Lisa Shepherd proposes the following substitute bill:

1   **Candidate Petition Amendments**

2026 GENERAL SESSION

STATE OF UTAH

Chief Sponsor: Lisa Shepherd

Senate Sponsor: Daniel McCay

2

3   **LONG TITLE**

4   **Committee Note:**

5   The Government Operations Interim Committee recommended this bill.

6   Legislative Vote: 6 voting for   5 voting against   6 absent

7   **General Description:**

8   This bill amends provisions related to candidate nomination petitions.

9   **Highlighted Provisions:**

10   This bill:

11   ‣ requires a candidate who seeks the nomination for an elective office by gathering

12   signatures of registered voters to submit the signatures to the county clerk of each

13   registered voter's residence;

14   ‣ provides that a county clerk may only certify the signature of a registered voter described

15   above if the registered voter is a resident of the county clerk's county;

16   ‣ for a signature gathering candidate who seeks the nomination for an office in a district

17   where the officeholder is elected by the voters from more than one county, requires the

18   county clerk of each county to which the candidate submits signatures to:

19   • count the number of valid signatures submitted by the candidate; and

20   • certify the number of valid signatures to the lieutenant governor;

21   ‣ for an elective office described above, requires the lieutenant governor to:

22   • count the total number of valid signatures received from each county clerk; and

23   • if the aggregate number of valid signatures is sufficient for the candidate to qualify for

24   placement on the ballot, certify the signatures;

25   ‣ amends the candidate nomination petition forms to specify that only a registered voter

26   residing in the county where a candidate submits signatures for verification should sign

27   the candidate's nomination petition;

28   ‣ for a candidate for elective office seeking the nomination of a qualified political party

29   through signature-gathering, shortens the deadline for the candidate to submit signatures

30   to an election official from 14 to 21 days before the day on which the party holds a

31   convention to nominate a candidate for the same elective office; and

32   ‣   makes technical and conforming changes.

33   **Money Appropriated in this Bill:**

34   None

35   **Other Special Clauses:**

36   This bill provides a special effective date.

37   **Utah Code Sections Affected:**

38   AMENDS:

39   **20A-1-501**, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2025, First Special Session, Chapter 16

40   **20A-1-1002**, as enacted by Laws of Utah 2023, Chapter 116

41   **20A-3a-106**, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2025, Chapters 381, 448

42   **20A-6-301**, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2025, Chapter 39

43   **20A-6-302**, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2025, Chapters 39, 448

44   **20A-6-304**, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2021, Chapter 136

45   **20A-9-403**, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2025, Chapters 39, 448

46   **20A-9-405**, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2025, Chapter 38

47   **20A-9-406**, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2025, Second Special Session, Chapter 2

48   **20A-9-408**, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2025, Second Special Session, Chapter 2

49   **20A-9-502**, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2025, Second Special Session, Chapter 2

50   **20A-9-701**, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2015, Chapter 296

51

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

53   Section 1. Section **20A-1-501** is amended to read:

54   **20A-1-501 . Candidate vacancies -- Procedure for filling.**

55   (1) As used in this section, "central committee" means:

56   (a) the state central committee of a political party, for a candidate for:

57   (i)   United States senator, United States representative, governor, lieutenant governor,

58   attorney general, state treasurer, or state auditor; or

59   (ii) state legislator if the legislative district encompasses all or a portion of more than

60   one county; or

61   (b) the county central committee of a political party, for a party candidate seeking an

62   office, other than an office described in Subsection (1)(a), elected at an election held

63   in an even-numbered year.

64   (2) Except as provided in Subsection (6), the central committee may certify the name of

65   another candidate to the appropriate election officer if:

66   (a) for a registered political party that will have a candidate on a ballot in a primary

67   election:

68   (i) after the close of the period for filing a declaration of candidacy and continuing

69   through the day before the day on which the lieutenant governor provides the list

70   described in Subsection [20A-9-403(4)(a)] 20A-9-403(9)(a), only one or two

71   candidates from that party have filed a declaration of candidacy for that office and

72   one or both dies, resigns as a candidate, or is disqualified as a candidate; and

73   (ii) the central committee provides written certification of the replacement candidate

74   to the appropriate election officer before the day on which the lieutenant governor

75   provides the list described in Subsection [20A-9-403(4)(a)] 20A-9-403(9)(a);

76   (b) for a registered political party that does not have a candidate on the ballot in a

77   primary, but will have a candidate on the ballot for a regular general election:

78   (i) after the close of the period for filing a declaration of candidacy and continuing

79   through the day before the day on which the lieutenant governor makes the

80   certification described in Section 20A-5-409, the party's candidate dies, resigns as

81   a candidate, or is disqualified as a candidate; and

82   (ii) the central committee provides written certification of the replacement candidate

83   to the appropriate election officer before the day on which the lieutenant governor

84   makes the certification described in Section 20A-5-409; or

85   (c) for a registered political party with a candidate certified as winning a primary

86   election:

87   (i) after the close of the period for filing a declaration of candidacy and continuing

88   through the day before the day on which the lieutenant governor makes the

89   certification described in Section 20A-5-409, the party's candidate dies, resigns as

90   a candidate, or is disqualified as a candidate; and

91   (ii) the central committee provides written certification of the replacement candidate

92   to the appropriate election officer before the day on which the lieutenant governor

93   makes the certification described in Section 20A-5-409.

94   (3) If no more than two candidates from a political party have filed a declaration of

95   candidacy for an office elected at a regular general election and one resigns to become

96   the party candidate for another position, the central committee of that political party may

97   certify the name of another candidate to the appropriate election officer.

