#### GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA

#### **SESSION 1989**

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#### SENATE BILL 106

Short Title: Second Primaries Abolished.	(Public)
Sponsors: Senators Hunt of Durham; Johnson of Cabarrus, Bryan, Allran.	Hunt of Moore, and
Referred to: Election Laws.	- -

# February 2, 1989

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
AN ACT TO ABOLISH SECOND PRIMARIES, AND TO PROVIDE THAT IF ANY

NONPARTISAN RUNOFF ELECTIONS ARE HELD ON THE DATE OF THE SECOND PRIMARY, THEY SHALL INSTEAD BE HELD ON THE DATE OF THE GENERAL ELECTION.

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

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#### PART 1. GENERAL LAW AMENDMENTS

Section 1. G.S. 163-111 reads as rewritten:

# "§ 163-111. Determination of primary results; second primaries Nomination determined by plurality.

- (a) Nomination Determined by Majority; Definition of Majority. Except as otherwise provided in this section, nominations in primary elections shall be determined by a majority of the votes cast. A majority within the meaning of this section shall be determined as follows:
- (1) If a nominee for a single office is to be selected, and there is more than one person seeking nomination, the majority shall be ascertained by dividing the total vote cast for all aspirants by two. Any excess of the sum so ascertained shall be a majority, and the aspirant who obtains a majority shall be declared the nominee.
- (2) If nominees for two or more offices (constituting a group) are to be selected, and there are more persons seeking nomination than there are offices, the majority shall be ascertained by dividing the total vote cast for all aspirants by the number of positions to be filled, and by dividing the result by two. Any excess of the sum so ascertained shall be a majority, and the aspirants who obtain a majority shall be declared the

nominees. If more candidates obtain a majority than there are positions to be filled, those having the highest vote (equal to the number of positions to be filled) shall be declared the nominees.

- (a) Nominations in primary elections shall be determined as follows:
  - (1) When more than one person is seeking election to a single office, the candidate who receives the highest number of votes shall be declared the nominee.
  - When more persons are seeking nomination to two or more offices (constituting a group) than there are offices to be filled, those candidates receiving the highest number of votes, equal in number to the number of offices to be filled, shall be declared the nominees.
- \_- (b) Right to Demand Second Primary. If an insufficient number of aspirants receive a majority of the votes cast for a given office or group of offices in a primary, a second primary, subject to the conditions specified in this section, shall be held:
- (1) If a nominee for a single office is to be selected and no aspirant receives a majority of the votes cast, the aspirant receiving the highest number of votes shall be declared nominated by the appropriate board of elections unless the aspirant receiving the second highest number of votes shall request a second primary in accordance with the provisions of subsection (c) of this section. In the second primary only the two aspirants who received the highest and next highest number of votes shall be voted for.
- (2) If nominees for two or more offices (constituting a group) are to be selected and aspirants for some or all of the positions within the group do not receive a majority of the votes, those candidates equal in number to the positions remaining to be filled and having the highest number of votes shall be declared the nominees unless some one or all of the aspirants equal in number to the positions remaining to be filled and having the second highest number of votes shall request a second primary in accordance with the provisions of subsection (c) of this section. In the second primary to select nominees for the positions in the group remaining to be filled, the names of all those candidates receiving the highest number of votes and all those receiving the second highest number of votes and demanding a second primary shall be printed on the ballot.
  - (c) Procedure for Requesting Second Primary.
- (1) A candidate who is apparently entitled to demand a second primary, according to the unofficial results, for one of the offices listed below, and desiring to do so, shall file a request for a second primary in writing or by telegram with the Executive Secretary-Director of the State Board of Elections no later than 12:00 noon on the seventh day (including Saturdays and Sundays) following the date on which the primary was conducted, and such request shall be subject to the certification of the official results by the State Board of Elections. If the vote certification by the State Board of Elections determines that a candidate who was not originally thought to be eligible to call for a second primary is in fact eligible to call for a second primary, the Executive Secretary-Director of the State Board of Elections shall immediately notify such candidate and permit him to exercise any options available to him within a 48-hour period following the notification:
  - Governor,

- 1 Lieutenant Governor,
- 2 All State executive officers,
- 3 Justices, Judges, or District Attorneys of the General Court of Justice,
- 4 United States Senators,
- 5 Members of the United States House of Representatives,
- 6 State Senators in multi-county senatorial districts, and
- 7 Members of the State House of Representatives in multi-county representative 8 districts.
  - (2) A candidate who is apparently entitled to demand a second primary, according to the unofficial results, for one of the offices listed below and desiring to do so, shall file a request for a second primary in writing or by telegram with the chairman or supervisor of the county board of elections no later than 12:00 noon on the seventh day (including Saturdays and Sundays) following the date on which the primary was conducted, and such request shall be subject to the certification of the official results by the county board of elections:

State Senators in single-county senatorial districts,

Members of the State House of Representatives in single-county representative districts, and

All county officers.

