1   **Candidate Petition Amendments**

2025 GENERAL SESSION

STATE OF UTAH

Chief Sponsor: Lisa Shepherd

Senate Sponsor: Ronald M. Winterton

2
3   **LONG TITLE**
4   **General Description:**
5   This bill amends provisions related to ballot access.
6   **Highlighted Provisions:**
7   This bill:
8   ‣ for a candidate for elective office seeking the nomination of a political party by manually
9   gathering the signatures of registered voters on a nomination petition:
10   • prohibits a county clerk from verifying the signature of a voter if the county clerk is
11 not the county clerk of the voter's residence; and
12   • if an elective office's political division crosses the boundary of two or more counties,
13 requires the county clerk to verify each signature and to certify the total number of
14 verified signatures to the lieutenant governor;
15   ‣ for an elective office described above, requires the lieutenant governor to:
16   • count the verified signatures received from each county clerk where the candidate
17 submitted signatures for verification; and
18   • if the total number of signatures is sufficient for the candidate to qualify for placement
19 on the ballot, certify the signatures;
20   ‣ implements the signature verification and certification processes described above for a
21 candidate who is not affiliated with a political party;
22   ‣ amends the form of a nomination petition to specify that only a registered voter of the
23 county where a candidate will submit signatures for verification is eligible to have the
24 voter's signature verified;
25   ‣ establishes and amends deadlines relating to signature verification and certification of a
26 petition described above; and
27   ‣ makes technical and conforming changes.
28 **Money Appropriated in this Bill:**
29   None
30 **Other Special Clauses:**

31   This bill provides a special effective date.

32   **Utah Code Sections Affected:**

33   AMENDS:

34   **20A-9-403**, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2024, Chapter 503

35   **20A-9-405**, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2022, Chapter 325

36   **20A-9-408**, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2023, Chapter 116

37   **20A-9-502**, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2024, Chapter 17

38   ══

39   *Be it enacted by the Legislature of the state of Utah:*

40   Section 1. Section **20A-9-403** is amended to read:

41   **20A-9-403 . Regular primary elections.**

42   (1)(a) Candidates for elective office that are to be filled at the next regular general

43   election shall be nominated in a regular primary election by direct vote of the people

44   in the manner prescribed in this section. The regular primary election is held on the

45   date specified in Section 20A-1-201.5. Nothing in this section shall affect a

46   candidate's ability to qualify for a regular general election's ballot as an unaffiliated

47   candidate under Section 20A-9-501 or to participate in a regular general election as a

48   write-in candidate under Section 20A-9-601.

49   (b) Each registered political party that chooses to have the names of the registered

50   political party's candidates for elective office featured with party affiliation on the

51   ballot at a regular general election shall comply with the requirements of this section

52   and shall nominate the registered political party's candidates for elective office in the

53   manner described in this section.

54   (c) A filing officer may not permit an official ballot at a regular general election to be

55   produced or used if the ballot denotes affiliation between a registered political party

56   or any other political group and a candidate for elective office who is not nominated

57   in the manner prescribed in this section or in Subsection 20A-9-202(4).

58   (d) Unless noted otherwise, the dates in this section refer to those that occur in each

59   even-numbered year in which a regular general election will be held.

60   (2)(a) Each registered political party, in a statement filed with the lieutenant governor,

61   shall:

62   (i) either declare the registered political party's intent to participate in the next regular

63   primary election or declare that the registered political party chooses not to have

64   the names of the registered political party's candidates for elective office featured

65   on the ballot at the next regular general election; and

66   (ii) if the registered political party participates in the upcoming regular primary

67   election, identify one or more registered political parties whose members may

68   vote for the registered political party's candidates and whether individuals

69   identified as unaffiliated with a political party may vote for the registered political

70   party's candidates.

71 (b)(i) A registered political party that is a continuing political party shall file the

72   statement described in Subsection (2)(a) with the lieutenant governor no later than

73   5 p.m. on November 30 of each odd-numbered year.

74   (ii) An organization that is seeking to become a registered political party under

75   Section 20A-8-103 shall file the statement described in Subsection (2)(a) at the

76   time that the registered political party files the petition described in Section

77   20A-8-103.

78 (3)(a) Except as provided in Subsection [(3)(e)] (3)(h), an individual who submits a

79   declaration of candidacy under Section 20A-9-202 shall appear as a candidate for

80   elective office on the regular primary ballot of the registered political party listed on

81   the declaration of candidacy only if the individual is certified by the appropriate

82   filing officer as having submitted a nomination petition that was:

83   (i) circulated and completed in accordance with Section 20A-9-405; and

84   (ii) signed by at least 2% of the registered political party's members who reside in the

85   political division of the office that the individual seeks.

86 (b)(i) A candidate for elective office shall submit signatures for a nomination petition

87   to the [appropriate filing officer] county clerk for verification and certification no

88   later than 5 p.m. on the final day in March.

89   (ii) A candidate may supplement the candidate's submissions at any time on or before

90   the filing deadline.