98   (4) Each replacement candidate shall file a declaration of candidacy as required by Chapter

99   9, Part 2, Candidate Qualifications and Declarations of Candidacy.

100   (5)(a) The name of a candidate who is certified under Subsection (2)(a) after the

101   deadline described in Subsection (2)(a)(ii) may not appear on the primary election

102   ballot.

103   (b) The name of a candidate who is certified under Subsection (2)(b) after the deadline

104   described in Subsection (2)(b)(ii) may not appear on the general election ballot.

105   (c) The name of a candidate who is certified under Subsection (2)(c) after the deadline

106   described in Subsection (2)(c)(ii) may not appear on the general election ballot.

107   (6) A political party may not replace a candidate who is disqualified for failure to timely

108   file a campaign disclosure financial report under Chapter 11, Campaign and Financial

109   Reporting Requirements, or Section 17-70-403.

110   (7) This section does not apply to a candidate vacancy for a nonpartisan office.

111   Section 2. Section **20A-1-1002** is amended to read:

112   **20A-1-1002 . Verification of voter registration.**

113   (1) A clerk shall use the [following]procedures described in this section to determine

114   whether a signer of a petition is a registered voter and to determine the address where

115   the voter is registered to vote[:] .

116   [(a)] (2) Except as provided in Subsection 20A-9-403(4)(b)(i), 20A-9-408(9)(d)(ii)(A), or

117   20A-9-502(6)(a):

118   (a) if a signer's name and address provided by the individual with the individual's

119   petition signature exactly match a name and address shown on the official register

120   and the signer's signature appears substantially similar to the signature on the

121   statewide voter registration database, the clerk shall declare the signature valid for the

122   district or jurisdiction in which the signer is registered to vote;

123   (b) if there is no exact match of an address and a name, the clerk shall declare the

124   signature valid for the district or jurisdiction in which the signer is registered to vote,

125   if:

126   (i) the address provided by the individual with the individual's petition signature

127   matches the address of an individual on the official register with a substantially

128   similar name; and

129   (ii) the signer's signature appears substantially similar to the signature on the

130   statewide voter registration database of the individual described in Subsection [

131   (1)(b)(i)] (2)(b)(i); or

132   (c) if there is no match of an address and a substantially similar name, the clerk shall

133   declare the signature valid for the district or jurisdiction in which the signer is

134   registered to vote if:

135   (i)   the birth date or age provided by the individual with the individual's petition

136   signature matches the birth date or age of an individual on the official register

137   with a substantially similar name; and

138   (ii) the signer's signature appears substantially similar to the signature on the

139   statewide voter registration database of the individual described in Subsection [

140   (1)(c)(i)] (2)(c)(i).

141   [(2)] (3) If a signature is not declared valid under Subsection [(1)(a)] (2)(a), (b), or (c), the

142   clerk shall declare the signature to be invalid.

143   Section 3. Section **20A-3a-106** is amended to read:

144   **20A-3a-106 . Rulemaking authority relating to conducting an election.**

145   The director of elections, within the Office of the Lieutenant Governor, may make rules,

146   in accordance with Title 63G, Chapter 3, Utah Administrative Rulemaking Act, establishing

147   requirements for:

148   (1) a return envelope, to ensure uniformity and security of the envelopes;

149   (2) complying with the signature comparison audit requirements described in Section

150   20A-3a-402.5;

151   (3) conducting and documenting the identity verification process described in Subsection

152   20A-3a-401(7)(b); or

153   (4) establishing specific requirements and procedures for an election officer to:

154   (a) perform the signature comparison audits described in Subsection [20A-9-408(9)(e)]

155   20A-9-408(9)(h); or

156   (b) fulfill the chain of custody requirements described in Section 20A-9-408.3.

157   Section 4. Section **20A-6-301** is amended to read:

158   **20A-6-301 . Manual ballots -- Regular general election.**

159   (1) Each election officer shall ensure that:

160   (a) all manual ballots furnished for use at the regular general election contain:

161   (i)   no captions or other endorsements except as provided in this section;

162   (ii) no symbols, markings, or other descriptions of a political party or group, except

163   for a registered political party that has chosen to nominate its candidates in

164   accordance with Section 20A-9-403; and

165   (iii) no indication that a candidate for elective office has been nominated by, or has

166   been endorsed by, or is in any way affiliated with a political party or group, unless

167   the candidate has been nominated by a registered political party in accordance

168   with Subsection 20A-9-202(4) or Subsection [20A-9-403(5)] 20A-9-403(10);

169   (b) at the top of the ballot, the following endorsements are printed in 18 point bold type:

170   (i) "Official Ballot for ____ County, Utah";

171   (ii) the date of the election; and

172   (iii) the words "certified by the Clerk of _____ County" or, as applicable, the

173   name of a combined office that includes the duties of a county clerk;

174   (c) unaffiliated candidates, candidates not affiliated with a registered political party, and

175   all other candidates for elective office who were not nominated by a registered

176   political party in accordance with Subsection 20A-9-202(4) or Subsection [

177   20A-9-403(5)] 20A-9-403(10), are listed with the other candidates for the same office

178   in accordance with Sections 20A-6-109 and 20A-6-110, without a party name or title;

179   (d) each ticket containing the lists of candidates, including the party name and device,

180   are separated by heavy parallel lines;

181   (e) the offices to be filled are plainly printed immediately above the names of the

182   candidates for those offices;

183   (f) the names of candidates are printed in capital letters, not less than one-eighth nor

184   more than one-fourth of an inch high in heavy-faced type not smaller than 10 point,

185   between lines or rules three-eighths of an inch apart; and

186   (g) on a ticket for a race in which a voter is authorized to cast a write-in vote and in

187   which a write-in candidate is qualified under Section 20A-9-601:

188   (i) the ballot includes a space for a write-in candidate immediately following the last

189   candidate listed on that ticket; or

190   (ii) for the offices of president and vice president and governor and lieutenant

191   governor, the ballot includes two spaces for write-in candidates immediately

192   following the last candidates on that ticket, one placed above the other, to enable

193   the entry of two valid write-in candidates.

