

Stricken language would be deleted from and underlined language would be added to the law as it existed prior to this session of the General Assembly.

1 State of Arkansas  
2 87th General Assembly  
3 Regular Session, 2009  
4

# A Bill

SENATE BILL 253

5 By: Senators Faris, B. Pritchard  
6  
7

## For An Act To Be Entitled

9 AN ACT TO REPEAL THE PRESIDENTIAL PREFERENTIAL  
10 PRIMARY ELECTION; TO MOVE THE DATE OF THE PRIMARY  
11 ELECTIONS; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.  
12

## Subtitle

13 AN ACT TO REPEAL THE PRESIDENTIAL  
14 PREFERENTIAL PRIMARY ELECTION; AND TO  
15 MOVE THE DATE OF THE PRIMARY ELECTIONS.  
16  
17  
18

19 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:  
20

21 SECTION 1. Arkansas Code § 7-5-103 is amended to read as follows:  
22 7-5-103. Special elections.

23 (a)(1) All special elections to fill vacancies in an office shall be  
24 called by proclamation, ordinance, resolution, or order of the appropriate  
25 constituted authority.

26 (2) The proclamation, ordinance, resolution, or order shall be  
27 published as soon as practicable in a newspaper of general circulation in  
28 which the special election is held and the proclamation, ordinance,  
29 resolution, or order shall establish:

30 (A) The date of the election;

31 (B) The date of the primary election, if any;

32 (C) The deadline for filing party certificates and  
33 political practices pledges, if required, with the county clerk or Secretary  
34 of State, as the case may be, if applicable;

35 (D) The deadline for party conventions to select nominees,  
36 if applicable;



1 (E) The deadline for parties to issue certificates of  
 2 nomination, if applicable;

3 (F) The deadline for candidates to file certificates of  
 4 nomination, if applicable, and political practices pledges with the county  
 5 clerk or Secretary of State, as the case may be;

6 (G) The deadline for filing as an independent candidate  
 7 and the period in which petitions for independent candidacy may be  
 8 circulated;

9 (H) The deadline for filing as a write-in candidate, if  
 10 applicable;

11 (I) The deadline for drawing for ballot position by the  
 12 appropriate committee or election commission, as the case may be; and

13 (J) The date the election shall be certified by the county  
 14 board of election commissioners in each county in which the election takes  
 15 place and, if applicable, by the Secretary of State.

16 (3)(A) All special elections to fill vacancies in office shall  
 17 be held on the second Tuesday of any month.

18 (B)(i) Special elections under this section in which a  
 19 ~~presidential preferential primary election~~, preferential primary election,  
 20 general primary election, or general election is scheduled to occur shall be  
 21 held on the date of the ~~presidential preferential primary election~~,  
 22 preferential primary election, general primary election, or general election.

23 (ii) If a special election to fill a vacancy in  
 24 office is held on the date of the ~~presidential preferential primary election~~,  
 25 preferential primary election, or general primary election, the names of the  
 26 candidates in the special election shall be included on the ballot of each  
 27 political party, and the portion of the ballot on which the special election  
 28 appears shall be labeled with a heading stating "SPECIAL ELECTION FOR  
 29 \_\_\_\_\_" with the name of the office set out  
 30 in the heading.

31 (iii) However, separate ballots containing the names  
 32 of the candidates to be voted on at the special election, nonpartisan  
 33 judicial elections, if applicable, and any other measures or questions that  
 34 may be presented for a vote shall be prepared and made available to voters  
 35 requesting a separate ballot.

36 (iv) No voter shall be required to vote in a

1 political party's ~~presidential preferential primary~~, preferential primary, or  
2 general primary in order to be able to vote in the special election.

3 (C)(i) If the special election is held at the same time as  
4 the general election, the names of the candidates in the special election  
5 shall be included on the general election ballot, and the portion of the  
6 ballot on which the special election appears shall be labeled with a heading  
7 stating "SPECIAL ELECTION FOR \_\_\_\_\_" with  
8 the name of the office set out in the heading.

9 (ii) The county board of election commissioners may  
10 include the special election on a separate ballot if the special election is  
11 held at the same time as the general election and if the ~~commission~~ county  
12 board determines that a separate ballot is necessary to avoid voter  
13 confusion.

14 (D) A special election to fill a vacancy in office shall  
15 be held not less than sixty-five (65) days following the date in the  
16 proclamation, ordinance, resolution, or order for drawing for ballot position  
17 when the special election is to be held on the date of the ~~presidential~~  
18 ~~preferential primary election~~, preferential primary election, general primary  
19 election, or general election.

