

Ballot Measure No. 2

An Act Replacing the Political Party Primary with an Open Primary System and Ranked-Choice General Election, and Requiring Additional Campaign Finance Disclosures

Ballot Language

Ballot Measure No. 2 – 19AKBE

An Act Replacing the Political Party Primary with an Open Primary System and Ranked-Choice General Election, and Requiring Additional Campaign Finance Disclosures

This act would get rid of the party primary system, and political parties would no longer select their candidates to appear on the general election ballot. Instead, this act would create an open nonpartisan primary where all candidates would appear on one ballot. Candidates could choose to have a political party preference listed next to their name or be listed as “undeclared” or “nonpartisan.” The four candidates with the most votes in the primary election would have their names placed on the general election ballot.

This act would establish ranked-choice voting for the general election. Voters would have the option to “rank” candidates in order of choice. Voters would rank their first choice candidate as “1”, second choice candidate as “2”, and so on. Voters “1” choice would be counted first. If no candidate received a majority after counting the first-ranked votes, then the candidate with the least amount of “1” votes would be removed from counting. Those ballots that ranked the removed candidate as “1” would then be counted for the voters’ “2” ranked candidate. This process would repeat until one candidate received a majority of the remaining votes. If voters still want to choose only one candidate, they can.

This act would also require additional disclosures for contributions to independent expenditure groups and relating to the sources of contributions. It would also require a disclaimer on paid election communications by independent expenditure groups funded by a majority of out of state money.

Should this initiative become law?

Yes No

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Legislative Affairs Agency Summary

The Act would change state elections law. The Act would set new rules and penalties for campaign finance. An entity that spends to influence the election of a candidate and receives over \$2,000 in a year from a donor must disclose all receipts from the donor and their source. The donor must also report the donations and their source. The Act would also require new funding statements on some paid political ads.

The Act would set an open primary for most elections. In an open primary, all candidates appear on the same ballot. Voters may not add write-in candidates. The candidates with the four highest vote totals advance to the general election ballot. The primary will not choose the nominee of a party. The Act does not change the process for president and vice president. The Act would also change the special election process for filling some vacant offices. Special open primaries will set the candidates who appear on special election ballots.

At the general election, candidates may choose to appear on the ballot as affiliated with a party or group. Voters may add write-in candidates. Write-in candidates for governor or lieutenant governor do not have to be members of the same political party or group. The election pamphlet, ballot, and notice posted at each polling place will explain that candidates may designate a party or group but the designation is not party or group approval.

The Act would change the definition of political party and contribution because candidates on the ballot are not party nominees. The two parties or groups with the most registered voters may propose people to serve on some state boards. Election supervisors will appoint board members from the people proposed. The Governor must also appoint two Alaska Public Offices Commissioners from lists made by the two parties or groups. Each candidate for office may appoint one or more poll watchers.

The Act would enact ranked-choice voting for general elections. Voters will rank one or more candidates for each office. The ballot will direct voters to choose as many candidates as they wish but not assign the same ranking to more than one candidate. If one candidate is first choice on more than half of the ballots cast then the candidate wins. If no candidate is first choice on more than half of the ballots cast then the Division of Elections will remove the candidate who received the fewest votes from counting for the next round. In the next round, ballots ranking a removed candidate first will then count as votes for the next highest ranked candidate on the ballot. The counting repeats until two or fewer candidates remain. The election certificate will reflect the number of votes for each candidate at each round.