



Susan Bysiewicz  
SECRETARY OF THE STATE  
CONNECTICUT

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For more information:  
Derek Slap: (860) 509-6255  
Cell: (860) 573-2019

- NEWS RELEASE -

# NEW ELECTION LAWS TAKE EFFECT TODAY

- MINOR PARTIES CAN MORE EASILY CROSS ENDORSE MAJOR PARTY CANDIDATES
- POLITICAL PARTIES HAVE LESS TIME TO REPLACE ONE OF THEIR OWN CANDIDATES BEFORE AN ELECTION
- PRIMARY ELECTIONS THAT END IN A TIE NO LONGER DECIDED BY COIN TOSS

**Hartford:** Secretary of the State Susan Bysiewicz is announcing that several significant changes to Connecticut's election laws take effect today, October 1, 2007. The new requirements, as detailed in Public Act #194, An Act Concerning the Integrity and Security of the Voting Process, make it easier for minor parties to cross endorse major party candidates, restrict the time period in which political parties can replace candidates before an election, and eliminate the practice of tossing a coin to determine the winner of a primary election.

“While these changes may seem small to some observers, make no mistake, they go a long way to improving our democracy,” said Secretary Bysiewicz. “Taken together the new laws are sure to increase transparency, participation, and fairness in our elections.”

The General Assembly’s, Office of Legislative Research, has provided a summary of the new laws:

**Cross Endorsement:** “Current law prohibits a nominated major or minor party candidate from appearing on the ballot as a petitioning candidate for the same office. The bill lifts this prohibition under certain circumstances. Under the bill, a party that has not attained minor party status for the office in question, but has for at least one other office on that ballot, may cross-endorse a nominated major or minor party candidate by petitioning such candidate's name onto the ballot.”

**Filling vacancies:** “The bill changes the period of time during which political parties may fill vacancies for nominated candidates before an election. Under current law, a primary may be held if a candidate withdraws or becomes disqualified to hold office more than 10 days before the election. The bill extends this period to 24 days before an election. The bill requires vacancy nominations to be certified with the secretary of the state or town clerk by the 21st, rather than the 7th, day before the election.”

“Similarly, under current law, if a candidate dies between 10 days and 24 hours before an election, the party may fill the vacancy. The bill extends this period to between 24 days and 24 hours beforehand. By law, if a candidate dies within 24 hours of an election, his or her name remains on the ballot. If the candidate wins, a vacancy exists in the office and the party fills it in the manner prescribed by law. “

**Tie votes in primary elections:** “The bill changes the procedure for resolving a tie vote in a primary between two or more candidates for statewide, legislative, or municipal office, or town committee, or slates of candidates for justice of the peace. If any such candidates or slates of candidates tie in a primary under current law, the secretary of the state or registrar of voters, depending on the office, chooses the nominee by drawing lots. Under the bill, the primary stands adjourned and a run-off primary between the candidates or slates of candidates who tied is held three weeks later. “

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