20 (4) If the special election is not held at the same time as a  
21 ~~presidential preferential primary election~~, preferential primary election,  
22 general primary election, or general election, the special election shall be  
23 held not less than fifty (50) days following the date in the proclamation,  
24 ordinance, resolution, or order for drawing for ballot position.

25 (5)(A) All special primary elections required for an election to  
26 fill a vacancy in office shall be held on the second Tuesday of any month,  
27 and special primary elections held under this section in months in which a  
28 ~~presidential preferential primary election~~, preferential primary election,  
29 general primary election, or general election is scheduled to occur shall be  
30 held on the date of the ~~presidential preferential primary election~~,  
31 preferential primary election, general primary election, or general election.

32 (B) If a special primary election in conjunction with an  
33 election to fill a vacancy in office is held on the date of the ~~presidential~~  
34 ~~preferential primary election~~, preferential primary election, general primary  
35 election, or general election, the candidates to be voted upon at the special  
36 election shall be included on the ballot of each political party or the

1 general election ballot, as the case may be, and the portion of the ballot on  
 2 which the special primary election appears shall be labeled with a heading  
 3 stating "SPECIAL PRIMARY ELECTION FOR \_\_\_\_\_"  
 4 with the name of the party for which nomination is sought and the office set  
 5 out in the heading.

6 (C) The county board of election commissioners may include  
 7 the special primary election on a separate ballot if the special primary  
 8 election is held at the same time as a ~~presidential preferential primary~~  
 9 ~~election~~, preferential primary election, general primary election, or general  
 10 election and if the ~~commission~~ county board determines that a separate ballot  
 11 is necessary to avoid voter confusion.

12 (6) A special primary election shall be held not less than  
 13 sixty-five (65) days following the date in the proclamation, ordinance,  
 14 resolution, or order for drawing for ballot position when the special  
 15 election is to be held on the date of the ~~presidential preferential primary~~  
 16 ~~election~~, preferential primary election, general primary election, or general  
 17 election.

18 (7)(A) If the special primary election is not held at the same  
 19 time as a ~~presidential preferential primary election~~, preferential primary  
 20 election, general primary election, or general election, the special election  
 21 shall be held not less than fifty (50) days following the date in the  
 22 proclamation, ordinance, resolution, or order for drawing for ballot  
 23 position.

24 (B) When a special primary election is called to select  
 25 nominees for a special election to fill a vacancy in office, the nominee  
 26 shall be the person who receives the highest number of votes in the special  
 27 primary election. There shall be no runoff after a special primary election.

28 (8) In addition to the publication of the proclamation,  
 29 ordinance, resolution, or order required by the provisions of this section,  
 30 notice of special elections to fill vacancies called under this section shall  
 31 be published and posted under §§ 7-5-202 and 7-5-206.

32 (b)(1) Except for special school elections held under § 6-14-102(d),  
 33 all special elections on measures or questions referred to the voters shall  
 34 be called by proclamation, ordinance, resolution, or order of the properly  
 35 constituted authority.

36 (2) The proclamation, ordinance, resolution, or order shall set

1 forth:

2 (A) The date of the special election;

3 (B) The full text of any measure or question for which the  
4 election is called;

5 (C) Any ballot title for the measure or question for which  
6 the election is called; and

7 (D) Any other information ~~as may be~~ required by law.

8 (3) All special elections on measures or questions shall be held  
9 on the second Tuesday of any month, except special elections held under this  
10 section in a month in which a ~~presidential preferential primary election,~~  
11 preferential primary election, general primary election, or general election  
12 is scheduled to occur shall be held on the date of the ~~presidential~~  
13 ~~preferential primary election,~~ preferential primary election, general primary  
14 election, or general election. Special elections scheduled to occur in a  
15 month in which the second Tuesday is a legal holiday shall be held on the  
16 third Tuesday of the month.

17 (4)(A) If a special election is held on the date of the  
18 ~~presidential preferential primary election,~~ preferential primary election, or  
19 general primary election, the issue or issues to be voted upon at the special  
20 election shall be included on the ballot of each political party. The portion  
21 of the ballot containing the special election shall be labeled with a heading  
22 stating "SPECIAL ELECTION ON \_\_\_\_\_" with a  
23 brief description of the measure or question to be decided in the election.

24 (B) However, separate ballots containing the issue or  
25 issues or candidates to be voted on at the special election and candidates  
26 for nonpartisan judicial office shall be prepared and made available to  
27 voters requesting a separate ballot.