91 (c)(i) The lieutenant governor shall determine for each elective office the total

92   number of signatures that must be submitted under Subsection (3)(a)(ii) or

93   20A-9-408(8) by counting the aggregate number of individuals residing in each

94   elective office's political division who have designated a particular registered

95   political party on the individuals' voter registration forms on or before November

96   15 of each odd-numbered year.

97   (ii) The lieutenant governor shall publish the determination for each elective office

98   no later than November 30 of each odd-numbered year.

99   (d) The county clerk shall:

100   (i) consider an active and inactive voter eligible to sign a nomination petition;

101   (ii) consider an individual who signs a nomination petition a member of a registered

102   political party for purposes of Subsection (3)(a)(ii) if the individual has designated

103   the registered political party as the individual's party membership on the

104   individual's voter registration form;

105   (iii) except as otherwise provided in Section 20A-21-201 or Subsection (3)(e):

106   (A) verify signatures on a nomination petition in a transparent and orderly

107   manner, no later than 14 days after the day on which a candidate submits the

108   signatures to the county clerk; and

109   (B) use the procedures described in Section 20A-1-1002 to verify each submitted

110   nomination petition signature, or use statistical sampling procedures to verify

111   submitted nomination petition signatures in accordance with rules made under

112   Subsection (3)(i); and

113   (iv) except as provided in Subsection (3)(f), for each candidate who complies with

114   the signature-gathering requirements described in Subsections (3)(a)(i) and (ii),

115   issue to the candidate the certification described in Subsection (3)(a) no later than

116   the deadline described in Subsection 20A-9-202(1)(b).

117   (e) A county clerk may not verify the signature of an individual under Subsection

118   (3)(d)(iii) if the county clerk is not the county clerk of the individual's county of

119   residence.

120   (f) In an election for a federal office, constitutional office, or multicounty office, the

121   county clerk shall, instead of taking the action described in Subsection (3)(d)(iv):

122   (i) count the number of verified nomination petition signatures submitted on behalf of

123   the candidate; and

124   (ii) no later than seven days before the day of the deadline described in Subsection

125   20A-9-201(1)(b), certify the number of verified nomination petition signatures to

126   the lieutenant governor.

127   (g) For an election described in Subsection (3)(f) the lieutenant governor shall, upon

128   receiving the certification described in Subsection (3)(f)(ii) from the county clerk of

129   each county where the candidate submitted signatures for verification:

130   (i) add together the number of nomination petition signatures verified by each county

131   clerk; and

132   (ii) if the aggregate amount of signatures is equal to or more than the total number of

133	signatures required for the candidate to qualify for placement on the regular
134	primary ballot under Subsection (3)(c)(i), issue to the candidate the certification
135	described in Subsection (3)(a) no later than the deadline described in Subsection
136	20A-9-201(1)(b).
137	[(d) The filing officer shall:]
138	[(i) except as otherwise provided in Section 20A-21-201, verify signatures on
139	nomination petitions in a transparent and orderly manner, no later than 14 days
140	after the day on which a candidate submits the signatures to the filing officer;]
141	[(ii) for all qualifying candidates for elective office who submit nomination petitions
142	to the filing officer, issue certifications referenced in Subsection (3)(a) no later
143	than the deadline described in Subsection 20A-9-202(1)(b);]
144	[(iii) consider active and inactive voters eligible to sign nomination petitions;]
145	[(iv) consider an individual who signs a nomination petition a member of a registered
146	political party for purposes of Subsection (3)(a)(ii) if the individual has designated
147	that registered political party as the individual's party membership on the
148	individual's voter registration form; and]
149	[(v) except as otherwise provided in Section 20A-21-201 and with the assistance of
150	the county clerk as applicable, use the procedures described in Section 20A-1-1002
151	to verify submitted nomination petition signatures, or use statistical sampling
152	procedures to verify submitted nomination petition signatures in accordance with
153	rules made under Subsection (3)(f).]
154	[(e)] (h) Notwithstanding any other provision in this Subsection (3), a candidate for
155	lieutenant governor may appear on the regular primary ballot of a registered political
156	party without submitting nomination petitions if the candidate files a declaration of
157	candidacy and complies with Subsection 20A-9-202(3).
158	[(f)] (i) In accordance with Title 63G, Chapter 3, Utah Administrative Rulemaking Act,
159	the director of elections, within the Office of the Lieutenant Governor, may make
160	rules that:
161	(i) provide for the use of statistical sampling procedures that:
162	(A) [filing officers are] each county clerk is required to use to verify signatures
163	under Subsection (3)(d)(iii); and
164	(B) reflect a bona fide effort to determine the validity of a candidate's entire
165	submission, using widely recognized statistical sampling techniques; and
166	(ii) provide for the transparent, orderly, and timely submission, verification, and

167   certification of nomination petition signatures.

