Final

Initiative 2023-2024 #267: Elections For Federal And State Office

Be it enacted by the People of the State of Colorado:

SECTION 1. Statement of intent. It is the intent of this initiative to permit political parties to determine how to nominate candidates for public office and to do so at their discretion; to create a two-stage election system in which all candidates for federal or state offices qualify for the ballot by party nomination or petition, compete against each other in each stage regardless of their party affiliation or non-affiliation, and in which in each stage every registered voter can vote for any candidate on the ballot in their district regardless of their declared party affiliation or non-affiliation, and in which in the general election voters can rank their top three choices among the candidates for each office, the winner to be the first candidate in a series of instant runoffs to win at least 50 percent of the votes, and, further, to provide public funds for parties to conduct nominating contests of their design to determine whether to nominate candidates and, if so, which ones

SECTION 2. In Colorado Revised Statutes, **amend** and **re-enact** as amended Section 1-2-219(1) as follows:

Section 1-2-219. Changing or withdrawing declaration of affiliation. (1) Any eligible elector desiring to change or withdraw the elector's affiliation may do so by completing and signing a prescribed request for the change or withdrawal and filing it with the county clerk and recorder or by submitting a personal letter written by the elector to the county clerk and recorder at any time up to and including the twenty-second day preceding a primary election; except that. if the twenty-second day before the primary election is a Saturday, Sunday, or legal holiday, the change or withdrawal applies if made by the next day that is not a Saturday, Sunday, or legal holiday. The prescribed form or personal letter for the change must include the elector's printed name, address within the county, birth date, the last four digits of the elector's social security number, if the elector wishes to state it, and signature, the date, the elector's previous affiliation status, and the requested change in affiliation status. A prescribed form must be furnished by the county clerk and recorder upon the elector's oral or written request. Upon receiving the request, the county clerk and recorder shall change the elector's affiliation on his or her registration record. If the affiliation is withdrawn, the designation on the elector's registration record must be changed to "unaffiliated". If an elector changes affiliation, the elector is entitled to vote, at any primary election, only the ballot of the political party to which the elector is currently affiliated. A change or withdrawal of affiliation may not be made by anyone other than the elector. Notwithstanding any other provision of law, a declaration or change of affiliation made by an unaffiliated elector in accordance with this section must be deferred if the elector has already been mailed a primary election ballot packet. The deadline by which the elector must declare,

change, or withdraw an affiliation as specified in this subsection (1) only applies to a primary election and does not apply to a general or coordinated election.

SECTION 3. In Colorado Revised Statutes, **amend** and **re-enact** as amended 1-1-104 (32) as follows:

"Primary Election" means the election held on the last Tuesday in June of each evennumbered year and the presidential primary election held in accordance with part 12 of article 4
of this title 1 TO DETERMINE WHICH CANDIDATES FOR ELECTED OFFICES FOR THE UNITED STATES,
COLORADO STATE GOVERNMENT AND ALL OTHER OFFICES ELECTED IN DISTRICTS THAT INCLUDE
PARTS OF MULTIPLE COUNTIES OR WHOSE OFFICIALS SERVE ON BOARDS WITH REGIONAL
JURISDICTION ENCOMPASSING PARTS OF MULTIPLE COUNTIES SHALL BE ENTITLED TO APPEAR ON
THE BALLOT IN THE SUCCEEDING GENERAL ELECTION.

SECTION 4. In Colorado Revised Statutes. **repeal** parts 1, 3, 6, and 7 AND 12 of article 4 of title 1, Sections 1-4-101, 1-4-102, 1-4-103, 1-4-104, and 1-4-1-4.5 of part 4 of title 1, Sections 1-4-502 and 1-4-503 of part 5 of title 1, Sections 1-4-801 and 1-4-802 of part 8 of title 1, Sections 1-4-901, 1-4-902, 1-4-903 and 1-4-904 of part 9 of title 1, and Section 1-4-1304 of part 13 of title 1.

SECTION 5. In Colorado Revised Statutes, **enact** a new part 1 of article 4 of title 1 as follows:

Part 1. PRIMARY election.