28 (C) No voter shall be required to vote in a political  
29 party's ~~presidential preferential primary,~~ preferential primary, or general  
30 primary in order to be able to vote in the special election.

31 (5) A special election shall be held not less than sixty-five  
32 (65) days following the date that the ordinance or resolution is adopted or  
33 the date the proclamation or order is issued when the special election is to  
34 be held on the date of the ~~presidential preferential primary election,~~  
35 preferential primary election, general primary election, or general election.

36 (6) If the special election is not held at the same time as a

1 ~~presidential preferential primary election~~, preferential primary election,  
 2 general primary election, or general election, the special election shall be  
 3 held not less than fifty (50) days following the date that the proclamation,  
 4 ordinance, resolution, or order is published.

5 (7) Notice of the election shall be published and posted in  
 6 accordance with § 7-5-202, § 7-5-206, or as may be otherwise provided by  
 7 Arkansas law.

8  
 9 SECTION 2. Arkansas Code § 7-5-409(f), concerning materials furnished  
 10 to qualified voters, is amended to read as follows:

11 (f) A designated bearer shall be allowed to pick up only two (2)  
 12 absentee ballots from the county clerk only during the fifteen (15) days  
 13 prior to a school election, special election, preferential primary election,  
 14 ~~presidential preferential primary election~~, or general election and seven (7)  
 15 days prior to a runoff election, including a general primary election.

16  
 17 SECTION 3. Arkansas Code § 7-5-418(a)(2), concerning availability of  
 18 early voting, is amended to read as follows:

19 (2) However, on all other elections, including the ~~presidential~~  
 20 preferential primary, general primary, and general runoff elections, early  
 21 voting shall be available to any qualified elector who applies to the county  
 22 clerk during regular office hours, beginning seven (7) days before the  
 23 election and ending on the day before the election day at the time the county  
 24 clerk's office regularly closes.

25  
 26 SECTION 4. Arkansas Code § 7-7-203(a), concerning the date for the  
 27 general primary election, is amended to read as follows:

28 (a) The general primary election shall be held on the second Tuesday  
 29 in ~~June~~ August preceding the general election.

30  
 31 SECTION 5. Arkansas Code § 7-7-203(c), concerning the date for filing  
 32 party pledges, a party certificate, and the political practice pledge, is  
 33 amended to read as follows:

34 (c)(1) Party pledges, if any, shall be filed and any filing fees of a  
 35 political party, if any, shall be paid during regular office hours in the  
 36 period beginning at 12:00 noon on the first weekday in ~~March~~ May and ending

1 at 12:00 noon on the seventh day thereafter before the preferential primary  
 2 election.

3 (2) A party certificate and the political practice pledge for  
 4 primary elections shall be filed with the county clerk or the Secretary of  
 5 State, as the case may be, during regular office hours in the period  
 6 beginning at 12:00 noon on the first weekday in ~~March~~ May and ending at 12:00  
 7 noon on the seventh day thereafter before the preferential primary election.

8 (3) The name of a candidate who fails to file a party  
 9 certificate by the filing deadline with the Secretary of State or county  
 10 clerk, as the case may be, shall not appear on the ballot.

11 (4) Party pledges, if any, shall be filed, filing fees, if any,  
 12 shall be paid, and party certificates and political practice pledges shall be  
 13 filed for special primary elections on or before the deadline established by  
 14 proclamation of the Governor.

15

16 SECTION 6. Arkansas Code § 7-8-101 is amended to read as follows:

17 7-8-101. Primaries – General law governs.

18 ~~(a)~~ All primaries, preferential and general, for the selection of  
 19 nominees for federal offices, including those of the United States Senators  
 20 and Representatives, shall be held on the same date and in the same manner as  
 21 the preferential and general primaries for state, district, county, and  
 22 township offices and shall be governed by the same procedure prescribed by  
 23 this act.

24 ~~(b) Unless otherwise provided by Arkansas law, the presidential~~  
 25 ~~preferential primary election shall be on the date established by the General~~  
 26 ~~Assembly and shall be governed in accordance with the laws for primary~~  
 27 ~~elections in this state.~~

28

29 SECTION 7. Arkansas Code § 7-8-201 is amended to read as follows:

30 7-8-201. Preferential elections required – Apportionment of delegates.

31 ~~(a)(1)~~ Each political party in the state desiring to select delegates  
 32 to attend a quadrennial national nominating convention of the party to select  
 33 a nominee for the office of President of the United States shall hold a  
 34 ~~presidential~~ preferential primary election in the state, and the delegates to  
 35 the national party convention shall be apportioned to the presidential  
 36 candidates whose names were on the ballot at the ~~presidential~~ preferential

1 primary or to "uncommitted" in the proportion that the votes cast for each  
 2 candidate or for "uncommitted" bear to the total votes cast at the election,  
 3 rounded to the closest whole number.