- (3) Immediately upon receipt of a request for a second primary the appropriate board of elections, State or county, shall notify all candidates entitled to participate in the second primary, by telephone followed by written notice, that a second primary has been requested and of the date of the second primary.
  - (d) Tie Votes; How Determined.
- (1) In the event of a tie for the highest number of votes in a first primary between two candidates for party nomination for a single county, or single county legislative district office, the board of elections of the county in which the two candidates were voted for shall conduct a recount and declare the results. If the recount shows a tie vote, a second primary shall be held on the date prescribed in subsection (e) of this section between the two candidates having an equal vote, unless one of the aspirants, within three days after the result of the recount has been officially declared, files a written notice of withdrawal with the board of elections with which he filed notice of candidacy. Should that be done, the remaining aspirant shall be declared the nominee. In the event of a tie for the highest number of votes in a first primary among more than two candidates for party nomination for one of the offices mentioned in this subdivision, no recount shall be held, but all of the tied candidates shall be entered in a second primary.
- (2) In the event of a tie for the highest number of votes in a first primary between two candidates for a State office, for United States Senator, or for any district office (including State Senator in a multi-county senatorial district and member of the State House of Representatives in a multi-county representative district), no recount shall be held solely by reason of the tie, but the two candidates having an equal vote shall be entered in a second primary to be held on the date prescribed in subsection (e) of this section, unless one of the two candidates files a written notice of withdrawal with the State Board of Elections within three days after the result of the first primary has been

officially declared and published. Should that be done, the remaining aspirant shall be declared the nominee. In the event of a tie for the highest number of votes in a first primary among more than two candidates for party nomination for one of the offices mentioned in this subdivision, no recount shall be held, but all of the tied candidates shall be entered in a second primary.

- (3) In the event one candidate receives the highest number of votes cast in a first primary, but short of a majority, and two or more of the other candidates receive the second highest number of votes cast in an equal number, the proper board of elections shall declare the candidate having the highest vote to be the party nominee, unless all but one of the tied candidates give written notice of withdrawal to the proper board of elections within three days after the result of the first primary has been officially declared. If all but one of the tied candidates withdraw within the prescribed three-day period, and the remaining candidate demands a second primary in accordance with the provisions of subsection (c) of this section, a second primary shall be held between the candidate who received the highest vote and the remaining candidate who received the second highest vote.
- (e) Date of Second Primary; Procedures. If a second primary is required under the provisions of this section, the appropriate board of elections, State or county, shall order that it be held four weeks after the first primary.

There shall be no registration of voters between the dates of the first and second primaries. Persons whose qualifications to register and vote mature after the day of the first primary and before the day of the second primary may register on the day of the second primary and, when thus registered, shall be entitled to vote in the second primary. The second primary is a continuation of the first primary and any voter who files a proper and timely affidavit of transfer of precinct, under the provisions of G.S. 163-72(c), before the first primary may vote in the second primary without having to refile the affidavit of transfer if he is otherwise qualified to vote in the second primary. Subject to this provision for registration, the second primary shall be held under the laws, rules, and regulations provided for the first primary.

- (f) No Third Primary Permitted. In no case shall there be a third primary. The candidates receiving the highest number of votes in the second primary shall be nominated. If in a second primary there is a tie for the highest number of votes between two candidates, the proper party executive committee shall select the party nominee for the office in accordance with the provisions of G.S. 163-114.
- (f) When more than one person is seeking election to a single office, and two or more candidates receiving the highest number of votes each receive the same number of votes, the proper party executive committee shall, from among those candidates receiving the same number of votes, select the party nominee in accordance with G.S. 163-114.
- . (g) When more persons are seeking nomination to two or more offices (constituting a group) than there are offices to be filled, and two or more candidates receiving the lowest number of votes necessary for nomination each receive the same number of votes, the proper party executive committee shall, from among those candidates

receiving the same number of votes, select the party nominee in accordance with G.S. 163-114."

Sec. 2. G.S. 163-227.1 is repealed.

