

Senate Government Operations and Political Subdivisions Committee
Prepared by the Utah Association of Special Districts
03/04/2026

Bill: 1st substitute HB 548 - Primary Election Amendments

Sponsor: Representative Stoddard

Floor Sponsor: Senator McKell

UASD Position: Track

This Bill addresses primary elections.

Discussion: The sponsor presented Senate Amendment 1, explaining that the amendment corrects a drafting error by changing the word “file” to “fill”. The amendment was adopted by the Committee. The sponsor stated that the Bill was developed in collaboration with the Utah Association of Counties and the Utah League of Cities and Towns. The Bill modifies provisions governing municipal primary elections by establishing new thresholds for when a primary election may or must occur. Under the Bill, a municipality may not hold a primary election if the number of candidates for a municipal office is less than twice the number of individuals to be elected. If the number of candidates exceeds twice but does not exceed three times the number of individuals to be elected, the municipality may choose whether to hold a primary election. A primary election is required when the number of candidates exceeds three times the number of individuals needed to fill the office. The decision to hold a primary for special district board seats remains discretionary with the district board.

Senator Vickers asked for clarification regarding the threshold that triggers a mandatory primary election. The sponsor confirmed that a primary is required when the number of candidates for a municipal office is more than three times the number of positions to be filled.

The Utah League of Cities and Towns and the Clerks Association of Utah spoke in support of the Bill.

Yeas: 5

Nays: 0

N/V: 2

Outcome: 1st substitute HB 548, as amended, passed out of Committee with a favorable recommendation.