

Dear Members of the committee,

I want to thank you for this opportunity to address you and speak in favor SB 844 AAC VOTING RIGHTS OF MEMBERS OF MINOR PARTIES, on the merits of the proposed changes to Sec. 9-453u *Reservation of party designation, Sec. 9-374 Party rules to be filed, and Sec.9-375 Amendment of party rules.*

All proposed text to be added will appear in blue in brackets [] and proposed text to be removed will be in red and underlined

First, the need for the proposed changes to Sec 9-453u Reservation of Party Designation; The practice of the election division of the Secretary of State has been to follow the letter of the law, which it should do in all cases. Unfortunately this has caused unforeseen problems for minor parties trying to grow into state wide parties as is their right to be. The past practice of allowing more than one political party to use the same name on different ballots in the state as long as they don't appear on the same ballot at the same time has destroyed those parties of ever growing into state wide parties in their future. That is what has happened in the past and the wording of the Sec 9-453u *Reservation of Party Designation* needs to be changed to prevent that from happening again. These proposed changes to Sec 9-453u will allow the Secretary of The State to protect and preserve those minor parties right to the ballot and to their chosen name of their party.

Second , the need for the proposed changes to Sec 9-374 Party rules to be filed; The State of Connecticut should and does require that the rules to govern a political party need to be timely filed and certain rules regulating its method of selecting candidates and town committee members for the party need to be in those rules but makes no mention of need of stating the method of selecting state central committee members or of party leadership positions which also needs to be included in the rules to make them a valid set of party rules. The addition of these few words will fix that problem.

And third, the need for the proposed changes to Sec 9-375 Amendment of party rules; Many new minor parties write their party rules without much thought about how to change them in the future and leave out that important method in the final rules that they file with the state. Sec 9-375 spells out how to amend "local party rules" in detail but makes no mention of state party rules. For minor parties it is important that approved methods of amending state party rules also is stated in Sec 9-375. The addition of the proposed text will do that for minor parties.

Thank you,

Michael Telesca, Chairman of the Independent Party of CT under the 2010 bylaws

203-982-8578

Sec. 9-374. Party rules to be filed. No authority of the state or any political subdivision thereof having jurisdiction over the conduct of any primary shall permit the name of a party-endorsed candidate for an office or position to be printed on the official ballot to be used at any such primary unless a copy of the party rules regulating such party and its method of selecting party-endorsed candidates for nomination to such office or for election as town committee members, *[state central committee members, and state party leadership positions]* as the case may be, has been filed in the office of the Secretary of the State at least sixty days before such candidate is selected under such method of endorsement. The selection of delegates to conventions shall not be valid unless at least one copy of the party rules regulating the manner of making such selection has been filed in the office of the Secretary of the State at least sixty days before such selection is made. A duplicate copy of such rules shall also be filed with the state central committee of such party. A copy of the local party rules, relating to a party in a municipality, shall be filed forthwith by the town chairman or the secretary of the town committee of such party in such municipality with the Secretary of the State. The state party rules shall be filed by the state chairman or the secretary of the state central committee of such party. In the case of a minor party, no authority of the state or any subdivision thereof having jurisdiction over the conduct of any election shall permit the name of a candidate of such party for any office to be printed on the official ballot unless at least one copy of the party rules regulating the manner of nominating a candidate for such office has been filed in the office of the Secretary of the State at least sixty days before the nomination of such candidate. In the case of a minor party, the selection of town committee members and delegates to conventions shall not be valid unless at least one copy of the party rules regulating the manner of making such selection has been filed in the office of the Secretary of the State at least sixty days before such selection is made. A copy of local party rules shall forthwith be also filed with the town clerk of the municipality to which they relate. Party rules shall not be effective until sixty days after the filing of the same with the Secretary of the State. A party in any municipality for which local party rules with respect to any office or position have not been filed as provided in this section shall, as to such office or position, be subject to the provisions of the effective state rules of such party applicable in municipalities which do not have local party rules, until such time as local party rules therefor are filed and become effective as provided in this section. The town chairman of a party in any municipality for which local party rules have not been adopted and filed as provided in this section shall forthwith file a statement with the Secretary of the State to the effect that such party in such municipality does not have local party rules. The term "party rules" as used in this section includes any amendment to such party rules. When any amendment is to be filed as required by this section, complete party rules

incorporating such amendment shall be filed, together with a separate copy of such amendment.

(1949 Rev., S. 1045; 1953, S. 570d; 1957, P.A. 518, S. 41; 1958 Rev., S. 9-71; 1961, P.A. 148; 1963, P.A. 17, S. 3; 375; P.A. 79-363, S. 29, 38; P.A. 03-241, S. 18.)