168   [(g)] (j) The county clerk shall:

169   (i) review the declarations of candidacy filed by candidates for local boards of

170   education to determine if more than two candidates have filed for the same seat;

171   (ii) place the names of all candidates who have filed a declaration of candidacy for a

172   local board of education seat on the nonpartisan section of the ballot if more than

173   two candidates have filed for the same seat; and

174   (iii) determine the order of the local board of education candidates' names on the

175   ballot in accordance with Section 20A-6-305.

176   (4)(a) Before the deadline described in Subsection 20A-9-409(4)(c), the lieutenant

177   governor shall provide to [the county clerks] each county clerk:

178   (i) a list of the names of [all candidates] each candidate for federal, constitutional,

179   multi-county, single county, and county [offices who have received certifications]

180   office who has received a certification under Subsection (3)(a), along with

181   instructions on how [those names] each name shall appear on the primary election

182   ballot in accordance with Section 20A-6-305; and

183   (ii) a list of [unopposed candidates for elective office who have] each unopposed

184   candidate for elective office who has been nominated by a registered political

185   party under Subsection (5)(c) and [instruct the county clerks] instructions to

186   exclude the unopposed [candidates] candidate from the primary election ballot.

187   (b) A candidate for lieutenant governor and a candidate for governor campaigning as

188   joint-ticket running mates shall appear jointly on the primary election ballot.

189   (c) After the county clerk receives the certified list from the lieutenant governor under

190   Subsection (4)(a), the county clerk shall post or publish a primary election notice in

191   substantially the following form:

192   "Notice is given that a primary election will be held Tuesday, June ____,

193   _____(year), to nominate party candidates for the parties and candidates for nonpartisan

194   local school board positions listed on the primary ballot. The polling place for voting precinct

195   ____ is ____. The polls will open at 7 a.m. and continue open until 8 p.m. of the same day.

196   Attest: county clerk."

197   (5)(a) A candidate who, at the regular primary election, receives the highest number of

198   votes cast for the office sought by the candidate is:

199   (i) nominated for that office by the candidate's registered political party; or

200   (ii) for a nonpartisan local school board position, nominated for that office.

201   (b) If two or more candidates are to be elected to the office at the regular general
202   election, those party candidates equal in number to positions to be filled who receive
203   the highest number of votes at the regular primary election are the nominees of the
204   candidates' party for those positions.
205   (c)(i) As used in this Subsection (5)(c), a candidate is "unopposed" if:
206   (A) no individual other than the candidate receives a certification under
207   Subsection (3)(a) for the regular primary election ballot of the candidate's
208   registered political party for a particular elective office; or
209   (B) for an office where more than one individual is to be elected or nominated, the
210   number of candidates who receive certification under Subsection (3)(a) for the
211   regular primary election of the candidate's registered political party does not
212   exceed the total number of candidates to be elected or nominated for that office.
213   (ii) A candidate who is unopposed for an elective office in the regular primary
214   election of a registered political party is nominated by the party for that office
215   without appearing on the primary election ballot.
216   (6) The expense of providing all ballots, blanks, or other supplies to be used at any primary
217   election provided for by this section, and all expenses necessarily incurred in the
218   preparation for or the conduct of that primary election shall be paid out of the treasury of
219   the county or state, in the same manner as for the regular general elections.
220   (7) An individual may not file a declaration of candidacy for a registered political party of
221   which the individual is not a member, except to the extent that the registered political
222   party permits otherwise under the registered political party's bylaws.
223   Section 2. Section **20A-9-405** is amended to read:
224   **20A-9-405 . Nomination petitions for regular primary elections.**
225   (1) This section applies to the form and circulation of nomination petitions for regular
226   primary elections described in Subsection 20A-9-403(3)(a).
227   (2) A candidate for elective office, and the agents of the candidate, may not circulate
228   nomination petitions until the candidate has submitted a declaration of candidacy in
229   accordance with Subsection 20A-9-202(1).
230   (3) For the manual candidate qualification process, the nomination petitions shall be in
231   substantially the following form:
232   (a) the petition shall be printed on paper 8-1/2 inches long and 11 inches wide;
233   (b) the petition shall be ruled with a horizontal line 3/4 inch from the top, with the space
234   above that line blank for purposes of binding;

235 (c) the petition shall be headed by a caption stating the purpose of the petition[and the

236   name of the proposed candidate] , the name of the proposed candidate, and the county

237   from which signatures should be collected;

238 (d) the petition shall feature the words:

239   (i) "Warning" followed by the following statement in no less than eight-point, single

240   leaded type: "It is a class A misdemeanor for anyone to knowingly sign a

241   nomination petition with any name other than the person's own name, or more

242   than once for the same candidate, or if the person is not registered to vote in this

243   state."; and

244   (ii) "Notice" followed by the following statement in no less than eight-point, single

245   leaded type: "Only a registered voter who is a resident of [insert name of county]

246   County is eligible to sign this nomination petition.";

247 (e) the petition shall feature 10 lines spaced one-half inch apart and consecutively

248   numbered one through 10;

249 (f) the signature portion of the petition shall be divided into columns headed by the

250   following titles:

251   (i) Registered Voter's Printed Name;

252   (ii) Signature of Registered Voter;

253   (iii) Party Affiliation of Registered Voter;

254   (iv) Birth Date or Age (Optional);

255   (v) Street Address, City, Zip Code; [and]

256   (vi) County of Residence; and

257   [(vi)] (vii) Date of Signature; and

258 (g) a photograph of the candidate may appear on the nomination petition.

