

HOUSE RESEARCH

Bill Summary

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Authors: Laine; Pelowski

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Analyst: Matt Gehring, 651-296-5052

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Overview

This bill allows each political party to establish the date of their precinct caucus, eliminating the requirement that the caucus be held on the first Tuesday in March.

Courts have held that a state may regulate the time and manner of holding a primary election, but that a political party has “inherent powers of self-government,” which grants fairly wide discretion to a party in choosing its own regulations and rules (including whether to hold a caucus to allocate delegates instead). States generally have less authority to influence the operation of caucuses because of the party’s first amendment rights of association, and, unlike a primary election, a caucus does not require the full funding and operation of a state’s election machinery.

Section

- 1 Time of Caucus; Postponement.** Eliminates the requirement in state law that a party’s precinct caucus be held on the first Tuesday in March. The provisions of this bill allow the state executive committee of each party to determine the date on which the party’s caucus will be held. Consultation with the secretary of state is required, and notice of the chosen date must be submitted to the secretary of state at least 90 days prior to the caucus.

The bill also grants authority to each party, rather than the secretary of state, to postpone a caucus in the event of severe weather. Again, however, consultation with the secretary of state is required.

Section

2 **Time of caucus.** Provides a cross reference to the new provisions established in section 1 of the bill.