

SB 222 - AS AMENDED BY THE SENATE

03/27/2025 1119s

2025 SESSION

25-0423

08/06

SENATE BILL **222**

AN ACT relative to moving the state primary date.

SPONSORS: Sen. Lang, Dist 2; Sen. Pearl, Dist 17; Sen. Sullivan, Dist 18; Sen. Innis, Dist 7; Sen. Avar, Dist 12; Sen. McGough, Dist 11; Sen. Watters, Dist 4; Sen. Ward, Dist 8; Sen. Ricciardi, Dist 9; Sen. Perkins Kwoka, Dist 21

COMMITTEE: Election Law and Municipal Affairs

ANALYSIS

This bill moves the state primary date to June.

Explanation: Matter added to current law appears in ***bold italics***.
Matter removed from current law appears ~~[in brackets and struckthrough]~~
Matter which is either (a) all new or (b) repealed and reenacted appears in regular type.

STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

In the Year of Our Lord Two Thousand Twenty Five

AN ACT relative to moving the state primary date.

Be it Enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court convened:

1 1 Election of Officers and Delegates; Election Dates; State Primary Election. Amend RSA 653:8
2 to read as follows:

3 653:8 State Primary Election. The state primary election shall be held on the second Tuesday in
4 [~~September~~] **June** of every even-numbered year.

5 2 Voters and Checklists; Hearings on Alterations to Party Registration. Amend RSA 654:32 to
6 read as follows:

7 654:32 Hearings on Alterations to Party Registration. Before each state or presidential primary
8 election, the supervisors of the checklist shall be in session before each primary for the change of
9 registration of legal voters as provided in RSA 654:34 or 654:34-a or both. Before the presidential
10 primary, the session shall be on the Friday preceding the first day of the filing period, between 7:00
11 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. and at the discretion of the supervisors for extended hours. Before the state
12 primary election, the session shall be on Tuesday before the first Wednesday in [~~June~~] **March**
13 between 7:00 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. and at the discretion of the supervisors for extended hours.

14 3 Voters and Checklists; Change of Registration. Amend RSA 654:34, IV to read as follows:

15 IV. No person, who is already registered to vote, whether his **or her** party membership has
16 been previously registered or not, shall affiliate with a party or disaffiliate from a party between the
17 first Wednesday in [~~June~~] **March** and the day before the state primary election.

18 4 Elections; Nominations by Primary; Filing; General Provisions. Amend RSA 655:14 to read as
19 follows:

20 655:14 Filing; General Provisions. The name of any person shall not be printed upon the ballot
21 of any party for a primary unless he or she is a registered member of that party, he or she shall have
22 met the age and domicile qualifications for the office he or she seeks at the time of the general
23 election, he or she meets all the other qualifications at the time of filing, and he or she shall file with
24 the appropriate official between the first Wednesday in [~~June~~] **March** and the Friday of the
25 following week a declaration of candidacy as provided in RSA 655:17.

26 5 Elections; Nominations by Primary. Amend RSA 655:21 to read as follows:

27 655:21 Form. Primary petitions shall be made in the following form:

28 State of New Hampshire
29 County of _____ ss.
30 City (Town) of _____

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I do hereby join in a petition for the printing on the primary ballot of the name of _____ whose domicile is in the city (town) of _____ (ward, street, and number, if in a city), in the county of _____, for the office of _____ to be voted for on Tuesday, the ____ day of [~~September~~] **June**, ____ (year), and certify that I am qualified to vote for a candidate for said office, that I am a registered member of the _____ party, and am not at this time a signer of any other similar petition for any other candidate for the above office; that my domicile is in the city (town) of _____ (ward, street, and number, if in a city), in the county of _____. I certify that to my knowledge the above-named candidate is not a candidate for incompatible offices as defined in RSA 655:10, and that he or she is not a federal employee which makes him or her ineligible to file as a candidate for this office. I further certify that I believe the above-named person is especially qualified to fill said office.

I hereby swear, under the penalties for voting fraud set forth below, that the information above is true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Print Voter's name

Voter's Signature

In accordance with RSA 659:34, the penalty for knowingly or purposefully providing false information when registering to vote or voting is a class A misdemeanor with a maximum sentence of imprisonment not to exceed one year and a fine not to exceed \$2,000. Fraudulently registering to vote or voting is subject to a civil penalty not to exceed \$5,000.

6 Elections; Nomination by Primary; Examination and Rejection. Amend RSA 655:26 to read as follows:

655:26 Examination and Rejection. The officer with whom primary petitions are filed shall immediately upon receipt thereof examine the same and ascertain whether they conform to the law. If found not to conform thereto or to be conflicting as provided in RSA 655:23, [~~he~~] **they** shall then endorse thereon the reason why such petition cannot be accepted and shall, within 24 hours, return the same to the candidate in whose behalf it was filed. In such case, the candidate may file supplementary petitions with the official, but not later than the third Wednesday in [~~June~~] **March**.