259 (4) For the electronic candidate qualification process, the lieutenant governor shall design

260 an electronic form, using progressive screens, that includes:

261 (a) the following warning:

262 "Warning: It is a class A misdemeanor for anyone to knowingly sign a nomination

263 petition with any name other than the person's own name, or more than once for the same

264 candidate, or if the person is not registered to vote in this state."; and

265 (b) the following information for each individual who signs the petition:

266   (i) name;

267   (ii) party affiliation;

268   (iii) date of birth or age, (optional);

269   (iv) street address, city, zip code;

270   (v) date of signature;

271   (vi) other information required under Section 20A-21-201; and

272   (vii) other information required by the lieutenant governor.

273   (5) For the manual candidate qualification process, if one or more nomination petitions are

274   bound together, a page shall be bound to the nomination petition(s) that features the following

275   printed verification statement to be signed and dated by the petition circulator:

276   "Verification

277   State of Utah, County of _____

278   I, _____, of _____, hereby state that:

279   I am a Utah resident and am at least 18 years old;

280   All the names that appear on the signature sheets bound to this page were, to the best of

281   my knowledge, signed by the persons who professed to be the persons whose names appear on

282   the signature sheets, and each of them signed the person's name on the signature sheets in my

283   presence;

284   I believe that each has printed and signed the person's name and written the person's

285   street address correctly, and that each signer is registered to vote in Utah."

286   (6) The lieutenant governor shall prepare and make public model nomination petition forms

287   and associated instructions.

288   (7) A nomination petition circulator must be at least 18 years old and a resident of the state,

289   but may affiliate with any political party.

290   (8) It is unlawful for any person to:

291   (a) knowingly sign the nomination petition described in this section or Section

292   20A-9-408:

293   (i) with any name other than the person's own name;

294   (ii) more than once for the same candidate; or

295   (iii) if the person is not registered to vote in this state;

296   (b) sign the verification of a signature for a nomination petition if the person:

297   (i) does not meet the residency requirements of Section 20A-2-105;

298   (ii) has not witnessed the signing by those persons whose names appear on the

299   nomination petition; or

300   (iii) knows that a person whose signature appears on the nomination petition is not

301   registered to vote in this state;

302   (c) pay compensation to any person to sign a nomination petition; or

303   (d) pay compensation to any person to circulate a nomination petition, if the

304   compensation is based directly on the number of signatures submitted to a [filing

305   officer] county clerk rather than on the number of signatures verified or on some other

306   basis.

307   (9) Any person violating Subsection (8) is guilty of a class A misdemeanor.

308   (10) Withdrawal of petition signatures is prohibited.

309   Section 3. Section **20A-9-408** is amended to read:

310   **20A-9-408 . Signature-gathering process to seek the nomination of a qualified**

311   **political party -- Removal of signature.**

312   (1) This section describes the requirements for a member of a qualified political party who

313   is seeking the nomination of the qualified political party for an elective office through

314   the signature-gathering process described in this section.

315   (2) Notwithstanding Subsection 20A-9-201(7)(a), the form of the declaration of candidacy

316   for a member of a qualified political party who is nominated by, or who is seeking the

317   nomination of, the qualified political party under this section shall be substantially as

318   described in Section 20A-9-408.5.

319   (3) Notwithstanding Subsection 20A-9-202(1)(a), and except as provided in Subsection

320   20A-9-202(4), a member of a qualified political party who, under this section, is seeking

321   the nomination of the qualified political party for an elective office that is to be filled at

322   the next general election shall:

323   (a) during the declaration of candidacy filing period described in Section 20A-9-201.5,

324   and before gathering signatures under this section, file with the filing officer on a

325   form approved by the lieutenant governor a notice of intent to gather signatures for

326   candidacy that includes:

327   (i) the name of the member who will attempt to become a candidate for a registered

328   political party under this section;

329   (ii) the name of the registered political party for which the member is seeking

330   nomination;

331   (iii) the office for which the member is seeking to become a candidate;

332   (iv) the address and telephone number of the member; and

333   (v) other information required by the lieutenant governor;

334   (b) except as provided in Subsection 20A-9-202(1)(c), file a declaration of candidacy, in

335   person, with the filing officer during the declaration of candidacy filing period

336   described in Section 20A-9-201.5; and

337   (c) pay the filing fee.

