if no person has a plurality of the votes for said office, the Governor may make a temporary appointment of a senator in Congress to serve for the ~~ensuing two years unless the General Assembly directs a special election~~LC0 for 5 a of senator 15 in Substitute Congress, Bill to No. ~~be held during said period, to fill the vacancy occasioned by such failure to elect.~~ 386 ~~ensuing two years unless the General Assembly directs a special election for a senator in Congress, to be held during said period, to fill the vacancy occasioned by such failure to elect.~~

(1) The call of a roll and the recording of the vote of each delegate ~~sSB386~~entitled ~~4 to File~~vote No. ~~and voting shall not be required;~~

~~227~~and (2) The determination of the per cent of the votes of the convention delegates present and voting on any roll-call vote, as described in section 9-386 of the general statutes, and of any similar reference to the LC0 6 ~~sSB386~~of File 15 Substitute Bill No.

~~227~~386 ~~entitled~~per ~~to~~cent ~~vote~~of such votes, including in sections 9-400 and ~~voting~~9-706 ~~shall~~of ~~not~~the general statutes, shall be ~~required~~; the number of votes received in any round of tabulation by each active candidate, as defined in section 1 of this act, in the round as a percentage of the votes received by all active candidates in the round.

~~and (2) The determination of the per cent of the votes of the convention delegates present and voting on any roll-call vote, as described in section 9-386 of the general statutes, and of any similar reference to the per cent of such votes, including in sections 9-400 and 9-706 of the general statutes, shall be the number of votes received in any round of tabulation by each active candidate, as defined in section 1 of this act, in the round as a percentage of the votes received by all active candidates in the round.~~

(2) In the case of a primary for a municipal office, the moderator, or the head moderator, as the case may be, shall declare nominated the person having the greatest number of votes for such office and, if more than one person is to be nominated for the same office, he shall declare nominated the persons having the greatest number of votes for such ~~sSB386~~office ~~4 up File to No.~~the number to be chosen.

~~227~~(3) In the case of a primary for members of a town committee, such moderator shall declare elected the persons having the greatest number of votes for such positions up to the number to be chosen for such LC0 7 ~~sSB386~~of File 15 Substitute Bill No.

~~227~~386 ~~office~~positions. ~~up to the number to be chosen.~~

~~(3) In the case of a primary for members of a town committee, such moderator shall declare elected the persons having the greatest number of votes for such positions up to the number to be chosen for such positions.~~

If such rules provide that such delegates are to be chosen from districts, the chairman shall also certify the ~~sSB386~~number ~~4 of File~~delegates No. ~~allocated to each district and the number to be selected at large, if any.~~

~~227~~Such rules (1) may [(1)] provide for ranked- choice voting, as defined in section 1 of this act, at any presidential preference primary held on or after January 1, 2028, and (2) may (A) LC0 8 ~~sSB386~~of File 15 Substitute Bill No.

~~227~~386 ~~number~~prescribe a formula for the allocation of delegates to candidates based upon the percentages of the total votes cast for, or received in any round of tabulation under ranked-choice voting by, such candidates at the primary, or [(2)] (B) require that all delegates shall be allocated to each the district candidate and [receiving] for whom the greatest number ~~to~~of ~~be~~votes ~~selected~~were ~~at~~cast, large, or if by any, whom the greatest number of votes were received in any round of tabulation under ranked-choice voting, notwithstanding such candidate's percentage of the total votes cast for all candidates.

Such rules (1) may [(1)] provide for ranked- choice voting, as defined in section 1 of this act, at any presidential preference primary held on or after January 1, 2028, and (2) may (A) prescribe a formula for the allocation of delegates to candidates based upon the percentages of the total votes cast for, or received in any round of tabulation under ranked-choice voting by, such candidates at the primary, or [(2)] (B) require that all delegates shall be allocated to the candidate [receiving] for whom the greatest number of votes were cast, or by whom the greatest number of votes were received in any round

~~of tabulation under ranked-choice voting, notwithstanding such candidate's percentage of the total votes cast for all candidates.~~

(b) If a party's rules so provide pursuant to subdivision (1) of ~~SSB386~~subsection 4(b) File of No-section 9-473, as amended by this act, each presidential preference primary held on or after January 1, 2028, shall be conducted under ranked-choice voting.

