



SENATE BILL 655: Change Date When Primary Elections Held.

2017-2018 General Assembly

Committee:	Senate Select Committee on Elections. If favorable, re-refer to Rules and Operations of the Senate	Date:	June 12, 2018
Introduced by:	Sen. Brock	Prepared by:	Erika Churchill and Jessica Sammons, Staff Attorneys
Analysis of:	First Edition		

OVERVIEW: Senate Bill 655 would move the date of the general primary election and the presidential preference primary to March and provide for notices of candidacy in primary elections to be filed in December. Effective January 1, 2019, applying to even-year elections held on or after that date, pursuant to an unengrossed House floor amendment.

CURRENT LAW & BILL ANALYSIS:

Section 1 – General Primary Date: Article 1 of Chapter 163 provides for the time of primaries and elections. The general primary date is the Tuesday after the first Monday in May before each general election held in November in even-numbered years.

Section 1 of Senate Bill 655 would move the date of the primary election to the Tuesday after the first Monday in March before each general election held in November in even-numbered years.

Section 2 – Party Primary Nominations: Article 10 of Chapter 163 provides that candidates seeking party primary nominations must file their notice of candidacy in February prior to the primary election.

Section 2 of Senate Bill 655 would provide for filing of notice of candidacy in December prior to the primary election.

Section 3 – Presidential Preference Primary: Article 18A of Chapter 163 establishes the Presidential Preference Primary Act. The presidential primary is held in presidential election years on the Tuesday after the first Monday in May, unless South Carolina holds its presidential primary before the 15th day of March. In that case, the North Carolina presidential preference primary is held on the Tuesday after the first South Carolina presidential preference primary of that year.

Section 3 of Senate Bill 655 would move the date of the presidential preference primary in presidential election years to the Tuesday after the first Monday in March, beginning with the 2020 presidential election.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Senate Bill 655, as amended on the House Floor by unengrossed amendment, would be effective January 1, 2019, applying to even-year elections held on or after that date.

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