

The Florida Senate
BILL ANALYSIS AND FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT

(This document is based on the provisions contained in the legislation as of the latest date listed below.)

Prepared By: The Professional Staff of the Ethics and Elections Committee

BILL: SM 1600

INTRODUCER: Senator Justice and others

SUBJECT: Memorial to Congress regarding Presidential Preference Primaries

DATE: March 5, 2008

REVISED: _____

	ANALYST	STAFF DIRECTOR	REFERENCE	ACTION
1.	<u>Goodwin</u>	<u>Rubinas</u>	<u>EE</u>	<u>Unfavorable</u>
2.	_____	_____	_____	_____
3.	_____	_____	_____	_____
4.	_____	_____	_____	_____
5.	_____	_____	_____	_____
6.	_____	_____	_____	_____

I. Summary:

The memorial urges the United States Congress to create a rotating regional presidential primary system to begin in 2012. A copy of the memorial, after passage, is to be presented to the President of the United States, the President of the United States Senate, the Speaker of the United States House of Representatives, and to each member of the Florida delegation to the United States Congress.

II. Present Situation:

Presidential Preference Primary Date

Prior to 2008, the Florida presidential preference primary was held on the last Tuesday in March in each presidential election year.¹ By the time Florida's presidential preference primary was held in the last two nominating cycles (2000 & 2004), the eventual Republican and Democratic nominees had already been determined and the leading candidates were running essentially unopposed.

During the 2007 Legislative session, Florida moved its presidential preference primary date to the last Tuesday in January of each presidential election year.² In recent years, many states have moved up their presidential primary elections to take advantage of the national attention coveted by the early primary states. The 2008 primary schedule is as follows:

¹ § 103.101(1), Florida Statutes (2006).

² § 103.101(1), Florida Statutes (2007).

JANUARY 2008

- **January 3:** Iowa
- **January 5:** Wyoming (R)
- **January 8:** New Hampshire
- **January 15:** Michigan
- **January 19:** Nevada, South Carolina (R)
- **January 26:** South Carolina (D)
- **January 29:** Florida

FEBRUARY 2008

- **February 1:** Maine (R)
- **February 5:** Alabama, Alaska, Arizona, Arkansas, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, Georgia, Idaho (D), Illinois, Kansas (D), Massachusetts, Minnesota, Missouri, Montana (R)³, New Jersey, New Mexico (D), New York, North Dakota, Oklahoma, Tennessee, Utah, West Virginia (R)⁴
- **February 9:** Louisiana, Kansas (R), Washington⁵
- **February 10:** Maine (D)
- **February 12:** District of Columbia, Maryland, Virginia
- **February 19:** Hawaii (D)⁶, Washington, Wisconsin

MARCH 2008

- **March 4:** Ohio, Rhode Island, Texas, Vermont
- **March 8:** Wyoming (D)
- **March 11:** Mississippi

APRIL 2008

- **April 22:** Pennsylvania

MAY 2008

- **May 6:** Indiana, North Carolina
- **May 13:** Nebraska, West Virginia
- **May 20:** Kentucky, Oregon
- **May 27:** Idaho (R)

³ Party caucus for delegate selection; June primary is non-binding.

⁴ State nominating convention for delegate selection

⁵ Party caucuses for delegate selection (Republican Party selects 51% of delegates, Democratic Party selects all delegates)

⁶ Hawaii's Republican Party will hold its state convention on May 16-18; delegates are selected during a week-long process.

JUNE 2008

- **June 3:** Montana, New Mexico (R), South Dakota

AUGUST 2008

- **August 25-28: Democratic National Convention in Denver, Colorado**

SEPTEMBER 2008

- **September 1-4: Republican National Convention in Minneapolis-St. Paul, Minnesota**

III. Effect of Proposed Changes:

The memorial takes into consideration the current presidential preference primary schedule's inability to provide each state with the opportunity to fairly and meaningfully participate in the selection of presidential candidates. The memorial also addresses the current presidential primary system's problematic "front loading" of the presidential primary calendar. As such, the memorial suggests a plan providing for rotating regional presidential primaries grouped by region, beginning in 2012. The order in which regional primaries would be conducted could be rotated among the regions, with the region conducting the first primary in 2012 conducting the last primary in 2016, and the region conducting the second primary in 2012 conducting the first primary in 2016.

The memorial urges the United States Congress to provide for a rotating regional presidential primary system to begin in 2012. A copy of the memorial, after passage, is to be presented to the President of the United States, the President of the United States Senate, the Speaker of the United States House of Representatives, and to each member of the Florida delegation to the United States Congress.

IV. Constitutional Issues:**A. Municipality/County Mandates Restrictions:**

None.

B. Public Records/Open Meetings Issues:

None.

C. Trust Funds Restrictions:

None.

V. Fiscal Impact Statement:

A. Tax/Fee Issues:

None.

B. Private Sector Impact:

None.

C. Government Sector Impact:

None.

VI. Technical Deficiencies:

None.

VII. Related Issues:

None.

VIII. Additional Information:

A. Committee Substitute – Statement of Substantial Changes:

(Summarizing differences between the Committee Substitute and the prior version of the bill.)

None.

B. Amendments:

None.