Sec. 3. G.S. 163-227.3 reads as rewritten:

## "§ 163-227.3. Date by which absentee ballots must be available for voting.

- (a) The State Board of Elections shall provide absentee ballots of the kinds to be furnished by the State Board, to the county boards of elections 60 days prior to the date on which the election shall be conducted unless there shall exist an appeal before the State Board or the courts not concluded, in which case the State Board shall provide the ballots as quickly as possible upon the conclusion of such an appeal. In every instance the State Board shall exert every effort to provide absentee ballots, of the kinds to be furnished by the State Board, to each county by the date on which absentee voting is authorized to commence.
- (b) Second Primary. The State Board of Elections shall provide absentee ballots, of the kinds to be furnished by the State Board, as quickly as possible after the ballot information has been determined."
  - Sec. 4. G.S. 163-278.6(8) reads as rewritten:
- "(8) The term 'election' means any general or special election, a first or second primary, a run-off election, or an election to fill a vacancy. The term 'election' shall not include any local or statewide referendum."
  - Sec. 5. G.S. 163-278.9(a) reads as rewritten:
- "(a) The treasurer of each candidate and of each political committee shall file under verification with the Board the following reports:
- (1) Organizational Report. The appointment of the treasurer as required by G.S. 163-278.7(a), the statement of organization required by G.S. 163-278.7(b), and a report of all contributions and expenditures not previously reported shall be filed with the Board no later than the tenth day following the day the candidate files his notice of candidacy or the tenth day following the organization of the political committee, whichever occurs first. Any candidate whose campaign is being conducted by a political committee which is handling all contributions and expenditures for his campaign shall file a statement with the Board stating such fact at the time required herein for the organizational report. Thereafter, the candidate's political committee shall be responsible for filing all reports required by law.
- (2) Preprimary Report. The treasurer shall file a report with the Board no later than the tenth day preceding the primary election.
- (3) Postprimary Report(s). The treasurer shall file a report with the Board no later than the tenth day after the primary election if the candidate was eliminated in the primary. If there is a second primary, the treasurer shall file a report with the Board no later than the tenth day after the second primary election if the candidate was eliminated in the second primary.
- (4) Preelection Report. The treasurer shall file a report with the Board not later than the tenth day preceding the general election.
  - (5) Repealed by Session Laws 1985, c. 164, s. 1, effective January 1, 1986.

 (6) Annual Reports. – If contributions are received or expenditures made during a calendar year, for which no reports are otherwise required by this Article, any and all such contributions and expenditures shall be reported by the last Friday in January of the following year."

Sec. 6. G.S. 163-278.13(d) reads as rewritten:

- "(d) For the purposes of this section, the term 'an election' means any primary, second primary, or general election in which the candidate or political committee may be involved, without regard to whether the candidate is opposed or unopposed in the election."
  - Sec. 7. G.S. 163-278.40B reads as rewritten:

# "§ 163-278.40B. Campaign report; partisan election.

In any city election conducted on a partisan basis in accordance with G.S. 163-279(a)(2) and 163-291, the following reports shall be filed in addition to the organizational report:

- (1) Pre-primary Report. The treasurer shall file a report with the board no later than the tenth day preceding each primary election.
- (2) Pre-election Report. The treasurer shall file a report 10 days prior to the election, unless a second primary is held and the candidate appeared on the ballot in the second primary, in which case the report shall be filed 10 days before the second primary.
  - (3) Repealed by Session Laws 1985, c. 164, s. 2, effective January 1, 1986.
- (4) Annual Report. If contributions are received or expenditures made during a calendar year, for which no reports are otherwise required by this section, any and all contributions and expenditures shall be reported by the last Friday in January of the following year."
  - Sec. 8. G.S. 163-279(a)(2) reads as rewritten:
- "(a) Primaries and elections for offices filled by election of the people in cities, towns, incorporated villages, and special districts shall be held in 1973–1991 and every two or four years thereafter as provided by municipal charter on the following days:
- (1) If the election is nonpartisan and decided by simple plurality, the election shall be held on Tuesday after the first Monday in November.
- (2) If the election is partisan, the election shall be held on Tuesday after the first Monday in November, the first primary shall be held on the sixth Tuesday before the election, and the second primary, if required, shall be held on the third Tuesday before the election the primary shall be held on the fourth Tuesday before the elections."
- (3) If the election is nonpartisan and the nonpartisan primary method of election is used, the election shall be held on Tuesday after the first Monday in November and the nonpartisan primary shall be held on the fourth Tuesday before the election.
- (4) If the election is nonpartisan and the election and runoff election method of election is used, the election shall be held on the fourth Tuesday before the Tuesday after the first Monday in November, and the runoff election, if required, shall be held on Tuesday after the first Monday in November."
  - Sec. 9. G.S. 163-291 reads as rewritten:
- "§ 163-291. Partisan primaries and elections.