Section 1-4-101. Ballot access. To be entitled to appear on the primary election ballot, a candidate must by april 15 prior to the primary election:

- (1) BE NOMINATED BY A MAJOR POLITICAL PARTY PURSUANT TO 1-1-104(22) OR MINOR POLITICAL PARTY PURSUANT TO 1-1-104(230), OR
- (2) BE AN INCUMBENT SEEKING RE-ELECTION AND NOTIFY THE SECRETARY OF STATE OF THEIR INTENTION TO SEEK RE-ELECTION, OR
 - (3) SUBMIT A PETITION MEETING THE REQUIREMENTS OF SECTION 1-4-102.

Section 1-4-102. Petitions. (1) THE SECRETARY OF STATE SHALL MAKE AVAILABLE PETITIONS TO CANDIDATES SEEKING TO QUALIFY FOR PLACEMENT ON THE PRIMARY BALLOT IN A MANNER AND FORM PRESCRIBED BY THE SECRETARY NO LATER THAN JANUARY 15 IN EVERY EVENNUMBERED YEAR.

- (2) PETITIONS SHALL IDENTIFY:
- (A) THE OFFICE TO WHICH THE CANDIDATE SEEKS TO BE ELECTED; AND

- (B) THE CANDIDATE'S NAME AND ADDRESS OF LEGAL RESIDENCE, AND:
- (C) THE CANDIDATE'S PARTY AFFILIATION AS OF JANUARY 1 OF THAT YEAR, OR THE DESIGNATION "UNAFFILIATED," CONSISTENT WITH THE DESIGNATION ON THEIR VOTER REGISTRATION AS OF JANUARY 1 OF THAT YEAR.
 - (3) PETITIONS SHALL CONTAIN ONLY THE NAME OF ONE CANDIDATE FOR ONE OFFICE.
- (4) SELECTION OF A PARTY AFFILIATION BY A CANDIDATE ON THEIR PETITIONS SHALL NOT CONSTITUTE OR IMPLY ENDORSEMENT OF THE CANDIDATE BY THE PARTY, AND NO CANDIDATE FOR THAT OFFICE SHALL BE DEEMED A NOMINATED CANDIDATE OF ANY PARTY BY THEIR PARTY AFFILIATION ON THE PETITIONS THEY CIRCULATE.
 - (6) (A) PETITIONS MAY BE SIGNED ONLY BY REGISTERED VOTERS.
- (B)WITH RESPECT TO CANDIDATES FOR CONGRESS OR THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, PETITIONS MAY BE SIGNED ONLY BY VOTERS REGISTERED IN THE DISTRICT IN WHICH THE CANDIDATE SEEKS TO BE PLACED ON THE BALLOT.
- (C) WITH RESPECT TO CANDIDATES WHO ARE AFFILIATED WITH A PARTY AS DETERMINED BY THEIR VOTER REGISTRATION AS OF THE PRECEDING JANUARY 1, THEIR PETITIONS MAY BE SIGNED ONLY BY REGISTERED VOTERS WHO ARE AFFILIATED WITH THAT PARTY AS DETERMINED BY THE VOTER'S REGISTRATION AS OF THE PRECEDING JANUARY 1.
- (7) IN ORDER TO OBTAIN PLACEMENT ON THE PRIMARY BALLOT, PETITIONS MUST BE SIGNED BY AT LEAST THE FOLLOWING NUMBER OF REGISTERED VOTERS:
 - (A) 1,000 PER CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT FOR OFFICES ELECTED STATEWIDE.
 - (B) 1,000 for offices elected by congressional district, except for seats on the state board of education and the university of colorado board of regents.
 - (C) 750 FOR OFFICES IN THE SENATE OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY.
 - (D) 500 for offices in the house of representatives in the general assembly, and seats on the state board of education and the university of colorado board of regents.
 - (8) PETITIONS MUST BE SUBMITTED TO THE SECRETARY NO LATER THAN APRIL 15.
- (9) THE SECRETARY SHALL DETERMINE WHETHER THE PETITIONS SUBMITTED REFLECT THE REQUISITE NUMBER OF REGISTERED VOTERS, AND, IN THE EVENT DETERMINES THAT THE NUMBER OF SIGNATURES IS INSUFFICIENT FOR BALLOT PLACEMENT, SHALL NOTIFY THE CANDIDATE NO LESS THAN FIFTEEN DAYS AFTER THE PETITIONS ARE SUBMITTED OF THE AMOUNT OF DEFICIENCY AND THAT THEY HAVE AN ADDITIONAL FIFTEEN DAYS TO COLLECT THE ADDITIONAL SIGNATURES REQUIRED. THE CANDIDATE SHALL THEN HAVE 15 DAYS FROM SUCH NOTIFICATION TO COLLECT AND SUBMIT ADDITIONAL SIGNATURES. UPON THE SUBMISSION OF ANY ADDITIONAL SIGNATURES, THE SECRETARY SHALL THEN DETERMINE ANEW WHETHER THE REQUIRED NUMBER OF SIGNATURES HAS BEEN SUBMITTED OR OBTAINED ONLINE, AND, IF SO, SHALL PLACE THE CANDIDATE ON THE BALLOT.

