

OFFICE OF LEGISLATIVE RESEARCH
PUBLIC ACT SUMMARY



PA 11-143—sHB 6532

Government Administration and Elections Committee

**AN ACT CONCERNING THE PRESIDENTIAL PREFERENCE
PRIMARY**

SUMMARY: This act delays the date of Connecticut's presidential preference primary from the first Tuesday in February to the last Tuesday in April to conform state law to recent rule revisions by the Democratic and Republican national committees. To effectuate this change, the act alters the number of days before the presidential preference primary when:

1. the secretary of the state must announce publicly the list of candidates whose names will appear on the ballot (from 78 to 74 days before the primary);
2. a candidate may ask the secretary to remove his or her name from the ballot (from 40 to 36 days before the primary);
3. petitioning candidates may begin circulating nominating petitions and must file them with the registrar of voters (from 78 to 74 days and 50 to 53 days, respectively, before the primary);
4. registrars must verify the signatures and forward the petitions to the secretary (from 46 to 49 days before the primary); and
5. the secretary must finish calculating the number of signatures on the petitions to determine whether each candidate has enough for his or her name to be placed on the ballot (from 36 to 46 days before the primary).

These changes also accommodate the federal Military and Overseas Voter Empowerment (MOVE) Act (P.L. 111-84). Among other things, the MOVE Act requires states to transmit validly requested absentee ballots to overseas and military voters no later than 45 days before a federal election, unless they request and receive a hardship waiver from the Department of Defense.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2011

BACKGROUND

National Democratic and Republican Committee Rules

In August 2010, the Democratic National Committee and the Republican National Committee both adopted rules prohibiting states, other than Iowa, New Hampshire, South Carolina, or Nevada from holding a presidential preference primary before the first Tuesday in March in the year in which a national convention is held (Democratic National Committee, Delegate Selection Rules 11(A) and Republican National Committee, Revised Rule No. 15(b)).

OLR Tracking: KS:KM:PF:ts