History: 1961 act added provisions re failure to file local rules; 1963 acts entirely replaced previous provisions and further provided for filing two copies of party rules, rather than one, with the secretary, one to be forwarded to the state central committee and further provided where amendment(s) are filed, complete copies of the rules incorporating amendment(s) as well as separate copies of the amendment(s) are to be filed; P.A. 79-363 provided that one copy of rules be filed with the secretary and one copy sent direct to the state central committee; P.A. 03-241 specified applicability to "political" subdivisions of state, deleted delegates from application of provision re ballot requirement, added provision requiring party rules to be filed in office of Secretary of the State for delegate selection to be valid, and made technical changes, effective January 1, 2004, and applicable to primaries and elections held on or after that date.

See Sec. 3-99a re fees for filing, recording and processing copies of documents in Secretary of the State's office.

Cited. 30 CS 34.

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Sec. 9-375. Amendment of party rules. The local party rules, governing a political party in any municipality, may be amended by one of the three following methods: (1) By a caucus of its enrolled party members, (2) by a convention of delegates chosen by its enrolled party members in a manner prescribed in such rules or (3) by its town committee. Whenever, in any municipality, the method of amending the local party rules of a party is by the town committee, such rules may also be amended either by a caucus of its enrolled party members or by a convention of delegates chosen by its enrolled party members in a manner prescribed in such rules, whichever such rules specify, which caucus or convention, as the case may be, shall forthwith be called by the chairman of its town committee upon the filing with the registrar of voters of such party in such municipality of a petition signed by at least five per cent or five hundred, whichever is less, of its enrolled party members in such municipality, and such caucus

or convention, as the case may be, shall be held within a period of time reasonably necessary to convene the same, which period of time shall be prescribed in its rules. Whenever the method of amendment prescribed in accordance with the provisions of this section for a party in any municipality consists of or involves a convention of delegates chosen by its enrolled party members under its party rules, such rule or amendment so prescribing such method of amendment shall also prescribe the manner in which such delegates are to be chosen.

[The state party rules, governing a minor political party in the State of Connecticut, may be amended by one of the three following methods: (1) By a caucus of its enrolled party members, upon the filing with the Secretary of the State of a petition signed by at least five per cent or five hundred, whichever is less, of its enrolled party members, and such caucus or convention, as the case may be, shall be held within a period of time reasonably necessary to convene the same, properly noticed ten days in advance in a state wide circulated newspaper stating the purpose of the caucus, the time and place of the caucus, and the presiding officer or officers of the caucus (2) by a convention of delegates chosen by its enrolled party members in a manner prescribed in such rules or (3) by its state central committee as allowed in its state party rules.]

Proposed Changes to Sec. 9-453u.

Sec. 9-453u. (Formerly Sec. 9-378m). Reservation of party designation. (a) An application to reserve a party designation with the Secretary of the State and to form a party designation committee may be made at any time after November 3, 1981, by filing in the office of the secretary a written statement signed by at least twenty-five electors who desire to be members of such committee.

(b) The statement shall include the offices for which candidates may petition for nomination under the party designation to be reserved but shall not include an office if no elector who has signed the application is entitled to vote at an election for such office. *[Said statement currently form ED-601 may be amended for the purpose of adding more offices and more qualified electors to the form until the deadline for filing said form has passed providing all other details including the names of the co-chairs and the name of the party designation remain the same.]*

(c) The statement shall include the party designation to be reserved which (1) shall consist of not more than three words and not more than twenty-five letters; (2) shall not incorporate the name of any major party; (3) shall not incorporate the name of any minor party which is entitled to nominate candidates for any office *[in the State of Connecticut]*, which will appear on the same ballot with any office included in the statement; (4) shall not be the same as any party designation for which a reservation with the secretary is currently in effect for any office, included in the statement; and (5) shall not be the word "none", or incorporate the words "unaffiliated" or "unenrolled" or any similarly antonymous form of the words "affiliated" or "enrolled".

(d) The statement shall include the names of two persons who are authorized by the party designation committee to execute and file with the secretary statements of endorsement required by section 9-453o and certificates of nomination as required by section 9-460.

(e) The secretary shall examine the statement, and if it complies with the requirements of this section, the secretary shall reserve the party designation for the offices included in the statement and record such reservation in the office of the secretary. The reservation shall continue in effect from the date it is recorded until the day following any regular election at which no candidate appears on the appropriate ballot for that office under that party designation.

[(f) Once a party designation committee has qualified to be a political party in the State of Connecticut able to name future candidates by nomination to any ballot according to said party rules and CT State Statutes, no additional ED-601 forms will be required to be filed to preserve said party name and no other group may use the same party name unless they are part of the first party using the same State party rules. Local town committees may be formed according to CT State Statutes and use local town committee rules for local elections provided they are presented and approved by said Party State Central Committee. If a qualified political party fails to maintain its status of being able to nominate candidates according to CT State Statutes, its party rules will be void and nullified and its name will be returned to the public domain.]