194 (2) An election officer shall ensure that:

195   (a) each individual nominated by any registered political party under Subsection

196   20A-9-202(4) or Subsection [20A-9-403(5)] 20A-9-403(10), and no other individual,

197   is placed on the ballot:

198   (i) under the registered political party's name, if any; or

199   (ii) under the title of the registered political party as designated by them in their
200   certificates of nomination or petition, or, if none is designated, then under some
201   suitable title;
202   (b) the names of all unaffiliated candidates that qualify as required in Chapter 9, Part 5,
203   Candidates not Affiliated with a Party, are placed on the ballot;
204   (c) the names of the candidates for president and vice president are used on the ballot
205   instead of the names of the presidential electors; and
206   (d) the ballots contain no other names.
207 (3) When the ballot contains a nonpartisan section, the election officer shall ensure that:
208   (a) the designation of the office to be filled in the election and the number of candidates
209   to be elected are printed in type not smaller than eight point;
210   (b) the words designating the office are printed flush with the left-hand margin;
211   (c) the words, "Vote for one" or "Vote for up to _____ (the number of candidates for
212   which the voter may vote)" extend to the extreme right of the column;
213   (d) the nonpartisan candidates are grouped according to the office for which they are
214   candidates;
215   (e) the names in each group are placed in accordance with Sections 20A-6-109 and
216   20A-6-110, with the surnames last; and
217   (f) each group is preceded by the designation of the office for which the candidates seek
218   election, and the words, "Vote for one" or "Vote for up to _____ (the number of
219   candidates for which the voter may vote)," according to the number to be elected.
220 (4) Each election officer shall ensure that:
221   (a) proposed amendments to the Utah Constitution are listed on the ballot in accordance
222   with Section 20A-6-107;
223   (b) ballot propositions submitted to the voters are listed on the ballot in accordance with
224   Section 20A-6-107;
225   (c) bond propositions that have qualified for the ballot are listed on the ballot under the
226   title assigned to each bond proposition under Section 11-14-206; and
227   (d) the judicial retention section of the ballot includes a statement at the beginning
228   directing voters to the Judicial Performance Evaluation Commission's website in
229   accordance with Subsection 20A-12-201(4).
230   Section 5. Section **20A-6-302** is amended to read:
231   **20A-6-302 . Manual ballots -- Placement of candidates' names.**
232 (1) An election officer shall ensure, for manual ballots in regular general elections, that:

233   (a) each candidate is listed by party, if nominated by a registered political party under

234   Subsection 20A-9-202(4) or Subsection [20A-9-403(5)] 20A-9-403(10);

235   (b) candidates' surnames are listed in alphabetical order on the ballots when two or more

236   candidates' names are required to be listed on a ticket under the title of an office; and

237   (c) the names of candidates are placed on the ballot in:

238   (i) the manner described in Section 20A-6-109; and

239   (ii) the order described in Section 20A-6-110.

240 (2)(a) When there is only one candidate for county attorney at the regular general

241   election in counties that have three or fewer registered voters of the county who are

242   licensed active members in good standing of the Utah State Bar, the county clerk

243   shall cause that candidate's name and party affiliation, if any, to be placed on a

244   separate section of the ballot with the following question: "Shall (name of candidate)

245   be elected to the office of county attorney? Yes ____ No ____.".

246   (b) If the number of "Yes" votes exceeds the number of "No" votes, the candidate is

247   elected to the office of county attorney.

248   (c) If the number of "No" votes exceeds the number of "Yes" votes, the candidate is not

249   elected and may not take office, nor may the candidate continue in the office past the

250   end of the term resulting from any prior election or appointment.

251   (d) When the name of only one candidate for county attorney is printed on the ballot

252   under authority of this Subsection (2), the county clerk may not count any write-in

253   votes received for the office of county attorney.

254   (e) If no qualified individual files for the office of county attorney or if the candidate is

255   not elected by the voters, the county legislative body shall appoint the county

256   attorney as provided in Section 20A-1-509.2.

257   (f) If the candidate whose name would, except for this Subsection (2)(f), be placed on

258   the ballot under Subsection (2)(a) has been elected on a ballot under Subsection (2)(a)

259   to the two consecutive terms immediately preceding the term for which the candidate

260   is seeking election, Subsection (2)(a) does not apply and that candidate shall be

261   considered to be an unopposed candidate the same as any other unopposed candidate

262   for another office, unless a petition is filed with the county clerk before 5 p.m. no

263   later than the day before that year's primary election that:

264   (i) requests the procedure set forth in Subsection (2)(a) to be followed; and

265   (ii) contains the signatures of registered voters in the county representing in number

266   at least 25% of all votes cast in the county for all candidates for governor at the

267   last election at which a governor was elected.