338   (4) Notwithstanding Subsection 20A-9-202(2)(a), a member of a qualified political party

339   who, under this section, is seeking the nomination of the qualified political party for the

340   office of district attorney within a multicounty prosecution district that is to be filled at

341   the next general election shall:

342   (a) during the declaration of candidacy filing period described in Section 20A-9-201.5,

343   and before gathering signatures under this section, file with the filing officer on a

344   form approved by the lieutenant governor a notice of intent to gather signatures for

345   candidacy that includes:

346   (i) the name of the member who will attempt to become a candidate for a registered

347   political party under this section;

348   (ii) the name of the registered political party for which the member is seeking

349   nomination;

350   (iii) the office for which the member is seeking to become a candidate;

351   (iv) the address and telephone number of the member; and

352   (v) other information required by the lieutenant governor;

353   (b) except as provided in Subsection 20A-9-202(1)(c), file a declaration of candidacy, in

354   person, with the filing officer during the declaration of candidacy filing period

355   described in Section 20A-9-201.5; and

356   (c) pay the filing fee.

357   (5) Notwithstanding Subsection 20A-9-202(3)(a)(iii), a lieutenant governor candidate who

358   files as the joint-ticket running mate of an individual who is nominated by a qualified

359   political party, under this section, for the office of governor shall, during the declaration

360   of candidacy filing period described in Section 20A-9-201.5, file a declaration of

361   candidacy and submit a letter from the candidate for governor that names the lieutenant

362   governor candidate as a joint-ticket running mate.

363   (6) The lieutenant governor shall ensure that the certification described in Subsection

364   20A-9-701(1) also includes the name of each candidate nominated by a qualified

365   political party under this section.

366   (7) Notwithstanding Subsection 20A-9-701(2), the ballot shall, for each candidate who is

367   nominated by a qualified political party under this section, designate the qualified

368   political party that nominated the candidate.

369   (8) A member of a qualified political party may seek the nomination of the qualified

370   political party for an elective office by:

371   (a) complying with the requirements described in this section; and

372   (b) collecting signatures, on a form approved by the lieutenant governor that complies

373   with Subsection 20A-9-405(3), during the period beginning on the day on which the

374   member files a notice of intent to gather signatures and ending at 5 p.m. [14] 21 days

375   before the day on which the qualified political party's convention for the office is

376   held, in the following amounts:

377   (i) for a statewide race, 28,000 signatures of registered voters in the state who are

378   permitted by the qualified political party to vote for the qualified political party's

379   candidates in a primary election;

380   (ii) for a congressional district race, 7,000 signatures of registered voters who are

381   residents of the congressional district and are permitted by the qualified political

382   party to vote for the qualified political party's candidates in a primary election;

383   (iii) for a state Senate district race, 2,000 signatures of registered voters who are

384   residents of the state Senate district and are permitted by the qualified political

385   party to vote for the qualified political party's candidates in a primary election;

386   (iv) for a state House district race, 1,000 signatures of registered voters who are

387   residents of the state House district and are permitted by the qualified political

388   party to vote for the qualified political party's candidates in a primary election;

389   (v) for a State Board of Education race, the lesser of:

390   (A) 2,000 signatures of registered voters who are residents of the State Board of

391   Education district and are permitted by the qualified political party to vote for

392   the qualified political party's candidates in a primary election; or

393   (B) 3% of the registered voters of the qualified political party who are residents of

394   the applicable State Board of Education district; and

395   (vi) for a county office race, signatures of 3% of the registered voters who are

396   residents of the area permitted to vote for the county office and are permitted by

397   the qualified political party to vote for the qualified political party's candidates in

398   a primary election.

399   (9)(a) This Subsection (9) applies only to the manual candidate qualification process.

400   (b) In order for a member of the qualified political party to qualify as a candidate for the

401   qualified political party's nomination for an elective office under this section, using

402   the manual candidate qualification process, the member shall:

403   (i) collect [the signatures] signatures of registered voters on a form approved by the

404   lieutenant governor, using the same circulation and verification requirements

405   described in [Sections 20A-7-105 and 20A-7-204] Section 20A-9-405; and

406   (ii) submit [the signatures to the election officer] each signature to the county clerk of

407   the registered voter's county of residence before 5 p.m. no later than [14] 21 days

408   before the day on which the qualified political party holds the party's convention

409   to select candidates, for the elective office, for the qualified political party's

410   nomination.

411 (c) Upon timely receipt of the signatures described in Subsections (8) and (9)(b), the [

412   election officer] county clerk shall, no later than the earlier of 14 days after the day on

413   which the [election officer] county clerk receives the signatures, or [one day] seven

414   days before the day on which the qualified political party holds the convention to

415   select a nominee for the elective office to which the signature packets relate:

416   (i) check the name of each individual who completes the verification for a signature

417   packet to determine whether each individual is a resident of Utah and is at least 18

418   years old;

419   (ii) submit the name of each individual described in Subsection (9)(c)(i) who is not a

420   Utah resident or who is not at least 18 years old to the attorney general and the

421   county attorney;

422   (iii) [with the assistance of the county clerk as applicable] except as provided in

423   Subsection (9)(d), determine whether each signer is a registered voter who is

424   qualified to sign the petition, using the same method, described in Section

425   20A-1-1002, used to verify a signature on a petition; and

426   (iv) except as provided in Subsection (9)(e), certify whether each name is that of a

427   registered voter who is qualified to sign the signature packet.