The nomination of candidates for office in cities, towns, villages, and special districts whose elections are conducted on a partisan basis shall be governed by the provisions of this Chapter applicable to the nomination of county officers, and the terms 'county board of elections,' 'chairman of the county board of elections,' 'county officers,' and similar terms shall be construed with respect to municipal elections to mean the appropriate municipal officers and candidates, except that:

- (1) The dates of primary and election shall be as provided in G.S. 163-279.
- (2) A candidate seeking party nomination for municipal or district office shall file his notice of candidacy with the board of elections no earlier than 12:00 noon on the first Friday in July and no later than 12:00 noon on the first Friday in August preceding the election. No person may file a notice of candidacy for more than one municipal office at the same election. If a person has filed a notice of candidacy for one office with the county board of elections under this section, then a notice of candidacy may not later be filed for any other municipal office for that election unless the notice of candidacy for the first office is withdrawn first.
- (3) The filing fee for municipal and district primaries shall be fixed by the governing board not later than the day before candidates are permitted to begin filing notices of candidacy. There shall be a minimum filing fee of five dollars (\$5.00). The governing board shall have the authority to set the filing fee at not less than five dollars (\$5.00) nor more than one percent (1%) of the annual salary of the office sought unless one percent (1%) of the annual salary of the office sought is less than five dollars (\$5.00), in which case the minimum filing fee of five dollars (\$5.00) will be charged. The fee shall be paid to the board of elections at the time notice of candidacy is filed.
  - (4) The municipal ballot may not be combined with any other ballot.
- (5) The canvass of the primary and second primary shall be held on the Thursday following the primary-or second primary.
- (6) Candidates having the right to demand a second primary shall do so not later than 12:00 noon on the Monday following the canvass of the first primary."

Sec. 10. G.S. 163-179.1(a) reads as rewritten:

- "(a) Whenever, according to the canvass made under this Article, the difference between the number of votes received by a candidate who:
  - (1) has received the number of votes necessary to be declared nominated for an office in a primary election with a majority; or
  - (2) has received the number of votes necessary to be declared nominated for an office in a second primary election

and the number of votes received by the candidate receiving the next highest number of votes but not declared nominated under G.S. 163-179 is not more than one percent (1%) of the total votes which were cast for that office, except in multi-seat races one percent (1%) of the total votes cast for those two candidates, the county board of elections shall, before declaring the person nominated, order a recount of the primary if the candidate having the next highest number of votes shall, by noon on the second day (Saturdays and Sundays excepted) following the canvass, request in writing such a recount."

Sec. 11. G.S. 163-192.1 reads as rewritten:

- "(a) Whenever, according to the canvass made under this Article, the difference between the number of votes received by a candidate who:
  - (1) has received the number of votes necessary to be declared nominated for an office in a primary election with a majority; or
  - (2) received the number of votes necessary to be declared nominated for an office in a second primary election

and the number of votes received by the candidate receiving the next highest number of votes but not declared nominated under G.S. 163-192 is not more than one percent (1%) of the total votes which were cast for that office, except in multi-seat races one percent (1%) of the total votes cast for those two candidates, the State Board of Elections shall, before declaring the person nominated, order a recount of the primary if the candidate having the next highest number of votes shall, by noon on the second day (Saturdays and Sundays excepted) following the canvass, request in writing such a recount."

## PART 2. DURHAM COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION

Sec. 12. Section 2 of Chapter 657, Session Laws of 1975, as amended by Chapter 249, Session Laws of 1977, is amended by adding the following at the end:

"The runoff election shall be held on the date of the general election established by G.S. 163-1(c)."

### PART 3. CHARLOTTE-MECKLENBURG BOARD OF EDUCATION

Sec. 13. Section 7 of Chapter 378, Session Laws of 1959, is amended by deleting "it shall be held at the time that the second primary would be held under the general law dealing with nomination of State officers", and substituting ", it shall be held on the date of the general election established by G.S. 163-1(c)".