268   (3)(a) When there is only one candidate for district attorney at the regular general

269   election in a prosecution district that has three or fewer registered voters of the

270   district who are licensed active members in good standing of the Utah State Bar, the

271   county clerk shall cause that candidate's name and party affiliation, if any, to be

272   placed on a separate section of the ballot with the following question: "Shall (name of

273   candidate) be elected to the office of district attorney? Yes ____ No ____.".

274   (b) If the number of "Yes" votes exceeds the number of "No" votes, the candidate is

275   elected to the office of district attorney.

276   (c) If the number of "No" votes exceeds the number of "Yes" votes, the candidate is not

277   elected and may not take office, nor may the candidate continue in the office past the

278   end of the term resulting from any prior election or appointment.

279   (d) When the name of only one candidate for district attorney is printed on the ballot

280   under authority of this Subsection (3), the county clerk may not count any write-in

281   votes received for the office of district attorney.

282   (e) If no qualified individual files for the office of district attorney, or if the only

283   candidate is not elected by the voters under this subsection, the county legislative

284   body shall appoint a new district attorney for a four-year term as provided in Section

285   20A-1-509.2.

286   (f) If the candidate whose name would, except for this Subsection (3)(f), be placed on

287   the ballot under Subsection (3)(a) has been elected on a ballot under Subsection (3)(a)

288   to the two consecutive terms immediately preceding the term for which the candidate

289   is seeking election, Subsection (3)(a) does not apply and that candidate shall be

290   considered to be an unopposed candidate the same as any other unopposed candidate

291   for another office, unless a petition is filed with the county clerk before 5 p.m. no

292   later than the day before that year's primary election that:

293   (i) requests the procedure set forth in Subsection (3)(a) to be followed; and

294   (ii) contains the signatures of registered voters in the county representing in number

295   at least 25% of all votes cast in the county for all candidates for governor at the

296   last election at which a governor was elected.

297   Section 6. Section **20A-6-304** is amended to read:

298   **20A-6-304 . Regular general election -- Mechanical ballots.**

299   (1) Each election officer shall ensure that:

300   (a) the format and content of a mechanical ballot is arranged in approximately the same

301   order as manual ballots;

302   (b) the titles of offices and the names of candidates are displayed in vertical columns or

303   in a series of separate displays;

304   (c) the mechanical ballot is of sufficient length to include, after the list of candidates:

305   (i) the names of candidates for judicial offices and any other nonpartisan offices; and

306   (ii) any ballot propositions submitted to the voters for their approval or rejection;

307   (d) the office titles are displayed above or at the side of the names of candidates so as to

308   indicate clearly the candidates for each office and the number to be elected;

309   (e) the party designation of each candidate who has been nominated by a registered

310   political party under Subsection 20A-9-202(4) or Subsection [20A-9-403(5)]

311   20A-9-403(10) is displayed adjacent to the candidate's name; and

312   (f) if possible, all candidates for one office are grouped in one column or upon one

313   display screen.

314 (2) Each election officer shall ensure that:

315   (a) proposed amendments to the Utah Constitution are displayed in accordance with

316   Section 20A-6-107;

317   (b) ballot propositions submitted to the voters are displayed in accordance with Section

318   20A-6-107;

319   (c) bond propositions that have qualified for the ballot are displayed under the title

320   assigned to each bond proposition under Section 11-14-206; and

321   (d) the judicial retention section of the ballot includes a statement at the beginning

322   directing voters to the Judicial Performance Evaluation Commission's website in

323   accordance with Subsection 20A-12-201(4).

324   Section 7. Section **20A-9-403** is amended to read:

325   **20A-9-403 . Regular primary elections.**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

337   manner described in this section.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

345   shall:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

354   party's candidates.

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

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

357   5 p.m. on November 30 of each odd-numbered year.

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

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

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

361   20A-8-103.

362 (3)(a) Except as provided in Subsection [(3)(e)] (6), an individual who submits a

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

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

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

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

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

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

369   political division of the office that the individual seeks.

370   (b)(i) A candidate for elective office shall, in accordance with Section 20A-9-408.3,

371   submit signatures for a nomination petition to the [appropriate filing officer]

372   county clerk of the nomination petition signer's residence for verification and

373   certification no later than 5 p.m. on March 31.

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

375   the filing deadline.

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

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

378   20A-9-408(8) by counting the aggregate number of individuals residing in each

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

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

381   15 of each odd-numbered year.

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

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

384   (d) The county clerk shall:

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

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

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

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

389   individual's voter registration form;

390   (iii) except as provided in Subsection (4) or Section 20A-21-201, and in accordance

391   with Section 20A-9-408.3, use the procedures described in Section 20A-1-1002 to

392   verify submitted nomination petition signatures in a transparent and orderly

393   manner, or use statistical sampling procedures to verify submitted nomination

394   petition signatures in accordance with rules made under Subsection (7), no later

395   than 14 calendar days after the day on which a candidate submits the signatures to

396   the county clerk; and

397   (iv) except as provided in Subsection (5), for each qualifying candidate for elective

398   office who submits a nomination petition to the county clerk, issue the

399   certification described in Subsection (3)(a) no later than the deadline described in

400   Subsection 20A-9-202(1)(b).

401   [(d) The filing officer shall:]

402   [(i) except as otherwise provided in Section 20A-21-201, and in accordance with