~~227~~The Secretary shall issue written LCO 9 ~~SSB386~~of File 15 Substitute Bill No.

~~227386 subsection instructions (b) for of the section implementation 9-473, of as policies amended and by procedures this regarding act, tabulation each and presidential publication preference of primary preliminary held and on final or results, after including January round-by-round 1, results. 2028, shall be conducted under ranked-choice voting.~~

~~The Secretary shall issue written instructions for the implementation of policies and procedures regarding tabulation and publication of preliminary and final results, including round-by-round results.~~

The provisions of section 9-436a shall apply to each candidate whose name ~~SSB386~~appears /on File the ballot, except that each such candidate, through such candidate's authorized or known representative, may submit to the LCO 10 of 15 Substitute Bill No.

~~227386 10 registrar~~ ~~SSB386~~of File voters No. the name of one designee as candidate checker for each polling place, and the registrar of voters shall appoint such designee as candidate checker for such candidate.

~~227 appears on the ballot, except that each such candidate, through such candidate's authorized or known representative, may submit to the registrar of voters the name of one designee as candidate checker for each polling place, and the registrar of voters shall appoint such designee as candidate checker for such candidate.~~

As used in this ~~SSB386~~section, /"ranked-choice File voting", "active candidate" and "withdrawn LCO 11 of 15 Substitute Bill No.

~~227386 11 candidate"~~ ~~SSB386~~have File the No-same meanings as provided in section 1 of this act.

~~227 section, "ranked-choice voting", "active candidate" and "withdrawn candidate" have the same meanings as provided in section 1 of this act.~~

~~SSB386[(1)] / (B) File~~ If the rounding off of such products to the nearest integers LCO 12 of 15 Substitute Bill No.

~~227386 12 causes~~ ~~SSB386~~the File sum No. of all delegates so allocated to be greater than the total number of delegates to be selected at large or from the district, then one delegate shall be subtracted from the number allocated to the candidate who received the greatest mathematical gain from such rounding off, and if necessary one delegate shall also be subtracted from the number allocated to the candidate who received the next greatest gain, and so on until the sum of all delegates allocated to candidates equals the total number of delegates to be so selected.

~~227 [(1)] (B) If the rounding off of such products to the nearest integers causes the sum of all delegates so allocated to be greater than the total number of delegates to be selected at large or from the district, then one delegate shall be subtracted from the number allocated to the candidate who received the greatest mathematical gain from such rounding off, and if necessary one delegate shall also be subtracted from the number allocated to the candidate who received the next greatest gain, and so on until the sum of all delegates allocated to candidates equals the total number of delegates to be so selected.~~

(c) (1) For allocations under this subsection when party rules provide for ranked-choice voting, the Secretary shall determine the number of delegates, if any, to be allocated at large to each candidate and, if applicable, the number of delegates, if any, to be allocated to each ~~SSB386~~candidate /from File each No-district respectively.

~~227~~An active candidate's LCO 13 ~~SSB386~~of File 15 Substitute Bill No.

~~227386 percentage of the votes received by all active candidates in the state or in a district is required to equal or exceed fifteen per cent in order for such candidate to be allocated any at large delegates or any delegates from each such district district, respectively, as the case may be.~~

~~An active candidate's percentage of the votes received by all active candidates in the state or in a district is required to equal or exceed fifteen per cent in order for such candidate to be allocated any at large delegates or any delegates from such district, as the case may be.~~

(3) If the rounding off of such products to the nearest integers causes ~~SSB386~~the /sum File of all delegates so allocated to be fewer than the total number LCO 14 of 15 Substitute Bill No.

~~227386 14 of~~ ~~SSB386~~delegates File to No. be selected at large or from the district, then one delegate shall be added to the number allocated to the candidate who suffered the greatest mathematical loss from such rounding off, and if necessary one delegate shall also be added to the number allocated to the candidate who suffered the next greatest such loss, and so on until the sum of all delegates allocated to candidates equals the total number of delegates to be so selected.