- **Section 1-4-103. Political party nominations.** (1) EACH POLITICAL PARTY QUALIFIED AS SUCH BY THE SECRETARY OF STATE IN COMPLIANCE WITH SECTION 1-1-104 (22), SECTION 1-1-104(23), OR PART 13 OF ARTICLE 4 MAY:
- (A) ESTABLISH SUCH PROCEDURES AS THEY SEE FIT TO DETERMINE WHICH PARTY MEMBERS, IF ANY, TO NOMINATE.
- (B) NOMINATE ONE OR TWO PARTY MEMBERS FOR EACH OR ANY OFFICE BY NOTIFYING THE SECRETARY OF THE NOMINATION OR NOMINATIONS NO LATER THAN APRIL 15 BEFORE THE PRIMARY ELECTION.

Section 1-4-104. Form of ballot. (1) FOR EACH CANDIDATE ON THE BALLOT, THE BALLOT MUST INCLUDE:

- (A) THE CANDIDATE'S FULL LEGAL NAME;
- (B) THE CANDIDATE'S CITY OF LEGAL RESIDENCE AS REFLECTED IN THE CANDIDATE'S VOTER REGISTRATION AS OF JANUARY 1 OF THAT YEAR, OR, IN THE EVENT THE CANDIDATE DOES NOT LIVE IN AN INCORPORATED CITY, THE CANDIDATE'S COUNTY OF LEGAL RESIDENCE;
- (C) IF THE CANDIDATE WAS NOMINATED BY A POLITICAL PARTY, THE DESIGNATION "NOMINATED BY," FOLLOWED BY THE NAME OF THE PARTY;
- (D) IF THE CANDIDATE IS A MEMBER OF A POLITICAL PARTY AS INDICATED BY THEIR VOTER REGISTRATION AS OF JANUARY 1 OF THAT YEAR, THE CANDIDATE'S POLITICAL PARTY AFFILIATION WITH THE WORDS 'MEMBER OF' FOLLOWED BY THE NAME OF THE PARTY.
- (E) IF THE CANDIDATE IS NOT AFFILIATED WITH A POLITICAL PARTY AS INDICATED ON THEIR VOTER REGISTRATION AS OF JANUARY 1 OF THAT YEAR, THE DESIGNATION 'UNAFFILIATED.'
- (F) IN THE EVENT A CANDIDATE QUALIFIES FOR THE PRIMARY BALLOT BOTH AS A CANDIDATE NOMINATED BY A PARTY AND ON THE BASIS OF A SUBMITTED PETITION, THE CANDIDATE SHALL BE LISTED ON THE BALLOT AS BEING NOMINATED BY THE PARTY THAT NOMINATED THEM.
- (2) A CANDIDATE QUALIFIED TO BE PLACED ON THE BALLOT MAY WITHDRAW THEIR NAME FROM SUCH PLACEMENT ANY TIME PRIOR TO 45 DAYS PRIOR TO THE ELECTION, AND NOT THEREAFTER.

