

Senate Elections Committee

Monday, March 14, 2005

Members present:

Fischbach

Higgins

Hottinger

Kleis

Limmer

Marko

Marty

Pariseau

Scheid

Wiger

Senator Wiger called the meeting to order at 3:12 p.m.

Agenda item #1 S.F. 1389-Higgins: State primary election date change

Annette Meeks, CEO Center for the American Experiment and Vice-Chair of the Republican Party testified in support of the bill. She discussed a task force she was a part of that put forth recommendations on electoral reform, one of which was changing the state primary election date.

Joe Mansky, Ramsey County Elections Manager, testified on behalf of the bill. He outlined administrative benefits to an earlier state primary election date.

Senator Wiger noted a quorum was present.

Senator Higgins offered the A-1 author's amendment. Amendment passed.

Tom Deans, Minnesota School Board Association, testified in opposition to the bill because of the complications with the school board elections. The bill would push their elections back to March.

Jeanne Olson, Executive Director, Campaign Finance and Public Disclosure Board, testified in response to technical questions regarding primary races in Minnesota.

Senator Higgins moved to change the primary date to the second Tuesday in August. Page 5, line 17-18, delete "June" and insert "August" and delete "first" to "second" Amendment adopted.

Joe Mansky, Ramsey County Elections Manager, provided an anecdote of the importance of the bill.

Senator Higgins moved the bill be recommended to pass to the floor.

Senator Hottinger moved to delete the amended language and reinstate the original language. Motion adopted.

Senator Higgins moved that S.F. 1389 as amended be recommended to pass and move to the floor.

Senator Pariseau requested a division.

There were 5-yes's and 5-no's, the motion was not adopted.

Agenda item #2 S.F. 1051-Hottinger: Ongoing status of an absentee voter

Karl Knutson, State Legislative Director, Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way Employees Division, testified in support of the bill. He gave an overview of the importance of this bill for his members since many of them work from home most of the time with the railroad.

Senator Fischbach moved the A-5 amendment.

Senator Fischbach moved to amend the amendment. Page 1, line 3-4, delete “,due to employment or other good cause,” Amendment to the amendment adopted.

A-5 amendment passed as amended.

Senator Marko moved to amend after line 22, insert (6) the voter ceasing to meet the requirements of section 203 b.02”

Senator Hottinger offers friendly amendment. Page 1, line 20, delete “or”. Page 1, line 22 before the period insert “;or (6) the voter ceasing to meet the requirements of paragraph (a)”

Senator Marko moved her amendment. Amendment adopted.

Senator Hottinger moved that S.F. 1051 as amended be recommended to pass and moved to the floor. Motion adopted.

Agenda item #3 S.F. 1249-Jungbauer: Eliminating specified grounds for recall

Sandy Neurin, Minnesota District Judges Association, testified in opposition to the bill.

Since the Elections Committee did not hear constitutional amendments, the bill was laid over for next year.

Agenda item #4 S.F. 1493-Nienow: Requiring an additional report by a principal campaign committee in a year

Senator Kleis moved to lay the bill over. Motion adopted.

Agenda item #5 S.F. 1494-Nienow: Suggestion solicitation and postage are constituent services

Frank Wright, Concerned Citizen, testified in opposition to S.F. 1494 due to his belief that incumbents would have a distinct advantage.

Jeanne Olson, Campaign Finance and Public Disclosure Board testified in response to questions by Senator Higgins.

Senator Kleis moved that S.F. 1494 be recommended to pass.

Senator Hottinger moved to table the bill in order to see the Board's decision.

Division was requested. There were 4-yes's and 5-no's. Motion not adopted.

Senator Kleis renewed his motion to that S.F. 1494 be recommended to pass.

Motion not adopted. Division was requested. There were 5-yes's and 5-no's.

Committee is adjourned at 5:32 p.m.

Senate Elections Committee

Chair: Chuck Wiger
Monday, March 14, 2005
3:00 p.m.
Room 107 Capitol

Agenda

1. S.F. 1389-Higgins: State primary election date change
2. S.F. 1051-Hottinger: Ongoing status of an absentee voter
Testifying: Karl Knutson
3. S.F. 852-Higgins: Facilitating voter registration by college students
4. S.F. 1086-Higgins: Authorizing early voting by absentee ballot at certain locations without qualification.
5. S.F. 1249-Jungbauer: Eliminating specified grounds for recall
6. S.F. 1494-Nienow: Suggestion solicitation and postage are constituent services
Testifying: Frank Wright, Concerned citizen
7. S.F. 1493-Nienow: Requiring an additional report by a principal campaign committee in a year