7 Ballot Law Commission; Hearing Date. Amend the introductory paragraph of RSA 665:5, I to read as follows:

I. If necessary, the ballot law commission shall meet on the third Thursday of [~~September~~] **June** in each general election year and the third Friday following the presidential primary election in order to hear and decide:

8 Certification; Nomination Papers. Amend RSA 655:41, I to read as follows:

I. Each nomination paper shall be submitted to the supervisors of the checklist of the town or ward in which the signer is domiciled or is registered, and a majority of the supervisors shall

certify whether or not the signer is a registered voter in said town or ward. The supervisors of the checklist shall certify nomination papers under this section in a timely fashion, so that their certification shall be complete for each candidate, together with any objections to the nomination papers submitted, no later than 5:00 p.m. on the Wednesday [2] **12 weeks before the *state general election* [primary]**. Each nomination paper shall be submitted to the supervisors of the checklist no later than 5:00 p.m. on the Wednesday [5] **15 weeks before the [primary] *state general election***.

9 Filing Deadline; Nomination Papers. Amend RSA 655:43, I to read as follows:

I. ~~[Nomination]~~ ***A candidate shall file the required number of certified nomination papers [shall be filed] with the secretary of state no later than 5:00 p.m. on the Wednesday [one week before the primary] 11 weeks before the state general election.*** Nomination papers to be filed shall be grouped by municipality. No nomination papers shall be accepted by the secretary of state unless the candidate shall have met the age and domicile qualifications for the office he or she seeks at the time of the general election and meets all the other qualifications at the time of filing; and if a candidate for the office of governor, executive councilor, state senator, or state representative, unless the candidate shall file with the nomination papers an affidavit of qualifications as provided in RSA 655:28 and 655:29; and if a candidate for United States senator or United States representative, unless the candidate shall meet the qualifications for office under RSA 655:3 and 655:4.

10 Objections; Nomination Papers. Amend RSA 655:44 to read as follows:

655:44 Objections. Nomination papers made in accordance with the provisions of this chapter shall be regarded as valid and shall be received by the secretary of state unless objection thereto is made in writing no later than the Monday following the last day for the filing of such papers. ***The secretary of state shall notify the ballot law commission as required in RSA 665:6, II.***

11 Session for Correction. Amend RSA 654:27 to read as follows:

654:27 Session for Correction. In cities and towns, the supervisors of the checklist shall be in session for the correction of the checklist at some suitable place in the city or town on a day designated by the supervisors which shall be 6 to 13 days prior to the election and upon which all hearings shall be finally closed; provided that whenever more than one meeting is required within a 21-day period, the first required meeting may serve to fulfill the requirements of the remaining meetings. All sessions for the correction of the checklist shall be for no less than 30 minutes and at the discretion of the supervisors for additional hours. Notice of the day, hour, and place of each session of the board of supervisors shall be given upon the checklists first posted in 2 appropriate places one of which shall be the city or town's Internet website, if such exists, or shall be published in a newspaper of general circulation in the city or town at least 7 days prior to each such session. The reconvening of any session which has been adjourned shall not require the publication of notice. ***Notwithstanding other provisions of RSA 654:27, the required sessions of the supervisors of the checklist on the evening before the opening of a candidate filing period shall be held.***

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1 12 Effective Date. This act shall take effect January 1, 2026.

SB 222- FISCAL NOTE
AS AMENDED BY THE SENATE (AMENDMENT #2025-1119s)

AN ACT relative to moving the state primary date.

FISCAL IMPACT: This bill does not provide funding, nor does it authorize new positions.

Estimated State Impact				
	FY 2025	FY 2026	FY 2027	FY 2028
Revenue	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
<i>Revenue Fund(s)</i>	None			
Expenditures*	\$0	Indeterminable	\$0	\$0
<i>Funding Source(s)</i>	General Fund			
Appropriations*	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
<i>Funding Source(s)</i>	None			

***Expenditure = Cost of bill**

***Appropriation = Authorized funding to cover cost of bill**

METHODOLOGY:

This bill changes the date of the state primary election from the second Tuesday in September to the second Tuesday in June of every even numbered year.

The Department of State indicates that no additional costs will be required for the undertaking of extensive election official training, updating the political calendar, and changing the publication and distribution date of the election procedure manual as extensive training and publication of election materials is already managed by the Secretary of State's office. Additionally, the Secretary of State's office will carry out an extensive voter education outreach to inform voters of the date change. However, this voter education outreach campaign might require extra funding, leaving the fiscal impact of this bill indeterminable.

AGENCIES CONTACTED:

Department of State