403   Section 20A-9-408.3, verify signatures on nomination petitions in a transparent
404   and orderly manner, no later than 14 calendar days after the day on which a
405   candidate submits the signatures to the filing officer;]
406   [(ii) for all qualifying candidates for elective office who submit nomination petitions
407   to the filing officer, issue certifications referenced in Subsection (3)(a) no later
408   than the deadline described in Subsection 20A-9-202(1)(b);]
409   [(iii) consider active and inactive voters eligible to sign nomination petitions;]
410   [(iv) consider an individual who signs a nomination petition a member of a registered
411   political party for purposes of Subsection (3)(a)(ii) if the individual has designated
412   that registered political party as the individual's party membership on the
413   individual's voter registration form; and]
414   [(v) except as otherwise provided in Section 20A-21-201 and with the assistance of
415   the county clerk as applicable, use the procedures described in Section 20A-1-1002
416   to verify submitted nomination petition signatures, or use statistical sampling
417   procedures to verify submitted nomination petition signatures in accordance with
418   rules made under Subsection (3)(f).]
419   (4)(a) In reviewing a candidate signature packet, the county clerk shall count only an
420   individual who signed with a holographic signature:
421   (i) who is a registered voter residing within the county clerk's county and the political
422   division that the candidate seeks to represent; and
423   (ii) who did not sign any other nomination petition for that office.
424   (b) If, in verifying signatures under Section 20A-1-1002, the county clerk determines
425   that a registered voter who signed a nomination petition is not a resident of the
426   county clerk's county, the county clerk:
427   (i) shall declare the signature invalid under Subsection 20A-1-1002(3); and
428   (ii) may not certify the signature.
429   (5)(a) In an election for federal office, constitutional office, or multicounty office, the
430   county clerk shall, instead of taking the action described in Subsection (3)(d)(iv):
431   (i) count the number of valid nomination petition signatures submitted by the
432   candidate; and
433   (ii) no later than seven calendar days before the day of the deadline described in
434   Subsection 20A-9-202(1)(b), certify the number of valid signatures to the
435   lieutenant governor.
436   (b) The lieutenant governor shall, upon receiving the certification described in

437   Subsection (5)(a)(ii) from the county clerk of each county where the candidate

438   submits nomination petition signatures for verification:

439   (i) add together the total number of signatures declared valid by each county clerk;

440   and

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

442   number of signatures required for the candidate to qualify for placement on the

443   regular primary ballot, issue the certification described in Subsection (3)(a) no

444   later than the deadline described in Subsection 20A-9-202(1)(b).

445   (6)[(e)] Notwithstanding any other provision in [this Subsection (3)] Subsection (3), (4),

446   (5), (7), or (8), a candidate for lieutenant governor may appear on the regular primary

447   ballot of a registered political party without submitting nomination petitions if the

448   candidate files a declaration of candidacy and complies with Subsection 20A-9-202

449   (3).

450   [(f)] (7) In accordance with Title 63G, Chapter 3, Utah Administrative Rulemaking Act, the

451   director of elections, within the Office of the Lieutenant Governor, may make rules that:

452   [(i)] (a) provide for the use of statistical sampling procedures that:

453   [(A)] (i) filing officers are required to use to verify signatures under Subsection (3)(d);

454   and

455   [(B)] (ii) reflect a bona fide effort to determine the validity of a candidate's entire

456   submission, using widely recognized statistical sampling techniques; and

457   [(ii)] (b) provide for the transparent, orderly, and timely submission, verification, and

458   certification of nomination petition signatures.

459   [(g)] (8) The county clerk shall:

460   [(i)] (a) review the declarations of candidacy filed by candidates for local boards of

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

462   [(ii)] (b) place the names of all candidates who have filed a declaration of candidacy for a

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

464   candidates have filed for the same seat; and

465   [(iii)] (c) place the local board of education candidates' names on the ballot in accordance

466   with Sections 20A-6-109 and 20A-6-110.

467   [(4)] (9)(a) Before the deadline described in Subsection 20A-9-409(4)(c), the lieutenant

468   governor shall provide to the county clerks:

469   (i) a list of the names of all candidates for federal, constitutional, multi-county, single

470   county, and county offices who have received certifications under Subsection [(3)]

471   (3)(a), along with instructions on how those names shall appear on the primary

472   election ballot in accordance with Sections 20A-6-109 and 20A-6-110; and

473   (ii) a list of unopposed candidates for elective office who have been nominated by a

474   registered political party under Subsection [(5)(c)] (10)(c) and instruct the county

475   clerks to exclude the unopposed candidates from the primary election ballot.

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

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

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

479   Subsection [(4)(a)] (9)(a), the county clerk shall post or publish a primary election notice in

480   substantially the following form:

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

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

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

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

485   Attest: county clerk."

486 [(5)] (10)(a) A candidate who, at the regular primary election, receives the highest

487   number of votes cast for the office sought by the candidate is:

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

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

490   (b) If two or more candidates are to be elected to the office at the regular general

491   election, those party candidates equal in number to positions to be filled who receive

492   the highest number of votes at the regular primary election are the nominees of the

493   candidates' party for those positions.

494   (c)(i) As used in this Subsection [(5)(c)] (10)(c), a candidate is "unopposed" if:

495   (A) no individual other than the candidate receives a certification under

496   Subsection [(3)] (3)(a) for the regular primary election ballot of the candidate's

497   registered political party for a particular elective office; or

498   (B) for an office where more than one individual is to be elected or nominated, the

499   number of candidates who receive certification under Subsection [(3)] (3)(a) for

500   the regular primary election of the candidate's registered political party does

501   not exceed the total number of candidates to be elected or nominated for that

502   office.

503   (ii) A candidate who is unopposed for an elective office in the regular primary

504   election of a registered political party is nominated by the party for that office

505   without appearing on the primary election ballot.