Section 1-4-105. Order on ballot. The Secretary shall determine the order in which the candidates for the same office appear on the ballot by random selection.

Section 1-4-106. Write-in candidates. The secretary shall provide for placement on the ballot a provision through which voters can write-in a candidates for each office on the ballot, and shall count such votes in the same manner as the votes cast for candidates whose names are on the ballot.

Section 1-4-107. Who may vote. Any registered voter is eligible to vote for any candidate on the ballot in their district regardless of how the candidate secured ballot status and regardless of the voter's party affiliation or non-affiliation.

Section 1-4-108. Joint local elections. Counties may hold county, municipal, school district and special district elections in conjunction with the primary election, and county clerks are authorized to hold such coordinated elections.

Section 1-4-109. Funding. (1) ON JANUARY 1 OF EVEN-NUMBERED YEARS THE SECRETARY OF STATE SHALL PAY TO THE POLITICAL PARTIES REGISTERED PURSUANT TO — AND IN COMPLIANCE WITH - SECTION 1-1-104 (22), SECTION 1-1-104(23) OR PART 13 OF ARTICLE 4, A SUM EQUIVALENT TO \$1 FOR EVERY REGISTERED ACTIVE VOTER AFFILIATED WITH THAT PARTY ON THAT DATE, AND ON JANUARY 1 OF EVERY EVEN-NUMBERED YEAR THEREAFTER SHALL INCREASE SUCH PAYMENT BY AN AMOUNT EQUIVALENT TO THE INCREASE OVER THE PRIOR TWO YEARS IN THE CONSUMER PRICE INDEX FOR DENVER-AURORA-LAKEWOOD AS DETERMINED BY THE FEDERAL BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS.

- (2) POLITICAL PARTIES RECEIVING THE FUNDS PROVIDED FOR IN SUBSECTION (2) SHALL USE THEM TO FINANCE THEIR NOMINATING CONTESTS, AND SHALL NO LATER THAN DECEMBER 31 OF EVERY EVEN-NUMBERED YEAR FILE WITH THE SECRETARY A REPORT IDENTIFYING ON A FORM AND IN A FORMAT SET BY THE SECRETARY THEIR EXPENDITURE OF THESE FUNDS.
- (3) ANY UNAFFILIATED CANDIDATE WHO CIRCULATES A PETITION SEEKING BALLOT ACCESS FOR THE PRIMARY MAY BY NO LATER THAN 60 DAYS PRIOR TO THE GENERAL ELECTION FILE A FINANCIAL AFFIDAVIT WITH THE SECRETARY ITEMIZING ON A FORM AND IN A FORMAT SET BY THE SECRETARY THE EXPENSES THEY INCURRED IN OBTAINING SIGNATURES FOR THEIR BALLOT-ACCESS PETITIONS, AND THEREBY SEEK REIMBURSEMENT OF THOSE EXPENSES. THE SECRETARY SHALL ALLOCATE ONE DOLLAR FOR EVERY REGISTERED UNAFFILIATED VOTER AS OF JANUARY 1 OF THAT YEAR AND INCREASE THAT AMOUNT EVERY EVEN NUMBERED YEAR BY A SUM EQUIVALENT TO THE INCREASE IN THE CONSUMER PRICE INDEX FOR DENVER-AURORA-LAKEWOOD AS DETERMINED BY THE FEDERAL BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS OVER THE PREVIOUS TWO YEARS, DIVIDE THAT SUM BY THE NUMBER OF UNAFFILIATED CANDIDATES SEEKING REIMBURSEMENT FOR THEIR PETITION-CIRCULATION EXPENSES MULTIPLIED BY THE NUMBER OF SIGNATURES THEY COLLECTED FROM REGISTERED VOTERS ELIGIBLE TO SIGN THE PETITIONS, THEREBY DETERMINE THE 'PER-SIGNATURE' REIMBURSEMENT RATE, AND THEN REIMBURSE THE CANDIDATES FOR THESE EXPENSES ACCORDINGLY.