428 (d) A county clerk may not verify the signature of a voter under Subsection (9)(c)(iii) if

429   the county clerk is not the county clerk of the voter's county of residence.

430 (e) In an election for a federal office, constitutional office, or multicounty office, the

431   county clerk shall, instead of taking the action described in Subsection (9)(c)(iv):

432   (i) count the number of verified petition signatures submitted on behalf of the

433   candidate; and

434   (ii) no later than seven days before the day of the convention described in Subsection

435   (9)(c), certify the number of verified petition signatures to the lieutenant governor.

436 (f) For an election described in Subsection (9)(e) the lieutenant governor shall, upon

437   receiving the certification described in Subsection (9)(e)(ii) from the county clerk of

438   each county where the candidate submitted signatures for verification:

439   (i) add together the number of signatures verified by each county clerk; and

440   (ii) if the aggregate amount of signatures is equal to or more than the total number of

441   signatures required for the candidate to qualify for placement on the regular

442   primary ballot under Subsection (8), certify the signatures no later than one day

443   before the day of the convention described in Subsection (9)(c).

444   [(d)] (g)(i) A registered voter who physically signs a form under Subsections (8) and

445   (9)(b) may have the voter's signature removed from the form by, no later than

446   three business days after the day on which the member submits the signature form

447   to the [election officer] county clerk, submitting to the [election officer] county

448   clerk a statement requesting that the voter's signature be removed.

449   (ii) A statement described in Subsection [(9)(d)(i)] (9)(g)(i) shall comply with the

450   requirements described in Subsection 20A-1-1003(2).

451   (iii) [With the assistance of the county clerk as applicable, the election officer] The

452   county clerk shall use the procedures described in Subsection 20A-1-1003(3) to

453   determine whether to remove an individual's signature after receiving a timely,

454   valid statement requesting removal of the signature.

455   (10)(a) This Subsection (10) applies only to the electronic candidate qualification

456   process.

457   (b) In order for a member of the qualified political party to qualify as a candidate for the

458   qualified political party's nomination for an elective office under this section, the

459   member shall, before 5 p.m. no later than [14] 21 days before the day on which the

460   qualified political party holds the party's convention to select candidates, for the

461   elective office, for the qualified political party's nomination, collect signatures

462   electronically:

463   (i) in accordance with Section 20A-21-201; and

464   (ii) using progressive screens, in a format approved by the lieutenant governor, that

465   complies with Subsection 20A-9-405(4).

466   (c) Upon timely receipt of the signatures described in Subsections (8) and [(9)(b)] (10)(b),

467   the election officer shall, no later than the earlier of 14 days after the day on which

468   the election officer receives the signatures, or [one day] seven days before the day on

469   which the qualified political party holds the convention to select a nominee for the

470   elective office to which the signature packets relate:

471   (i) check the name of each individual who completes the verification for a signature

472   to determine whether each individual is a resident of Utah and is at least 18 years

473   old; and

474   (ii) submit the name of each individual described in Subsection (10)(c)(i) who is not

475   a Utah resident or who is not at least 18 years old to the attorney general and the

476   county attorney.

477   (11)(a) An individual may not gather signatures under this section until after the

478   individual files a notice of intent to gather signatures for candidacy described in this

479   section.

480   (b) An individual who files a notice of intent to gather signatures for candidacy,

481   described in Subsection (3)(a) or (4)(a), is, beginning on the day on which the

482   individual files the notice of intent to gather signatures for candidacy:

483   (i) required to comply with the reporting requirements that a candidate for office is

484   required to comply with; and

485   (ii) subject to the same enforcement provisions, and civil and criminal penalties, that

486   apply to a candidate for office in relation to the reporting requirements described

487   in Subsection (11)(b)(i).

488   (c) Upon timely receipt of the signatures described in Subsections (8) and (9)(b), or

489   Subsections (8) and (10)(b), the election officer shall, no later than one day before the

490   day on which the qualified political party holds the convention to select a nominee

491   for the elective office to which the signature packets relate, notify the qualified

492   political party and the lieutenant governor of the name of each member of the

493   qualified political party who qualifies as a nominee of the qualified political party,

494   under this section, for the elective office to which the convention relates.

495   (d) Upon receipt of a notice of intent to gather signatures for candidacy described in this

496   section, the lieutenant governor shall post the notice of intent to gather signatures for

497   candidacy on the lieutenant governor's website in the same location that the

498   lieutenant governor posts a declaration of candidacy.