506   [(6)] (11) The expense of providing all ballots, blanks, or other supplies to be used at any

507   primary election provided for by this section, and all expenses necessarily incurred in

508   the preparation for or the conduct of that primary election shall be paid out of the

509   treasury of the county or state, in the same manner as for the regular general elections.

510   [(7)] (12) An individual may not file a declaration of candidacy for a registered political

511   party of which the individual is not a member, except to the extent that the registered

512   political party permits otherwise under the registered political party's bylaws.

513   Section 8. Section **20A-9-405** is amended to read:

514   **20A-9-405 . Nomination petitions for regular primary elections.**

515   (1) This section applies to the form and circulation of nomination petitions for regular

516   primary elections described in Subsection 20A-9-403(3)(a).

517   (2) A candidate for elective office, [and the agents] or an agent of the candidate, may not

518   circulate nomination petitions until the candidate has submitted a declaration of

519   candidacy in accordance with Subsection 20A-9-202(1).

520   (3) For the manual candidate qualification process, the nomination petitions shall be in

521   substantially the following form:

522   (a) the petition shall be printed on paper 8-1/2 inches long and 11 inches wide;

523   (b) the petition shall be ruled with a horizontal line 3/4 inch from the top, with the space

524   above that line blank for purposes of binding;

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

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

527   to which the signatures will be submitted for verification;

528   (d) the petition shall feature the [word "Warning" followed by the]following [statement]

529   statements in no less than eight-point, single leaded type:

530   (i) "WARNING: It is a class A misdemeanor for anyone to knowingly sign a

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

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

533   state."; and

534   (ii) "NOTICE: Only a registered voter who is a resident of [insert name of county]

535   County should sign this nomination petition.";

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

537   numbered one through 10;

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

539   following titles:

540   (i) Registered Voter's Printed Name;

541   (ii) Signature of Registered Voter;

542   (iii) Party Affiliation of Registered Voter;

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

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

545   (vi) County of Residence; and

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

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

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

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

550   (a) the following warning:

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

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

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

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

555   (i) name;

556   (ii) party affiliation;

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

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

559   (v) date of signature;

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

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

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

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

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

565   "Verification

566   State of Utah, County of ____

567   I, ____, of ____, hereby state that:

568   I am at least 18 years old;

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

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

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

572   presence;

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

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

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

576   and associated instructions.

577   (7) A nomination petition circulator:

578   (a) must be at least 18 years old; and

579   (b) may affiliate with any political party.

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

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

582   20A-9-408:

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

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

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

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

587   (i) has not witnessed the signing by those persons whose names appear on the

588   nomination petition; or

589   (ii) knows that a person whose signature appears on the nomination petition is not

590   registered to vote in this state;

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

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

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

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

595   basis.

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

597   (10)(a) A voter who signs a nomination petition may have the voter's signature removed

598   from the petition by, no later than three business days after the day on which the

599   candidate files the petition with the [appropriate filing officer] county clerk,

600   submitting to the [filing officer] county clerk a statement requesting that the voter's

601   signature be removed.

602   (b) A statement described in Subsection (10)(a) shall comply with the requirements

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

604   (c) The [filing officer] county clerk shall use the procedures described in Subsection

605   20A-1-1003(3) to determine whether to remove an individual's signature from a

606   nomination petition after receiving a timely, valid statement requesting removal of

607   the signature.

608   Section 9. Section **20A-9-406** is amended to read:

609   **20A-9-406 . Qualified political party -- Requirements and exemptions.**

610   The following provisions apply to a qualified political party:

611 (1) the qualified political party shall, no later than 5 p.m. on the first Monday of October of

612   each odd-numbered year, certify to the lieutenant governor the identity of one or more

613   registered political parties whose members may vote for the qualified political party's

614   candidates and whether unaffiliated voters may vote for the qualified political party's

615   candidates;

616 (2) the following provisions do not apply to a nomination for the qualified political party:

617   (a) Subsections 20A-9-403(1) through (3)(b) and Subsections (3)(d)(ii) through [(4)(a)]

618   (9)(a);

619   (b) Subsection [20A-9-403(5)(c)] 20A-9-403(10)(c); and

620   (c) Section 20A-9-405;

621 (3) an individual may only seek the nomination of the qualified political party by using a

622   method described in Section 20A-9-407, Section 20A-9-408, or both;

623 (4) the qualified political party shall comply with the provisions of Sections 20A-9-407,

624   20A-9-408, and 20A-9-409;

625 (5) notwithstanding Subsection 20A-6-301(1)(a), (1)(e), or (2)(a), each election officer shall

626   ensure that a ballot described in Section 20A-6-301 includes each individual nominated

627   by a qualified political party:

628   (a) under the qualified political party's name, if any; or

629   (b) under the title of the qualified registered political party as designated by the qualified

630   political party in the certification described in Subsection (1), or, if none is

631   designated, then under some suitable title;

632 (6) notwithstanding Subsection 20A-6-302(1)(a), each election officer shall ensure, for

633   ballots in regular general elections, that each candidate who is nominated by the

634   qualified political party is listed by party;

635 (7) notwithstanding Subsection 20A-6-304(1)(e), each election officer shall ensure that the

636   party designation of each candidate who is nominated by the qualified political party is

637   displayed adjacent to the candidate's name on a mechanical ballot;

638 (8) "candidates for elective office," defined in Subsection 20A-9-101(1)(a), also includes an

639   individual who files a declaration of candidacy under Section 20A-9-407 or 20A-9-408