SECTION 6. In Colorado Revised Statutes, **amend** part 2 of article 4 of title 1 by **adding** sections as follows:

Section 1-4-207. Candidates on the general election ballot. (1) THE FOUR CANDIDATES WITH THE HIGHEST NUMBER OF VOTES IN THE PRIMARY ELECTION, ALL OTHER CANDIDATES WITH

AT LEAST FIVE PERCENT OF THE VOTES CAST IN THE PRIMARY ELECTION, AND ANY OTHER CANDIDATES IN THE PRIMARY ELECTION WHO WERE NOMINATED BY PARTIES AND WHO WON AT LEAST ONE PERCENT OF THE VOTE IN THE PRIMARY ELECTION SHALL BE ON THE BALLOT.

(2) THE BALLOT SHALL PROVIDE FOR THE CASTING OF A WRITE-IN VOTE FOR EACH OFFICE.

Section 1-4-208. Ballot information. The ballot shall list for each candidate qualified for the ballot the same information for that candidate that appeared on the primary election ballot.

Section 1-4-209. Order of candidates on ballot. Candidates shall be listed on the ballot in the same order they appeared on the primary ballot.

Section 1-4-210. Write-in candidates. The Secretary shall provide for placement on the ballot a provision through which voters can write-in a candidates for each office on the ballot, and shall count such votes in the same manner as the votes cast for candidates whose names are on the ballot.

Section 1-4-211. Who may vote. Any registered voter is eligible to vote for any candidate on the ballot in their district regardless of how the candidate secured ballot status and regardless of the voter's party affiliation or non-affiliation.

Section 1-4-212. Instant runoff voting. The Election shall be conducted by instant runoff voting . The following terms and procedures shall apply:

- (1) "INSTANT RUNOFF VOTING" MEANS A METHOD OF CASTING AND TABULATING VOTES WHEREBY VOTERS CAN RANK CANDIDATES ACCORDING TO THE ORDER OF THEIR PREFERENCE, AND COUNTING PROCEEDS IN ROUNDS.
- (2) THE BALLOT SHALL ALLOW VOTERS TO RANK UP TO THREE CANDIDATES FOR EACH OFFICE, IN ORDER OF PREFERENCE.
- (3) THE BALLOTS SHALL BE COUNTED IN ROUNDS UNTIL TWO CANDIDATES REMAIN. THE CANDIDATE HAVING THE LARGEST NUMBER OF VOTES SHALL BE DECLARED THE WINNER.
- (4) IN EACH ROUND OF COUNTING BALLOTS, EACH BALLOT SHALL BE COUNTED AS A VOTE FOR THE REMAINING CANDIDATE RANKED HIGHEST BY THE VOTER, AND THE CANDIDATE WITH THE SMALLEST NUMBER OF VOTES SHALL BE ELIMINATED.
- (5) IF TWO OR MORE CANDIDATES TIE FOR THE SMALLEST NUMBER OF VOTES, THE CANDIDATE TO ELIMINATE SHALL BE CHOSEN BY LOT.
- (6) AN EXPLANATION OF INSTANT RUN-OFF VOTING AND INSTRUCTIONS FOR ELECTORS IN THE FORM APPROVED BY THE SECRETARY OF STATE BY RULE SHALL BE POSTED AT EACH POLLING LOCATION AND INCLUDED WITH THE BALLOT INFORMATION BOOKLET AND EACH MAILED BALLOT.

SECTION 7. In Colorado Revised Statutes, **repeal** 1-5-102.9 (3) (e) of part 1, (1) (h) and (n) of 1-5-615 of article 5 of title 1.