499   Section 4. Section **20A-9-502** is amended to read:

500   **20A-9-502 . Certificate of nomination -- Contents -- Circulation -- Verification --**

501   **Criminal penalty -- Removal of petition signature.**

502   (1) The candidate shall:

503   (a) prepare a certificate of nomination in substantially the following form:

504   "State of Utah, County of _____

505   I, _____, declare my intention of becoming an unaffiliated candidate for the

506   political group designated as _____ for the office of _____. I do solemnly swear that I can

507   qualify to hold that office both legally and constitutionally if selected, and that I reside at ____

508   Street, in the city of ____, county of ____, state of _____, zip code ____, phone ____, and

509   that I am providing, or have provided, the required number of holographic signatures of

510   registered voters required by law; that as a candidate at the next election I will not knowingly

511   violate any election or campaign law; that, if filing via a designated agent for an office other

512   than president of the United States, I will be out of the state of Utah during the entire candidate

513   filing period; I will file all campaign financial disclosure reports as required by law; and I

514   understand that failure to do so will result in my disqualification as a candidate for this office

515   and removal of my name from the ballot.

516

517   _____

                                                          Subscribed and sworn to before me this _____(month\day\year).

518

519   _____

                                                          Notary Public (or other officer

520

                                                          qualified to administer oaths)";

521   (b) for each signature packet, bind signature sheets to a copy of the certificate of

522   nomination and the circulator verification, that:

523   (i) are printed on sheets of paper 8-1/2 inches long and 11 inches wide;

524   (ii) are ruled with a horizontal line 3/4 inch from the top, with the space above that

525   line blank for the purpose of binding;

526   (iii) contain the name of the proposed candidate and the words "Unaffiliated

527   Candidate Certificate of Nomination Petition" printed directly below the

528   horizontal line;

529   (iv) contain the word "Warning" printed directly under the words described in

530   Subsection (1)(b)(iii);

531   (v) contain, to the right of the word "Warning," the following statement printed in not less than

532   eight-point, single leaded type:

533   "It is a class A misdemeanor for anyone to knowingly sign a certificate of nomination

534   signature sheet with any name other than the person's own name or more than once for the

535   same candidate or if the person is not registered to vote in this state and does not intend to

536   become registered to vote in this state before the county clerk certifies the signatures.";

537   (vi) contain the word "Notice" printed directly under the words described in

538   Subsection (1)(b)(v);

539   (vii) contain, to the right of the word "Notice," the following statement printed in not

540   less than eight-point, single leaded type:

541   "Only a registered voter who is a resident of [insert name of county] County is

542   eligible to sign this nomination petition.";

543   [(vi)] (viii) contain the following statement directly under the statement described in

544   Subsection [(1)(b)(v)] (1)(b)(vii):

545   "Each signer says:

546   I have personally signed this petition with a holographic signature;

547   I am registered to vote in Utah or intend to become registered to vote in Utah before the

548   county clerk certifies my signature; and

549   My street address is written correctly after my name.";

550   [(vii)] (ix) contain horizontally ruled lines, 3/8 inch apart under the statement

551   described in Subsection [(1)(b)(vi)] (1)(b)(viii); and

552   [(viii)] (x) be vertically divided into columns as follows:

553   (A) the first column shall appear at the extreme left of the sheet, be 5/8 inch wide,

554   be headed with "For Office Use Only," and be subdivided with a light vertical

555   line down the middle;

556   (B) the next column shall be [2-1/2] 2 inches wide, headed "Registered Voter's

557   Printed Name (must be legible to be counted)";

558   (C) the next column shall be [2-1/2] 2 inches wide, headed "Holographic Signature

559   of Registered Voter";

560   (D) the next column shall be one inch wide, headed "Birth Date or Age

561   (Optional)";

562   (E) the [final] next column shall be 4-3/8 inches wide, headed "Street Address,

563   City, Zip Code"; [and]

564   (F) the final column shall be one inch wide, headed "County of Residence"; and

565   [(F)] (G) at the bottom of the sheet, contain the following statement: "Birth date or

566   age information is not required, but it may be used to verify your identity with

567   voter registration records. If you choose not to provide it, your signature may

568   not be certified as a valid signature if you change your address before petition

569   signatures are certified or if the information you provide does not match your

570   voter registration records."; and

571   (c) bind a final page to one or more signature sheets that are bound together that contains,

572   except as provided by Subsection (3), the following printed statement:

573   "Verification

574   State of Utah, County of ____

575   I, _____, of ____, hereby state that:

576   I am at least 18 years old;

577   All the names that appear on the signature sheets bound to this page were signed by

578   persons who professed to be the persons whose names appear on the signature sheets, and each

579   of them signed the person's name on the signature sheets in my presence;

580   I believe that each has printed and signed the person's name and written the person's

581   street address correctly, and that each signer is registered to vote in Utah or will register to

582   vote in Utah before the county clerk certifies the signatures on the signature sheet.

583   _____

584   (Signature)   (Residence Address)   (Date)".

585   (2) An agent designated to file a certificate of nomination under Subsection 20A-9-503

586   (2)(b) or (4)(b) may not sign the form described in Subsection (1)(a).

587   (3)(a) The candidate shall circulate the nomination petition and ensure that the person in

588   whose presence each signature sheet is signed:

589   (i) is at least 18 years old; and

590   (ii) verifies each signature sheet by completing the verification bound to one or more

591   signature sheets that are bound together.

