

Senate Election Law and Municipal Affairs Committee

Jessica Bourque 271-2104

HB 1381, extending the time of the party filing period.

Hearing Date: March 31, 2026

Time Opened: 2:21 p.m.

Time Closed: 2:27 p.m.

Members of the Committee Present: Senators Gray, Lang, Rochefort, Perkins Kwoka and Long

Members of the Committee Absent: None

Bill Analysis: This bill allows political organizations to file on behalf of candidates for 10 days following the deadline for filing for an election.

Sponsors:

Rep. Wilhelm

Rep. Berry

Who supports the bill: Rep. Matt Wilhelm, Rep. Ross Berry, Rep. Bob Wherry, Brendan O'Donnell, Eric Pauer, Jim Qualey, Cory Stone

Who opposes the bill: None

Summary of testimony presented:

Representative Matt Wilhelm, Hillsborough - District 21, and Representative Ross Berry, Hillsborough - District 44

- This is a bipartisan bill.
- This extends the deadline for political organizations to file on behalf of candidates from 3 to 10 days after the candidate filing deadline.
- It is difficult to recruit candidates, especially for the House, due to the large number of seats.
- Would like the committee to amend the bill to take effect “upon passage”.

Brendan O’Donnell, Deputy Secretary of State

- The Secretary of State’s Office has no issues with this bill.
- He explained that the 3-business-day deadline mentioned by the sponsors is actually in RSA 655:32, not RSA 655:14, and asked the committee to amend the bill so it stays in RSA 655:32 to prevent confusion.

Senator Long asked for clarification and asked if on line 8 it should be 655:32.

Mr. O'Donnell explained that 655:32 includes references to 655:14, so they prefer to amend 655:32 rather than change the other statute. He then offered to provide language to the committee.

jab

Date Hearing Report completed: April 2, 2026