SECTION 8. In Colorado Revised Statutes, **amend** parts 2, 3, 4 and 6 of article 5 of title 1 as follows:

Section 1-5-203. Certification of ballot

- (1) (a) Except as provided in subsection (1)(c) of this section, no No later than sixty days before any primary election and no later than fifty-seven days before any general or odd-year November election or congressional vacancy election, the secretary of state shall deliver by electronic transmission and registered mail to the county clerk and recorder of each county a certificate in writing of the ballot order and content for each county, as follows:
- (I) For general elections, the certificate shall specify the national and state officers and the district officers of state concern for whom some or all of the eligible electors of the county are entitled to cast ballots at the general election. The certificate shall include the name and party or other designation of each candidate for whom some or all of the eligible electors of the county are entitled to cast ballots and for whom a petition or certificate of nomination has been filed with the secretary of state, the name and party of each candidate nominated at the primary election QUALIFIED BY THE RESULTS OF THE PRIMARY PURSUANT TO 1-4-207 for a national or state office or a district office of state concern, and the order of the ballot and the ballot content for the election. With regard to the election of members to the general assembly, the notice shall also specify the district number and the names of the members whose terms of office will expire.
- (II) For primary elections, the certificate-shall specify the offices for which nominations are to be made. The notice-shall include a certified list of persons for whom certificates of designation or petitions have been filed with the secretary of state and the office for which each person is a candidate, together with the other details mentioned in the certificates of designation or petitions, and the order of the ballot for the primary election.
- (III) For any election at which one or more ballot issues or ballot questions are to be submitted to the eligible electors of the entire state, the secretary of state shall certify the order of ballot and ballot content with respect to such ballot issues or ballot questions to the county clerk and recorder of each county of the state.
- (b) The secretary of state shall be solely responsible for the accuracy of the information contained in the certificate.

(c) Repealed.

- (2) (Deleted by amendment, L. 2002, p. 1626, § 4, effective June 7, 2002.)
- (3) (a) No later than sixty days before any election, the designated election official of

each political subdivision that intends to conduct an election shall certify the order of the ballot and ballot content. Such certification shall be delivered to the county clerk and recorder of each county that has territory within the political subdivision if the election is coordinated with the clerk and recorder. The order of the ballot and ballot content shall include the name and office of each candidate for whom a petition has been filed with the designated election official and any ballot issues or ballot questions to be submitted to the eligible electors.

- (b) (Deleted by amendment, L. 2002, p. 1626, § 4, effective June 7, 2002.)
- (c) The state or a political subdivision that issues a certificate pursuant to this subsection (3) shall be solely responsible for the accuracy of the information contained in the certificate. Any error that can be corrected pursuant to the provisions of section 1-5-412 shall be corrected at the expense of the political subdivision whose designated election official issued the defective certificate or, at the expense of the state, if the secretary of state issued the defective certificate.

Part 3. Registration Books

1-5-302. Computer lists may be used in lieu of original registration records.

For the purposes of all elections, the county clerk and recorder may substitute and supply computer lists of registered electors within the political subdivision for the original registration record. Following a primary, general, or congressional vacancy election, the county clerk and recorder shall record the date of election and, if a primary election, the party ballot received on the registered elector's original registration record.

Part 4. Ballots

1-5-402. Primary Election

- (1) No later than thirty-two days before the primary election-the county clerk and recorder shall prepare a separate ballot for each political party. The ballots shall be printed in the following manner:
- (a) All official ballots shall be printed according to the provisions of sections 1-5-407 and 1-5-408. -except that across the top of each ballot shall be printed the name of the political party for which the ballot is to be used.

Part 6. Authorization And Use Of Voting Machines And Electronic Voting Systems 1-5-611. Requirements - non-punch card electronic voting systems

(G) IT IS CAPABLE OF PERMITTING VOTING AND TABULATING THE RESULTS OF THE FORM OF VOTING SPECIFIED IN 1-4-212.

1-5-615. Electronic and electromechanical voting systems - requirements

(Q) IS CAPABLE OF PERMITTING AND TABULATING THE RESULTS OF THE FORM OF VOTING SPECIFIED IN 1-4-212.

Section 9. Self-executing and severable. The Statutory Changes Hereby Enacted are self-executing and severable.

Section 10. Effective date. These amended sections shall become effective upon official declaration of the vote hereon by proclamation of the governor pursuant to section 1 (4) of article v of the colorado constitution, but no later than 12:01 am on Janaury 1, 2026.