

Senate Elections Committee
3:00 p.m. room 107, State Capitol

Monday, February 28, 2005

Members Present:

Wiger
Fischbach
Higgins
Hottinger
Kleis
Limmer
Marty
Marko
Pariseau
Scheid

Senator Wiger called the meeting to order at 3:05 p.m. A quorum was present.

Agenda item #1: S.F. 863- Hottinger: Fair and Clean Elections

Senator Hottinger offered the A-3 amendment. The A-3 amendment dealt with issues related to the appropriations dealing with implementation. Amendment was adopted.

Senate Counsel explained the implications of the amendments and the differences in S.F. 863 and S.F. 103.

Beth Fraser, Minnesota Alliance for Progressive Action, testified in support of the bill and the new amendments.

Jeanne Olson, Executive Director, Campaign Finance and Public Disclosure Board testified. She discussed what is currently in statute regarding campaign expenditures and answered questions from members as to what actions are currently acceptable.

Senator Hottinger offered the A-4 amendment. The A-4 amendment dealt with the penalty section for false campaign reporting. Amendment was adopted.

Senator Marty offered the A-2 amendment. The A-2 amendment dealt with the provision that allowed parties to contribute to candidates in good standing. Senator Marty felt this set up an unfair advantage to candidates and created disproportionate spending limits.

Senator Hottinger disagreed with the amendment. He felt it was important that the parties have direct contact and involvement with candidates.

Beth Fraser, Minnesota Alliance for Progressive Action, answered questions from members on the legitimacy of the amendment and the importance for party participation.

Senator Marty moved the A-2 amendment. Amendment was not adopted.

Senator Hottinger discussed a possible oral amendment.

Senate Counsel explained the amendment on page 36. This amendment, lines 23-27, would eliminate the contributions from political committees or political funds.

Senator Hottinger withdrew the amendment.

Senate Counsel outlined another possible amendment. On page 26, line 27, before the period, insert "or by a conduit fund in any amount." Senator Hottinger approved of the new language and moved the oral amendment.

The oral amendment did not pass.

Senator Hottinger moved that S.F. 863 be recommended to pass and moved to the Finance Committee.

Division was requested.

There were 4-Yes votes and 5-No votes. S.F. 863 was not passed.

Agenda item #2: S.F. 103-Marty: Clean money campaign

Senator Marty requested that the bill be laid over.

Agenda item #3: S.F. 489-Marty: Election campaign expenditures and contributions regulation modifications

Senator Marty moved his author's amendment. Amendment passed. *See attached committee report for amendments.*

Senator Marty outlined the bill as amended. The bill would prohibit political parties from making independent expenditures and excludes certain kinds of spending by political parties from the spending that may qualify as multi-candidate expenditures and thus not be allocated to any individual candidate's spending limit.

Senator Marty moved that S.F. 489 be recommended to pass and referred to the floor. Bill was passed to the floor as amended.

Agenda item #4: S.F. 879-Fischbach: Elimination of state primary in a municipality

Senator Fischbach gave an overview of the bill. The bill stated that in an uncontested election a state primary does not have to be held in a municipality. She discussed the costs to small municipalities to hold elections for uncontested primary races.

Senator Higgins raised a question as to the difficulty in canceling a primary for uncontested races.

Ann Higgins, League of MN Cities, testified in support of S.F. 879 and answered questions from committee members on the logistics on canceling a primary.

Senator Fischbach moved to amendment page 1, line 21-22, delete "at least 15 days before the date of the state primary" and insert "no later than 15 days after the close of filings."

Senator Scheid moved to delete sections 2 and 3. Motion adopted.

Senator Fischbach moved S.F. 879 be passed and moved to the Consent Calendar. S.F. 879 passed as amended.

Agenda item #5: S.F. 858-Dille: Nonpartisan legislative offices

Senator Dille gave an overview of S.F. 858. This bill would return Minnesota to a nonpartisan legislature, as was the case for 60 years between 1913 and 1973.

State Representative Phyllis Kahn testified in support of the bill. She was one of the original authors of the bill. She stated that this was not an attempt to eliminate political parties but an attempt to allow candidates to campaign on issues rather than party label.

Senator Dille requested that the bill be laid over for further consideration.

Agenda item #6: S.F. 827-Kleis: Quarterly election days for state and local

Senator Kleis provided a brief overview of the bill. The purpose of the bill was to provide some conformity to the election schedule.

Senator Higgins offered a friendly amendment to delete lines 19, 20, and 21. Senate Counsel drafted the appropriate language. The amendment to the amendment was accepted.

Senator Kleis offered the author's amendment. Amendment was adopted.

Senator Kleis moved that the bill be laid over. Motion adopted.

Senator Wiger adjourned the meeting at 5:00 p.m.

Senate Committee Meeting Log

Committee Name: Elections

Date: 3/28/05 Day: Monday Start Time: 3:10

Agenda

Bill # (or Topic)	SF 863 Hottinger
Author	Hottinger
Short Descriptor	Fair and Clean Elections
Action(s)	Did not pass
Bill # (or Topic)	SF 489
Author	Marty
Short Descriptor	Election campaign expenditures and contributions regulation modifications
Action(s)	amended & Pass to floor
Bill # (or Topic)	879
Author	Fischbach
Short Descriptor	Elimination of state primary in municipality
Action(s)	passed as amended to consent calendar
Bill # (or Topic)	877
Author	Kleis
Short Descriptor	Quarterly election days for state and local
Action(s)	held over

Bill # (or Topic)	858
Author	Dille
Short Descriptor	Nonpartisan legislative offices
Action(s)	held over
Bill # (or Topic)	
Author	
Short Descriptor	
Action(s)	
Bill # (or Topic)	
Author	
Short Descriptor	
Action(s)	
Bill # (or Topic)	
Author	
Short Descriptor	
Action(s)	

Adjournment Time: 4:55

Recorded by: Amanda Muehlhausen Date: 3/1/05
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Senate Elections Committee

Chair: Chuck Wiger
Monday, February 28, 2005
3:00 p.m.
Room 107 Capitol

Agenda

1. S.F.863-Hottinger: Fair and Clean Elections
2. S.F.103- Marty: Clean money campaign
3. S.F.489-Marty: Election campaign expenditures and contributions regulation modifications
4. S.F.879-Fischbach: Elimination of state primary in a municipality
5. S.F.827-Kleis: Quarterly election days for state and local

Testifying: Tony Kielkucki, Deputy Secretary of State

Kent Sulem, Attorney, Minnesota Association of Townships

6. S.F.858-Dille: Nonpartisan legislative offices