640   to run in a regular general election for a federal office, constitutional office, multicounty

641   office, or county office;

642   (9) an individual who is nominated by, or seeking the nomination of, the qualified political

643   party is not required to comply with Subsection 20A-9-201(1)(c);

644   (10) notwithstanding [Subsection 20A-9-403(3)] Subsections 20A-9-403(3) through (8), the

645   qualified political party is entitled to have each of the qualified political party's

646   candidates for elective office appear on the primary ballot of the qualified political party

647   with an indication that each candidate is a candidate for the qualified political party;

648   (11) notwithstanding Subsection [20A-9-403(4)(a)] 20A-9-403(9)(a), the lieutenant

649   governor shall include on the list provided by the lieutenant governor to the county

650   clerks:

651   (a) the names of all candidates of the qualified political party for federal, constitutional,

652   multicounty, and county offices; and

653   (b) the names of unopposed candidates for elective office who have been nominated by

654   the qualified political party and instruct the county clerks to exclude such candidates

655   from the primary-election ballot;

656   (12) notwithstanding Subsection [20A-9-403(5)(c)] 20A-9-403(10)(c), a candidate who is

657   unopposed for an elective office in the regular primary election of the qualified political

658   party is nominated by the party for that office without appearing on the primary ballot;

659   and

660   (13) notwithstanding the provisions of Subsections 20A-9-403(1) and (2) and Section

661   20A-9-405, the qualified political party is entitled to have the names of [its] the qualified

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

663   at a regular general election.

664   Section 10. Section **20A-9-408** is amended to read:

665   **20A-9-408 . Signature-gathering process to seek the nomination of a qualified**

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

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

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

669   the signature-gathering process described in this section.

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

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

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

673   described in Section 20A-9-408.5.

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

675   20A-9-202(4), a member of a qualified political party who, under this section, is seeking

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

677   the next general election shall:

678   (a) except to the extent otherwise provided in Subsection (13)(a), during the applicable

679   declaration of candidacy filing period described in Section 20A-9-201.5, and before

680   gathering signatures under this section, file with the filing officer on a form approved

681   by the lieutenant governor a notice of intent to gather signatures for candidacy that

682   includes:

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

684   qualified political party under this section;

685   (ii) the name of the [registered] qualified political party for which the member is

686   seeking nomination;

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

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

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

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

691   person, with the filing officer during the applicable declaration of candidacy filing

692   period described in Section 20A-9-201.5; and

693   (c) pay the filing fee.

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

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

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

697   the next general election shall:

698   (a) during the applicable declaration of candidacy filing period described in Section

699   20A-9-201.5, and before gathering signatures under this section, file with the filing

700   officer on a form approved by the lieutenant governor a notice of intent to gather

701   signatures for candidacy that includes:

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

703   political party under this section;

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

705   nomination;

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

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

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

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

710   person, with the filing officer during the applicable declaration of candidacy filing

711   period described in Section 20A-9-201.5; and

712   (c) pay the filing fee.

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

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

715   political party, under this section, for the office of governor shall, during the applicable

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

717   declaration of candidacy and submit a letter from the candidate for governor that names

718   the lieutenant governor candidate as a joint-ticket running mate.

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

720   20A-9-701(1) also includes the name of each candidate nominated by a qualified

721   political party under this section.

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

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

724   political party that nominated the candidate.

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

726   political party for an elective office by:

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

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

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

730   member files a notice of intent to gather signatures and ending at the applicable

731   deadline described in Subsection (12), in the following amounts:

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

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

734   candidates in a primary election;

735   (ii) except as provided in Subsection (13)(b), for a congressional district race, 7,000

736   signatures of registered voters who are residents of the congressional district and

737   are permitted by the qualified political party to vote for the qualified political

738   party's candidates in a primary election;

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

750   the applicable State Board of Education district; and

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

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

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

754   a primary election.

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

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

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

758   the manual candidate qualification process, the member shall:

759   (i) collect the signatures on a form approved by the lieutenant governor, using the

760   same circulation and verification requirements described in Sections 20A-7-105

761   and 20A-7-204; and

762   (ii) in accordance with Section 20A-9-408.3, submit the signatures to the [election

763   officer] county clerk of the petition signers' residence before the applicable

764   deadline described in Subsection (12).

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

766   accordance with Section 20A-9-408.3, the [election officer] county clerk shall, no

767   later than the earlier of 14 calendar days after the day on which the [election officer]

768   county clerk receives the signatures, or [one day] seven calendar days before the day

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

770   elective office to which the signature packets relate:

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

772   packet to determine whether each individual is at least 18 years old;

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

774   least 18 years old to the attorney general and the county attorney;

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

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

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

778   20A-1-1002, used to verify a signature on a petition; and

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

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

781   (d)(i) In reviewing a candidate signature packet, the county clerk shall count only an

782   individual who signed with a holographic signature:

783   (A) who is a registered voter residing within the county clerk's county and the

784   political division that the candidate seeks to represent; and

785   (B) who did not sign any other petition for that office.

786   (ii) If, in verifying signatures under Section 20A-1-1002, a county clerk determines

787   that a registered voter who signed a petition is not a resident of the county clerk's

788   county, the county clerk:

789   (A) shall declare the signature invalid under Subsection 20A-1-1002(3); and

790   (B) may not certify the signature.

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

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

793   (i) count the number of valid petition signatures submitted by the candidate; and

794   (ii) no later than seven calendar days before the day of the convention described in

795   Subsection (11)(c), certify the number of valid signatures to the lieutenant

796   governor.

