

December 3, 2018

Talking points on statutory revisions in “A PROPOSED BILL TO REVISE MINNESOTA POLITICAL PARTY DEFINITIONS AND PETITIONING CRITERIA FOR BALLOT ACCESS INCLUSIVENESS” as presented to Minnesota State Senator Scott Jensen of District 47 on November 29, 2018 (which was based on the original document “A Proposed Bill To Revise Candidate Petitioning And Ballot Requirements” by the Libertarian Party of Minnesota, presented to Steve Simon, Secretary of State of Minnesota, on August 25, 2015)

SYNOPSIS

This is a comprehensive set of proposals to modernize Minnesota's statutory definitions of Major and Minor political parties, which encompass a revision of arbitrary petitioning requirements, percentages, and timelines that as currently written, sustain exclusivity to ballot access.

Goals are to bring Minnesota's prohibitive standards in-line with neighboring states and to eliminate unconstitutional and outdated requirements while harmonizing the various statutes.

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1. Revise the petitioning threshold for major party status as based on statewide elections. (which revises the major party threshold) (from 5% to 1%) (WI, SD are 1%) (IA is 2%).
2. Eliminate minor party status altogether. (only MN has major, minor, and a ‘less than’)
3. Detach petitioning period from the state primary. Move and expand petitioning periods. (instead of a deadline for minor party petitioning 70 days before the major party primary, it should be 70 days before the general election, like we do for Pres.) (increase period to petition from 2 weeks to 12 weeks) (WI gives 10 wks, ND 12 wks, SD 16 wks, IA 20)
4. Revise the petitioning thresholds for state, county, and municipal candidates. (flat values not percentages i.e. 400 for State Senate, 200 for State House Rep.)
5. Allow petitions to be on common size 8-1/2x11 letter size paper.
6. Modify oath to remove prohibition on petition signers voting in primaries, as well as the prohibition on signing for multiple candidates. (“I solemnly swear that I know the contents and purpose of this NOMINATING petition, ~~that I do not intend to vote at the primary election for the office for which this nominating petition is made~~, and that I signed this petition of my own free will.”)
7. Add option of party approval of designation for partisan candidates.
8. Revise requirements for special elections. (reduce signatures needed with days reduced)

State	Major (or Recognized) Party by votes in election	Major (Recognized) Party by direct petitioning	Number of signatures	Per Capita signatures	Population of state
Minnesota (current)	5% of statewide race	5% of last state wide vote	130,000	2.3%	5,577,000
Minnesota (proposed)	1% of statewide race	20,000 signatures (or 1% of last vote)	20,000 (or 26,000)	0.4%	
Wisconsin	1% of Governor or President	10,000 signatures	10,000 (<.0.1%)	0.2%	5,795,000
Iowa	2% of Governor or President	n/a	n/a 2%=26,420	n/a 2%=0.8%	3,146,000
South Dakota	1% of Governor or President (was 2.5% prior to 2018)	1% of last state wide vote (was 2.5% prior to 2018)	3392	0.4%	869,000
North Dakota	5% of Secretary of State vote	7000 signatures	7000	0.9%	755,000