~~227 the sum of all delegates so allocated to be fewer than the total number of delegates to be selected at large or from the district, then one delegate shall be added to the number allocated to the candidate who suffered the greatest mathematical loss from such rounding off, and if necessary one delegate shall~~

~~also be added to the number allocated to the candidate who suffered the next greatest such loss, and so on until the sum of all delegates allocated to candidates equals the total number of delegates to be so selected.~~

~~7 January 1, 2028 9-484 Statement of GAE of Joint Legislative Favorable Commissioners: Subst.~~

~~In APP Section Joint 3(c), Favorable "or LCO the 15 office of state 15 senator or state representative" was added for consistency with other provisions of the section.~~

~~GAE Joint Favorable Subst.~~

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~~227 The following Fiscal Impact Statement and Bill Analysis are prepared for the benefit of the members of the General Assembly, solely for purposes of information, summarization and explanation and do not represent the intent of the General Assembly or either chamber thereof for any purpose.~~

~~In general, fiscal impacts are based upon a variety of informational sources, including the analyst's professional knowledge.~~

~~Whenever applicable, agency data is consulted as part of the analysis, however final products do not necessarily reflect an assessment from any specific department.~~

~~OFA Fiscal Note State Impact:~~

~~Agency Affected Fund Effect FY 27 \$ FY 28 \$ FY 29 \$ Secretary of the GF - Cost 973,000 1.4 million 306,000 State State GF - Cost 91,000 152,000 116,000 Comptroller - Fringe Benefits 1 Note:~~

~~GF-General Fund Municipal Impact:~~

~~Municipalities Effect FY 27 \$ FY 28 \$ FY 29 \$ All STATE None 1.1 million 1.1 million to Municipalities MANDATE 2 2.4 million - Potential Cost Explanation The bill allows ranked choice voting (RCV) for all primaries and municipal elections beginning in FY 28 if state parties and municipalities, respectively, choose to adopt it, resulting in a cost to the General Fund of approximately \$1.1 million in FY 27 and \$1.5 million in FY 28, and a potential cost to municipalities of approximately \$1.1 million in FY 28. Costs shift in the out years as described below.~~

~~1The fringe benefit costs for most state employees are budgeted centrally in accounts administered by the Comptroller.~~

~~The estimated active employee fringe benefit cost associated with most personnel changes is 41.82% of payroll in FY 27.~~

~~2State mandate is defined in Sec.~~

~~2-32b(2) of the Connecticut General Statutes, "state mandate" means any state initiated constitutional, statutory or executive action that requires a local government to establish, expand or modify its activities in such a way as to necessitate additional expenditures from local revenues.~~

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~~227 Secretary of the State The bill results in Personal Services Costs to SOTS of \$216,000 in FY and \$362,000 in FY 28, associated with four new positions needed to implement RCV, assuming that either a political party or any town adopts RCV.~~

~~SOTS must preapprove RCV ballots prior to printing and usage, requiring SOTS to hire one employee at a cost of \$130,000 in FY and annually thereafter, with an associated annual fringe cost of \$55,000.~~

~~Additionally, SOTS will require two positions at an annual combined cost of \$146,000 beginning in FY 28, with an associated fringe cost of \$61,000.~~

~~These positions are needed to implement and oversee the development of the RCV process, and to approve and oversee the design of RCV ballots in each participating municipality to comply with the provisions of the bill. Finally, to develop RCV regulations, SOTS will need to hire an additional durational staff member at a cost of \$86,000 in both FY 27 and FY 28, with an associated fringe cost of \$36,000 in FY and FY 28.~~

~~The bill also results in an Other Expenses cost to SOTS of \$757,000 in FY 27 and \$1.03 million in FY 28, primarily related to voting equipment and technology needs, along with a public information campaign. Upgrades to the state's Election Management System are required to process RCV ballots and produce RCV results, which has a one-time cost to SOTS of \$650,000 in FY 27.~~

~~There is also a \$85,000 cost in FY 27 to upgrade the election night reporting system, with an ongoing annual cost of \$30,000 beginning in FY 28, as the system will be more expensive to operate due to RCV. Because of the additional complexity of operating the system, SOTS will incur an additional cost of \$22,000 in FY 27 to develop training for registrars and poll workers to facilitate RCV.~~

