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State of Minnesota
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

EIGHTY-NINTH SESSION

H. F. No. 1387

03/02/2015 Authored by Nelson

The bill was read for the first time and referred to the Committee on Government Operations and Elections Policy

1.1 A bill for an act
1.2 relating to elections; requiring signatures on political party petitions to be
1.3 collected in the year the petition is filed; amending Minnesota Statutes 2014,
1.4 section 200.02, subdivisions 7, 23.

1.5 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MINNESOTA:

1.6 Section 1. Minnesota Statutes 2014, section 200.02, subdivision 7, is amended to read:

1.7 Subd. 7. **Major political party.** (a) "Major political party" means a political party
1.8 that maintains a party organization in the state, political division or precinct in question
1.9 and that has presented at least one candidate for election to the office of:

1.10 (1) governor and lieutenant governor, secretary of state, state auditor, or attorney
1.11 general at the last preceding state general election for those offices; or

1.12 (2) presidential elector or U.S. senator at the last preceding state general election for
1.13 presidential electors; and

1.14 whose candidate received votes in each county in that election and received votes
1.15 from not less than five percent of the total number of individuals who voted in that election.

1.16 (b) "Major political party" also means a political party that maintains a party
1.17 organization in the state, political subdivision, or precinct in question and that has
1.18 presented at least 45 candidates for election to the office of state representative, 23
1.19 candidates for election to the office of state senator, four candidates for election to
1.20 the office of representative in Congress, and one candidate for election to each of the
1.21 following offices: governor and lieutenant governor, attorney general, secretary of state,
1.22 and state auditor, at the last preceding state general election for those offices.

1.23 (c) "Major political party" also means a political party that maintains a party
1.24 organization in the state, political subdivision, or precinct in question and whose members

2.1 present to the secretary of state at any time before the close of filing for the state partisan
 2.2 primary ballot a petition for a place on the state partisan primary ballot, which petition
 2.3 contains valid signatures of a number of the party members equal to at least five percent
 2.4 of the total number of individuals who voted in the preceding state general election. A
 2.5 signature is valid only if obtained on or after January 1 of the year the petition is filed.

2.6 (d) A political party whose candidate receives a sufficient number of votes at a state
 2.7 general election described in paragraph (a) or a political party that presents candidates at
 2.8 an election as required by paragraph (b) becomes a major political party as of January
 2.9 1 following that election and retains its major party status for at least two state general
 2.10 elections even if the party fails to present a candidate who receives the number and
 2.11 percentage of votes required under paragraph (a) or fails to present candidates as required
 2.12 by paragraph (b) at subsequent state general elections.

2.13 (e) A major political party whose candidates fail to receive the number and
 2.14 percentage of votes required under paragraph (a) and that fails to present candidates as
 2.15 required by paragraph (b) at each of two consecutive state general elections described by
 2.16 paragraph (a) or (b), respectively, loses major party status as of December 31 following
 2.17 the later of the two consecutive state general elections.

2.18 Sec. 2. Minnesota Statutes 2014, section 200.02, subdivision 23, is amended to read:

2.19 Subd. 23. **Minor political party.** (a) "Minor political party" means a political party
 2.20 that has adopted a state constitution, designated a state party chair, held a state convention
 2.21 in the last two years, filed with the secretary of state no later than December 31 following
 2.22 the most recent state general election a certification that the party has met the foregoing
 2.23 requirements, and met the requirements of paragraph (b) or (e), as applicable.

2.24 (b) To be considered a minor party in all elections statewide, the political party must
 2.25 have presented at least one candidate for election to the office of:

2.26 (1) governor and lieutenant governor, secretary of state, state auditor, or attorney
 2.27 general, at the last preceding state general election for those offices; or

2.28 (2) presidential elector or U.S. senator at the preceding state general election for
 2.29 presidential electors; and

2.30 (3) who received votes in each county that in the aggregate equal at least one percent
 2.31 of the total number of individuals who voted in the election, or its members must have
 2.32 presented to the secretary of state at any time before the close of filing for the state
 2.33 partisan primary ballot a nominating petition in a form prescribed by the secretary of state
 2.34 containing the valid signatures of party members in a number equal to at least one percent

3.1 of the total number of individuals who voted in the preceding state general election. A
3.2 signature is valid only if obtained on or after January 1 of the year the petition is filed.

3.3 (c) A political party whose candidate receives a sufficient number of votes at a
3.4 state general election described in paragraph (b) becomes a minor political party as of
3.5 January 1 following that election and retains its minor party status for at least two state
3.6 general elections even if the party fails to present a candidate who receives the number
3.7 and percentage of votes required under paragraph (b) at subsequent state general elections.

3.8 (d) A minor political party whose candidates fail to receive the number and
3.9 percentage of votes required under paragraph (b) at each of two consecutive state general
3.10 elections described by paragraph (b) loses minor party status as of December 31 following
3.11 the later of the two consecutive state general elections.

3.12 (e) A minor party that qualifies to be a major party loses its status as a minor party
3.13 at the time it becomes a major party. Votes received by the candidates of a major party
3.14 must be counted in determining whether the party received sufficient votes to qualify as a
3.15 minor party, notwithstanding that the party does not receive sufficient votes to retain its
3.16 major party status. To be considered a minor party in an election in a legislative district,
3.17 the political party must have presented at least one candidate for a legislative office in that
3.18 district who received votes from at least ten percent of the total number of individuals
3.19 who voted for that office, or its members must have presented to the secretary of state a
3.20 nominating petition in a form prescribed by the secretary of state containing the valid
3.21 signatures of party members in a number equal to at least ten percent of the total number
3.22 of individuals who voted in the preceding state general election for that legislative office.
3.23 A signature is valid only if obtained on or after January 1 of the year the petition is filed.