4 ~~(2) Presidential preferential primary elections shall be held on~~  
 5 ~~the first Tuesday in February of the year in which the convention is held.~~

6 ~~(3)(A)(i) Any person desiring to have his or her name printed on~~  
 7 ~~the presidential preferential primary ballot as a candidate for his or her~~  
 8 ~~party's nomination shall file a party certificate with the Secretary of State~~  
 9 ~~during regular office hours in the period beginning at 12:00 noon on the~~  
 10 ~~first Monday in November and ending at 12:00 noon on the fourteenth day~~  
 11 ~~thereafter before the presidential preferential primary election.~~

12 ~~(ii) The name to be printed on the ballot shall be~~  
 13 ~~the name on the party certificate.~~

14 ~~(iii) The Secretary of State shall not accept for~~  
 15 ~~filing a party certificate that contains a name that does not conform to the~~  
 16 ~~requirements of § 7-7-305(e).~~

17 ~~(B) Each political party shall:~~

18 ~~(i) Be responsible for determining the~~  
 19 ~~qualifications of candidates seeking to appear on the presidential~~  
 20 ~~preferential primary ballot of each political party;~~

21 ~~(ii) Provide necessary applications for candidacy;~~  
 22 ~~and~~

23 ~~(iii) Accept and process the applications.~~

24 ~~(C) The Secretary of State shall transmit to each county~~  
 25 ~~board of election commissioners no later than sixty five (65) days before the~~  
 26 ~~presidential preferential primary election a certified list of the names of~~  
 27 ~~the candidates of each political party as they are to be printed on the~~  
 28 ~~ballot.~~

29 ~~(D)(i) Not later than sixty (60) days before the~~  
 30 ~~presidential preferential primary election, the county board of election~~  
 31 ~~commissioners of each county shall hold a public meeting to determine by lot~~  
 32 ~~the order in which the names of the candidates for the respective party~~  
 33 ~~primaries are to appear on the ballot.~~

34 ~~(ii) The county board of election commissioners~~  
 35 ~~shall publish notice of the meeting at least three (3) days before the~~  
 36 ~~meeting in a newspaper of general circulation in the county.~~



1           ~~(4) The cost of the presidential preferential primary election~~  
 2 ~~shall be borne by the State of Arkansas and shall be paid from an~~  
 3 ~~appropriation made to the State Board of Election Commissioners for that~~  
 4 ~~purpose.~~

5           ~~(5)(A) Within each county, the presidential preferential primary~~  
 6 ~~election shall be conducted by the county board of election commissioners.~~

7           ~~(B) The state board shall have authority to adopt rules~~  
 8 ~~for the administration of presidential preferential primary elections~~  
 9 ~~consistent with the election laws of this state.~~

10          ~~(C) The state board may withhold reimbursement of funds to~~  
 11 ~~counties for state funded presidential preferential primary elections for~~  
 12 ~~failure to comply with the rules developed by the state board for the~~  
 13 ~~administration of primary elections or applicable state election laws until~~  
 14 ~~all requirements are met to the satisfaction of the state board.~~

15          ~~(b)(1) Presidential preferential primary election procedures not~~  
 16 ~~addressed in this section shall be governed by the general election laws of~~  
 17 ~~this state, including, but not limited to, laws governing primary elections.~~

18          ~~(2) Party rules shall govern presidential preferential primary~~  
 19 ~~election procedures not addressed by the general election laws of this state.~~

21          SECTION 8. Arkansas Code § 7-8-204 is amended to read as follows:

22          7-8-204. Rules for selection of delegates and alternates.

23          Each political party holding a ~~presidential~~ preferential primary  
 24 election in the state shall adopt appropriate rules for the selection of  
 25 delegates and alternate delegates to the quadrennial national nominating  
 26 convention of the party and to otherwise carry out the intent and purposes of  
 27 this subchapter.

29          SECTION 9. Arkansas Code § 7-8-302(5)(A)(i), concerning holding a  
 30 preferential primary election in order to have the name of a political  
 31 party's candidates for President and Vice President placed on the ballot, is  
 32 amended to read as follows:

33          (5)(A)(i) In order to have the name of a political party's  
 34 candidates for President and Vice President printed on the ballot, a  
 35 political party shall hold a ~~presidential~~ preferential primary election.