~~To support participating municipalities, SOTS will need to conduct a public information campaign to inform the public of changes to current 3This position is an RCV Program Manager position.~~

~~5These positions include an Administrative Assistant and an Elections Officer.~~

~~This position is a Staff Attorney I.~~

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~~227 procedures, towards the goal of reducing the number of ineligible ballots, resulting in a one-time cost of \$1 million in FY 28.~~

~~Municipalities The bill empowers but does not require municipalities to use RCV beginning in FY 28 in municipal elections, and municipalities would be required to use RCV if adopted by a major party, resulting in a potential aggregate cost to municipalities of \$1.1 million if a party adopts RCV for the presidential preference primary in spring 2028. This cost includes additional labor and printing expenses associated with implementing RCV.~~

~~Per town costs are anticipated to range from:~~

~~(1) \$2,000 to \$4,500 for towns with up to 10,000 registered voters, to (2) \$30,000 up to \$65,500 for towns with more than 50,000 registered voters.~~

~~The Out Years The cost to implement RCV is expected to shift again in the out years, with a total annual cost to the General Fund of \$422,000 beginning in FY and an annual cost to municipalities of between \$1.1 million and \$2.4 million beginning in FY 29.~~

~~The SOTS cost will decline to \$306,000 annually beginning in FY 29.~~

~~The change in the cost to SOTS reflects the conclusion at the end of FY of both the durational position and the public information campaign.~~

~~The SOTS-associated fringe cost will decrease to \$116,000 annually.~~

~~The potential cost to municipalities is expected to range from \$1.1-8 million and \$2.4 million in the aggregate due to the increased number of applicable elections in which RCV could be used.~~

~~In FY 28, only the presidential preference primary would be eligible to see RCV. This figure assumes full implementation of RCV for the Presidential Preference Primary beginning in FY 28.~~

~~This is based on the median cost (\$0.43) per registered voter from the National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL) ranked choice voting survey.~~

~~This is based on the median cost (\$0.43) per registered voter from the National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL) ranked choice voting survey.~~

~~8This is based on the average (\$0.94) cost per registered voter from the NCSL ranked choice voting survey.~~

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~~227 utilization;~~

~~more elections occur in FY 29 and beyond.~~

~~The exact cost in the out years will vary by town and will depend on the number of towns that adopt RCV, as well as whether a major party adopts RCV for primaries.~~

~~The annualized ongoing fiscal impact identified above would continue into the future, subject to inflation, applicable elections, and the number of municipalities and parties that adopt RCV as a result of the bill.~~

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~~227-OLR Bill Analysis sSB 386 AN ACT CONCERNING THE USE OF RANKED-CHOICE VOTING IN PARTY CAUCUSES, CONVENTIONS AND PRIMARIES, INCLUDING PRESIDENTIAL PREFERENCE PRIMARIES, AND IN CERTAIN MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS.~~

~~SUMMARY This bill authorizes ranked choice voting (RCV) for certain municipal elections, presidential preference primaries, and all other primaries starting January 1, 2028, except when prohibited by the state's election laws.~~

~~Under the bill, RCV is a system of casting and counting votes for a particular office where (1) each voter can rank candidates based on their preferences (with "1" indicating their highest preference), (2) one or more rounds of counting are used to determine which candidates advance to the next round of counting based on those preferences, and (3) the candidate with the greatest number of votes after all rounds of counting wins.~~

~~Specifically, starting in 2028, for offices where only one candidate is chosen, the bill authorizes (1) municipalities to adopt RCV for municipal elections through a vote of the municipality's electors at a referendum and (2) major parties to adopt RCV for primaries under their party rules.~~

~~A municipality or major party must implement the bill's procedures when adopting RCV.~~

~~As under existing law and the bill, candidates for offices or party nominations not subject to RCV must receive a plurality of votes (the most).~~

~~The bill also establishes specific procedures for implementing RCV generally and, starting in 2028, for major parties adopting it for presidential preference primaries under their party rules.~~

~~It also makes corresponding changes for political party nominating conventions using RCV.~~

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~~227 Lastly, the bill makes technical and conforming changes.~~