### PART 4. ORANGE COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION

Sec. 14. Section 6 of Chapter 603, Session Laws of 1977, as enacted by Section 2 of Chapter 1214, Session Laws of 1981, reads as rewritten:

"Sec. 6. If a runoff election is required, the runoff election shall be held at the time for the second primary as provided in G.S. 163-111(e) on the date of the general election established by G.S. 163-1(c) and those persons elected members of Orange County Board of Education shall qualify and take office on the first Monday of the month-December following their election."

### PART 5. RICHMOND COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION

Sec. 15. Section 3.3 of Chapter 615, Session Laws of 1967, as enacted by Section 1 of Chapter 128, Session Laws of 1983, reads as rewritten:

"Sec. 3.3. The Richmond County Board of Education shall be elected by the nonpartisan election and run off election method, and the results determined in accordance with G.S. 163-293. The election shall be held on the date of the primary election provided by G.S. 163-1(b), and the run off election, if required, shall be held on the date of the second primary as provided by G.S. 163-111(e)general election established by G.S. 163-1(c). The filing period for candidates shall be the same as for the primary for county officers.

Sec. 16. Section 3.6 of Chapter 615, Session Laws of 1967, as enacted by Section 1 of Chapter 128, Session Laws of 1983, reads as rewritten:

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- "Sec. 3.6. The terms of office of the members of the Richmond County Board of 1 2 Education elected in 1978 shall terminate on the last Monday in June of 1984. The 3 terms of office of the members of the Richmond County Board of Education elected in 4 1980 shall terminate on the last Monday in June of 1986. The terms of office of the 5 members of the Richmond County Board of Education who were elected in 1982 shall 6 terminate on the last Monday in June of 1988. The terms of office of the members of 7 the Richmond County Board of Education elected in 1984 shall terminate on the first 8 Monday in December of 1990. The terms of office of the members of the Richmond 9 County Board of Education elected in 1986 shall terminate on the first Monday in 10 December of 1992. The terms of office of the members of the Richmond County Board of Education who were elected in 1988 shall terminate on the first Monday in December 11 12 of 1994."
  - Sec. 17. Section 3.7 of Chapter 615, Session Laws of 1967, as enacted by Section 1 of Chapter 128, Session Laws of 1983, reads as rewritten:
  - "Sec. 3.7. Members of the Richmond County Board of Education shall take office on the last Monday in June-first Monday in December of the year of their election.

### PART 6. BUNCOMBE COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION

- Sec. 18. Section 1.1(f) of Chapter 532, Session Laws of 1975, as added by Section 2 of Chapter 178, Session Laws of 1981, reads as rewritten:
- "(f) Runoff elections shall be held on the date fixed in G.S.163-111(e)the date of the general election established in G.S. 163-1(c). The runoff election shall be held under the laws, rules, and regulations provided for the first election."
- Sec. 19. Sections 4 and 5 of Chapter 178, Session Laws of 1981, are repealed.

# PART 7. YANCEY COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION

Sec. 20. The third and fourth paragraphs of Section 1 of Chapter 203, Session Laws of 1973, as rewritten by Section 1 of Chapter 135, Session Laws of 1985 is amended by deleting the words "on the date provided by G.S. 163-111(e)" and substituting "on the date of the general election as provided by G.S. 163-1(c)".

### PART 8. MCDOWELL COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION

Sec. 21. Section 1 of Chapter 322, Session Laws of 1987 reads as rewritten:

"Section 1. Notwithstanding the provisions of G.S.115C-37, the McDowell County Board of Education shall be elected on a nonpartisan basis at the time of the primary election in 1988 and biennially thereafter. The names of the candidates shall be printed on the ballot without reference to any party affiliations. The nonpartisan election and runoff election method shall be used with the results determined as provided in G.S. 163-293, except that the runoff shall be held on the date provided by G.S. 163-111(e) of the general election as provided by G.S. 163-1(c)."

### PART 9. OMNIBUS LOCAL ACT AMENDMENTS

Sec. 22. Any local act which provides that a nonpartisan runoff election shall be held on the date of the second primary is amended to provide that the runoff election shall be held on the date of the general election established by G.S. 163-1(c). If such local act provides that the persons elected take office at some other time than the first

- 1 Monday in December, it is amended to provide that they take office on the first Monday 2 in December.
- Sec. 24. Any local acts in conflict with this act are repealed to the extent of the conflict.
- Sec. 25. This act shall become effective with respect to all primary elections held on or after January 1, 1990.