592   (b) A person may not sign the circulator verification if the person signed a signature

593   sheet bound to the verification.

594   (4)(a) It is unlawful for any person to:

595   (i) knowingly sign a certificate of nomination signature sheet:

596   (A) with any name other than the person's own name;

597   (B) more than once for the same candidate; or

598   (C) if the person is not registered to vote in this state and does not intend to

599   become registered to vote in this state before the county clerk certifies the

600   signatures; or

601   (ii) sign the verification of a certificate of nomination signature sheet if the person:

602   (A) has not witnessed the signing by those persons whose names appear on the

603   certificate of nomination signature sheet; or

604   (B) knows that a person whose signature appears on the certificate of nomination

605   signature sheet is not registered to vote in this state and does not intend to

606   become registered to vote in this state.

607   (b) Any person violating this Subsection (4) is guilty of a class A misdemeanor.

608 (5)(a) To qualify for placement on the general election ballot, the candidate shall, no

609   earlier than the start of the declaration of candidacy period described in Section

610   20A-9-201.5 and no later than 5 p.m. on June 15 of the year in which the election

611   will be held:

612   (i) comply with Subsection 20A-9-503(1); [and]

613   (ii) [submit each signature packet to the county clerk where the majority of the

614   signatures in the packet were collected, with signatures] collect signatures of

615   registered voters in an amount totaling:

616   (A) at least 1,000 registered voters residing within the state when the nomination

617   is for an office to be filled by the voters of the entire state; or

618   (B) at least 300 registered voters residing within a political division or at least 5%

619   of the registered voters residing within a political division, whichever is less,

620   when the nomination is for an office to be filled by the voters of any political

621   division smaller than the state[.] ; and

622   (iii) submit each registered voter's signature to the county clerk of the registered

623   voter's residence.

624   (b)(i) A candidate has not complied with Subsection (5)(a)(ii), unless [the county

625   clerks verify] the county clerk verifies that each required signature is a valid

626   signature of a registered voter who is eligible to sign the signature packet and has

627   not signed a signature packet to nominate another candidate for the same office.

628   (ii) Except as provided in Subsection (5)(b)(iii), the county clerk shall use the

629   procedures described in Section 20A-1-1002 to determine whether a signer is a

630   registered voter who is qualified to sign the signature packet.

631   (iii) The county clerk may not verify the signature of a registered voter if the county

632   clerk is not the county clerk of the registered voter's residence.

633   (c) In reviewing the signature packets, the county clerk shall count and certify only those

634   persons who signed with a holographic signature, who:

635   (i) are registered voters [within the political division that the candidate seeks to

636   represent] who reside within the county of the county clerk; and

637   (ii) did not sign any other certificate of nomination for that office.

638   (d) [The] Except as provided in Subsection (5)(f), the county clerk shall [count and]

639   certify the number of registered voters who validly signed a signature packet, no later

640   than 30 days after the day on which the candidate submits the signature packet.

641   (e) The candidate may supplement the signatures or amend the certificate of nomination

642   or declaration of candidacy at any time on or before 5 p.m. on June 15 of the year in

643   which the election will be held.

644   [(f) The county clerk shall use the procedures described in Section 20A-1-1002 to

645   determine whether a signer is a registered voter who is qualified to sign the signature

646   packet.]

647   (f) In an election for a federal office, constitutional office, or multicounty office, the

648   county clerk shall, instead of taking the action described in Subsection (5)(d):

649   (i) count the number of verified signatures submitted on behalf of the candidate; and

650   (ii) no later than five business days after the day of the deadline described in

651   Subsection (5)(d), certify the number of verified signatures to the lieutenant

652   governor.

653   (g) For an election described in Subsection (5)(f) the lieutenant governor shall, upon

654   receiving the certification described in Subsection (5)(f)(ii) from the county clerk of

655   each county where the candidate submitted signatures for verification:

656   (i) add together the number of signatures verified by each county clerk; and

657   (ii) if the aggregate amount of signatures is equal to or more than the total number of

658   signatures required for the candidate to qualify for placement on the general

659   election ballot under Subsection (5)(a)(ii), certify the signatures no later than July

660   31 of the year in which the election will be held.

661   (6)(a) A voter who signs a signature packet under this section may have the voter's

662   signature removed from the signature packet by, no later than three business days

663   after the day on which the candidate submits the signature packet to the county clerk,

664   submitting to the county clerk a statement requesting that the voter's signature be

665   removed.

666   (b) A statement described in Subsection (6)(a) shall comply with the requirements

667   described in Subsection 20A-1-1003(2).

668   (c) The county clerk shall use the procedures described in Subsection 20A-1-1003(3) to

669   determine whether to remove an individual's signature from a signature packet after

670   receiving a timely, valid statement requesting removal of the signature.

671   Section 5. **Effective Date.**

672   This bill takes effect on January 1, 2026.