~~EFFECTIVE DATE:~~

~~January 1, 2028 Sec. 1 -- RCV GENERAL ADMINISTRATION Ballots and Tabulators The bill requires the secretary of the state to set the type of ballot to be used in authorized RCV elections or primaries, the ballot's layout and orientation, and any instructions appearing on it.~~

~~Further, any RCV ballot must be approved by the secretary.~~

~~The bill generally requires an RCV ballot to list all qualified candidates in a way allowing voters to rank them by order of preference.~~

~~If it is not possible to do so, the secretary must allow voters to rank at least five candidates and must uniformly apply this limitation to all eligible voters for that office.~~

~~For primaries, candidates must be ordered on the ballot as existing law requires (see BACKGROUND).~~

~~For municipal elections, existing law considers a candidate's party designation to (1) determine the candidate's order on the ballot, (2) determine whether a party achieved minor party status for a particular race (see BACKGROUND), and (3) allow for cross endorsements.~~

~~For these purposes, the bill requires RCV ballots to indicate a candidate's party designation, allowing voters to rank candidates under a specific designation.~~

~~Relatedly, state law requires that voting tabulators be able to process ballots under certain conditions and produce certain voting information, such as preventing a voter from voting for more than one candidate for the same office unless otherwise allowed.~~

~~The bill requires that voting tabulators used for authorized RCV primaries and elections be able to comply with the bill's procedures.~~

~~Procedures The bill establishes the following requirements for RCV contests in which voters nominate or elect only one candidate.~~

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~~227 Voting Tabulation.~~

~~In the first round of counting, the bill requires that a ballot be counted for the highest-ranked active candidate.~~

~~Under the bill, an "active candidate" is a candidate on the ballot (or registered as a write-in candidate) who has not won, been eliminated in an earlier round, or withdrawn.~~

~~If three or more active candidates remain after the first round, the active candidate with the fewest votes after all votes have been tabulated is eliminated, and the remaining active candidates proceed to the next round.~~

~~The votes for the eliminated candidate are transferred to the remaining active candidates based on the rank expressed on the ballots.~~

~~This process continues until there are less than three active candidates.~~

~~Once this has occurred, the active candidate with the most votes wins.~~

~~Tie Votes.~~

~~If there is a tie between the candidates with the fewest votes, and one must be eliminated, the elimination is determined by lot, as set in regulations that the bill requires the secretary to adopt (see below). If there is a tie between the final two candidates, the tie is broken in accordance with the applicable state law.~~

~~Voter Ranking Issues.~~

~~Under the bill, a voter's ballot is not counted if it ranks no active candidate (an undervote).~~

~~If a ballot skips a number when ranking candidates or ranks the same candidate at different ranks (for example, cross-endorsed candidates), the ballot is counted for the highest-ranked active candidate.~~

~~A voter's ballot is no longer counted if all the candidates the voter ranked are no longer active, or if the voter ranked two candidates at the same level (for example, ranked two different candidates as their second choice) and all higher-ranked candidates are no longer active (an inactive ballot).~~

~~Recanvass.~~

~~Existing law generally requires a recanvass (recount) to be conducted if the difference in votes between the top two candidates is (1) less than 0.5% of the total number of votes cast for the office, but not more than 1,000 votes for a primary or not more than 2,000 votes for an election, or (2) less than 20 votes.~~

~~To determine if an automatic recount is triggered under these provisions for an RCV election or sSB386 /~~

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~~227 primary, the bill requires evaluating the difference between the total votes of the winning candidate and the remaining active candidate.~~

~~Regulations The bill requires the secretary of the state to adopt regulations to implement these provisions.~~

~~Sec. Sec. 3 & 4 -- PARTY CONVENTION-SPECIFIC PROVISIONS When a major party adopts RCV as part of its rules, the bill requires the party's chairperson or authorized representative to notify the secretary of the state, or her designee, following the process and timeline she established.~~

~~For parties that have adopted RCV, the bill also establishes certain exemptions or procedures when endorsing candidates for nomination to state or district office or state legislator at political party conventions.~~

~~Specifically, the provisions below apply when choosing among three or more candidates and only one candidate may be endorsed (a covered convention).~~

