

PRESS RELEASE

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PHIL McGRANE
IDAHO SECRETARY OF STATE

Updated July 16, 2024. The short and long ballot titles were updated to the correct language.

Idahoans for Open Primaries Initiative Qualifies for November Ballot

(Boise, Idaho) – The Idaho Secretary of State’s Office announced today that the Idahoans for Open Primaries initiative has met the statutory requirements to appear on the November 5, 2024, General Election ballot.

The Secretary of State’s Office issued a letter of acceptance, certifying that the initiative met the required threshold of 62,895 valid petition signatures. This number is equivalent to 6 percent of the total registered voters from the last general election. Additionally, these signatures met the statutory requirements for distribution across at least 18 legislative districts, with a minimum of 6 percent of registered voters from each district. Idaho county clerk’s offices verified the signatures before initiative organizers submitted them to the Secretary of State’s Office for final acceptance and review.

The Attorney General’s official title and summary of the initiative are as follows:

Short Title:

MEASURE TO (1) REPLACE VOTER SELECTION OF PARTY NOMINEES WITH A TOP-FOUR PRIMARY; (2) REQUIRE A RANKED-CHOICE VOTING SYSTEM FOR GENERAL ELECTIONS.

General Title:

THIS MEASURE PROPOSES TWO DISTINCT CHANGES TO ELECTIONS FOR MOST PUBLIC OFFICES.

FIRST, THIS MEASURE WOULD ABOLISH IDAHO’S PARTY PRIMARIES. UNDER CURRENT LAW, POLITICAL PARTIES NOMINATE CANDIDATES THROUGH PRIMARY ELECTIONS IN WHICH PARTY MEMBERS VOTE FOR A CANDIDATE TO REPRESENT THE PARTY IN THE GENERAL ELECTION. THE INITIATIVE CREATES A SYSTEM WHERE ALL CANDIDATES PARTICIPATE IN A TOP-FOUR PRIMARY AND VOTERS MAY VOTE ON ALL CANDIDATES. THE TOP FOUR VOTE-EARNERS FOR EACH OFFICE WOULD ADVANCE TO THE GENERAL ELECTION. CANDIDATES COULD LIST ANY AFFILIATION ON THE BALLOT, BUT WOULD NOT REPRESENT POLITICAL PARTIES, AND NEED NOT BE ASSOCIATED WITH THE PARTY THEY NAME.

SECOND, THE MEASURE WOULD REQUIRE A RANKED-CHOICE VOTING SYSTEM FOR THE GENERAL ELECTION. UNDER CURRENT LAW, VOTERS MAY SELECT ONE CANDIDATE FOR EACH OFFICE, AND THE CANDIDATE WITH THE MOST VOTES WINS. UNDER THE RANKED-CHOICE VOTING SYSTEM, VOTERS RANK CANDIDATES ON THE BALLOT IN ORDER OF PREFERENCE, BUT NEED NOT RANK EVERY CANDIDATE. THE VOTES ARE COUNTED IN SUCCESSIVE ROUNDS, AND THE CANDIDATE RECEIVING THE FEWEST VOTES IN EACH ROUND IS ELIMINATED. A VOTE FOR AN ELIMINATED CANDIDATE WILL TRANSFER TO THE VOTER'S NEXT-HIGHEST-RANKED ACTIVE CANDIDATE. THE CANDIDATE WITH THE MOST VOTES IN THE FINAL ROUND WINS.

Pro- and con-arguments regarding the initiative may be submitted to the Secretary of State's Office no later than 11:59 p.m. Mountain Time on July 20, 2024. Arguments may be submitted via online form at <https://forms.sos.idaho.gov/pro-con/>.

Idaho voters will receive a voter pamphlet before the general election containing the initiative language and selected pro- and con-arguments. For more information about the initiative process, visit <https://voteidaho.gov/initiatives-amendments/>.

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ABOUT PHIL McGRANE

Phil McGrane was elected Idaho's twenty-eighth Secretary of State and took office on January 2, 2023. McGrane served as elected Clerk of Ada County from 2019-2022. McGrane holds a bachelor's degree in philosophy, a juris doctorate, and a Master of Public Administration. As a fourth-generation Idahoan, Phil has dedicated his career to making elections in the state of Idaho accessible, secure and transparent.