~~Voting and Records.~~

~~Whenever a vote is taken on a party's endorsement between two or more candidates, current law requires the convention's clerk or secretary to conduct it by roll call and record each delegate's vote.~~

~~The bill eliminates this requirement for covered conventions.~~

~~Additionally, similar to the existing law for roll call votes, the bill requires a convention's clerk or secretary to (1) keep an accurate written record of the vote totals each active candidate received in each RCV round, as well as the round-by-round totals;~~

~~(2) announce the round-by-round and final results;~~

~~and (3) file these records at the state central committee headquarters.~~

~~The records must be kept for at least 180 days after the convention adjourns and be available for public inspection at all reasonable times.~~

~~Eligibility Threshold.~~

~~Various state laws require candidates to receive a certain percentage of any roll call vote at a convention to meet sSB386 / File No.~~

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~~227 the law's requirements.~~

~~For example, the law allows any candidate who received at least 15% of the vote to qualify to run in the party's primary.~~

~~The law also requires a candidate to receive at least 15% of the vote in order to qualify for a public campaign finance grant from the Citizens' Election Program.~~

~~The bill specifies that in these and other similar situations under state law, the required percentage may be calculated based on the percentage of votes a candidate received in any RCV round at a covered convention.~~

~~Sec. Sec. 5-7 -- PRESIDENTIAL PREFERENCE PRIMARY A presidential preference primary is a type of primary election in which voters indicate their preference for a particular candidate to be the party's nominee for the presidency.~~

~~State law requires the parties with the largest and second-largest number of enrolled members in the state to hold a presidential preference primary if the names of two or more candidates are placed on the party's ballot (CGS Sec. Sec. 9-463 & 464).~~

~~In a presidential preference primary, voters do not directly select the party's nominee.~~

~~Instead, they vote for a particular candidate, and based on the vote results, state parties award delegates based on the party's system of allocating delegates.~~

~~These delegates then vote to formally select a candidate as the presidential nominee at the party's national convention.~~

~~Applicable Laws (Sec. 6) The law generally requires that presidential preference primaries, including any tabulations or generation of returns, be conducted, as nearly as practicable, in a manner set by the secretary of the state, with the state's laws on absentee balloting and political party nominations. Currently, they must do so unless the state's laws concerning presidential primaries say otherwise.~~

~~The bill also makes an exception if implementing RCV requires otherwise.~~

~~Delegate Certification (Sec. 5) By law, a party's chairman must submit a written certification to the secretary of the state with the number of delegates the party is entitled sSB386 / File No.~~

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~~227 to under its rules.~~

~~If any delegates are to be chosen from districts, the chairman must also certify the number of delegates allocated to each district and the number selected at large.~~

~~Additionally, the law allows a party to make rules (1) establishing a formula for allocating delegates based on the percentage of the total votes they receive or (2) allocating all the delegates to the candidate with the most votes (winner-take-all).~~

~~If a formula is used, the chairman must include it in the certification along with all necessary information to apply it.~~

~~The secretary may request a written interpretation or explanation of the formula's application.~~

~~Currently, the party's chairman must submit this certification at least 30 days before a primary.~~

~~The bill eliminates this deadline and instead requires the secretary to establish the process and deadline for these certifications.~~

~~By law, if the chairman does not certify how the delegates will be distributed, the secretary must determine the allocation of delegates generally in accordance with the party rules.~~

~~The law, unchanged by the bill, establishes procedures for the secretary to make this determination when RCV is not used.~~

~~Allocating Delegates (Sec. 5 & 7) Party Rules (Sec. 5).~~

~~The bill allows a party to authorize RCV through its rules starting in 2028.~~

~~If it does so, it must use RCV to allocate its delegates.~~

~~The rules may establish procedures for awarding delegates based on RCV (whether by formula or winner-take-all).~~

~~The secretary may request a written interpretation or explanation of a party's RCV rules.~~

~~Secretary Determination (Sec. 7).~~

~~The bill establishes alternative allocation procedures for major parties that permit RCV but have not certified how its delegates will be allocated.~~

~~By law, the secretary must determine (1) the number of delegates to be awarded at large, (2) those to be awarded by district (if any), and (3) the percentage of the vote received by each candidate in the state and each district.~~

~~Under the bill, sSB386 / File No.~~

~~227-25 sSB386 File No.~~

~~227 each ballot must initially be deemed to count for the highest-ranked candidate and the vote awarded to delegates pledged to vote for that candidate, as required under the applicable party's rules or state law.~~

~~By law, the secretary must also determine the number of votes cast for each candidate and the total number of votes cast, including the totals of each district, if applicable.~~

~~Under the bill, for RCV primaries, these totals must be based on the final tabulation of votes.~~

~~Under the bill's RCV procedures, to receive any delegates, a candidate must receive at least 15% of the total vote in the entire state or a specific district, as applicable.~~

~~The tabulation is considered complete if the vote total for all active candidates is 15% or greater.~~

~~If any active candidate has less than 15%, the candidate with the fewest votes is eliminated and that candidate's votes are transferred to the candidates ranked next by each ballot.~~

~~Any rankings for withdrawn candidates are treated as rankings for eliminated candidates.~~

~~Once the tabulation is complete, the secretary must calculate the number of delegates to be awarded for each candidate by multiplying each candidate's vote percentage by the total number of delegates to be selected, rounding off to the nearest whole number.~~

~~If, due to the rounding, the total number of awarded delegates for all candidates does not match the authorized number of delegates, the secretary must add or subtract a delegate, as necessary, from the candidate who had the largest difference between the calculated number and the rounded number.~~

~~She must continue this process for the candidates with the next largest differences until the number of allocated delegates equals the authorized number.~~

~~Secretary's Written Instructions (Sec. 6) The bill requires the secretary to issue, and publish on her office's website, written instructions for implementing policies and procedures regarding tabulating and publishing preliminary, round-by-round, and final RCV results.~~

~~(The bill does not establish a deadline by which the secretary must do so.) The instructions must also require that if a sSB386 / File No.~~

~~227-26 sSB386 File No.~~

~~227 candidate withdraws on the day of the primary as allowed by law, any ballot cast before the primary ranking that candidate first must be counted as a vote for the next-highest-ranked candidate on the ballot.~~

~~The instructions must also consider procedures requested in writing by a party's chairman if the party uses RCV, that are reasonable, compatible with the use of RCV ballots, and can be implemented using existing voting tabulators, including any associated hardware and software.~~

~~BACKGROUND Ballot Order for Primary Candidates State law generally requires the secretary to (1) place the party-endorsed candidate in the first row of the ballot and mark the name with an asterisk and (2) order all other candidates alphabetically based on the candidate's last name (CGS Sec. 9-437).~~

~~Minor Party Status Under Connecticut's election system, candidates running for office can get their names on the ballot in one of three ways:~~

~~(1) nomination by a major party (CGS Sec. 9-381 et. seq.), (2) nomination by a minor party (CGS Sec. 9-451 et. seq.), and (3) nomination by an nominating petition (CGS Sec. 9-453 et. seq.).~~

~~The law differentiates how a candidate may gain ballot access depending on whether the party is major or minor.~~

~~Under existing law, a "minor party" is one that is not a major party and whose candidate for the office in question received, under the same party designation, at least 1% of the votes cast for the same office at the last regular election.~~

~~In other words, unlike major parties, minor parties qualify for ballot access on a case-by-case basis and cannot nominate candidates to offices for which they have not achieved minor party status (CGS Sec. 9-372).~~

~~By law, if the party does not have minor party status for a particular office, a person may run under the party's designation only by sSB386 / File No.~~

~~227-27 sSB386 File No.~~

~~227 submitting a signed petition to the secretary of the state.~~

~~By law, it must be signed by (1) 1% of the qualified electors for the same office in the last preceding election or (2) 7,500 qualified electors (1% is usually the lower threshold and therefore the one most petitioners must meet) (CGS Sec. 9-453d).~~

~~For example, if a person is running for state senator, the petition must be signed by a total number of voters that equals 1% of all the voters that cast a ballot for the same state senate race in the last election.~~

~~COMMITTEE ACTION Government Administration and Elections Committee Joint Favorable Substitute Yea 13 Nay 6 (03/11/2026) sSB386 / File No.~~

~~227-28~~