797   (f) The lieutenant governor shall, upon receiving the certification described in

798   Subsection (9)(e)(ii) from the county clerk of each county where the candidate

799   submits petition signatures for verification:

800   (i) add together the total number of signatures declared valid by each county clerk;

801   and

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

803   number of signatures required for the candidate to qualify for placement on the

804   regular primary ballot, certify the signatures no later than the day before the day

805   of the convention described in Subsection (11)(c).

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

807   (9)(b) may have the voter's signature removed from the form by, no later than 5

808   p.m. three business days after the day on which the member submits the signature

809   form to the [election officer] county clerk, submitting to the [election officer]

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

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

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

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

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

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

816   valid statement requesting removal of the signature.

817   [(e)] (h)(i) [An election officer] A county clerk shall, in accordance with this

818   Subsection [(9)(e)] (9)(h) and rules made under Section 20A-3a-106, conduct

819   regular audits of signature comparisons made between signatures gathered under

820   this section and voter signatures maintained by the [election officer] county clerk.

821   (ii) An individual who conducts an audit of signature comparisons under this section

822   may not audit the individual's own work.

823   (iii) The [election officer] county clerk shall:

824   (A) audit 1% of all signature comparisons described in Subsection [(9)(e)(i)]

825   (9)(h)(i) to determine the accuracy of the comparisons made;

826   (B) record the individuals who conducted the audit;

827   (C) record the audit results;

828   (D) provide additional training or staff reassignments, as needed, based on the

829   results of an audit described in Subsection [(9)(e)(i)] (9)(h)(i); and

830   (E) record any remedial action taken.

831   (iv) The audit results described in Subsection [(9)(e)(iii)(C)] (9)(h)(iii)(C) are a public

832   record.

833   [(f)] (i) [An election officer who certifies signatures under Subsection (9)(c) or

834   20A-9-403(3)(d)] A county clerk who verifies signatures under Subsection (9)(c),

835   Subsection 20A-9-403(3)(d), or Subsection 20A-9-502(5)(b) shall, after [certifying

836   enough signatures] declaring valid enough signatures to establish that a candidate has

837   reached the applicable signature threshold described in [Subsection (8) or

838   20A-9-403(3)(a)] Subsection (8), Subsection 20A-9-403(3)(a), or Subsection

839   20A-9-502(5)(a), as applicable, continue to [certify] verify signatures submitted for

840   the candidate in excess of the number of signatures required, until the [election officer]

841   county clerk either:

842   (i) in a race for federal office, constitutional office, or multicounty office, declares

843   valid signatures equal to 110% of the applicable signature threshold;

844   (ii) in a race other than a race described in Subsection (9)(i)(i), certifies signatures

845   equal to 110% of the applicable signature threshold; or

846   [(ii)] (iii) has reviewed all signatures submitted for the candidate before reaching an

847   amount equal to 110% of the applicable signature threshold.

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

849   process.

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

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

852   member shall, before the deadline described in Subsection (12), collect signatures

853   electronically:

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

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

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

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

858   the election officer shall, no later than the earlier of 14 calendar days after the day on

859   which the election officer receives the signatures, or [one day] seven calendar days

860   before the day on which the qualified political party holds the convention to select a

861   nominee for the elective office to which the signature packets relate:

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

863   to determine whether each individual is at least 18 years old; and

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

865   at least 18 years old to the attorney general and the county attorney.

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

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

868   section.

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

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

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

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

873   required to comply with; and

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

887   lieutenant governor posts a declaration of candidacy.

888   (12) The deadline before which a member of a qualified political party must collect and

889   submit signatures to the election officer under this section is 5 p.m. on the last business

890   day that is at least [14] 21 calendar days before the day on which the qualified political

891   party's convention for the office begins.

892   (13) For the 2026 election year only, an individual who desires to gather signatures to seek

893   the nomination of a qualified political party for the office of United States representative

894   shall:

895   (a) in accordance with Subsection (3)(a), file a notice of intent to gather signatures

896   during the period beginning at 8 a.m. on the first business day of January and ending

897   at 5 p.m. on March 13, 2026; and

898   (b) during the period beginning on the day on which the individual files the notice of

899   intent to gather signatures and ending at 5 p.m. on March 13, 2026, on a form

900   approved by the lieutenant governor that complies with Subsection 20A-9-405(3),

901   collect 7,000 signatures of registered voters who are residents of the state and are

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

903   candidates in a primary election.

904   Section 11. Section **20A-9-502** is amended to read:

905   **20A-9-502 . Certificate of nomination -- Contents -- Circulation -- Verification --**

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

907   (1) The candidate shall:

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

909   "State of Utah, County of _____

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

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

912   qualify to hold that office both legally and constitutionally if selected, and that I reside at _____

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

920   and removal of my name from the ballot.

921

922   _____

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

923

924   _____

                                                                       Notary Public (or other officer

925

                                                                       qualified to administer oaths)";

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

927   nomination and the circulator verification, that:

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

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

930   line blank for the purpose of binding;

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

932   Candidate Certificate of Nomination Petition" printed directly below the

933   horizontal line;

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

935   Subsection (1)(b)(iii);

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

937   eight-point, single leaded type:

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

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

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

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

942   (vi) contain the word "Notice" printed directly beneath the words described in

943   Subsection (1)(b)(v);

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

945   less than eight-point, single leaded type:

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

947   should sign this nomination petition.";

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

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

950   "Each signer says:

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

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

953   county clerk certifies my signature; and

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

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

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

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

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

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

960   line down the middle;

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

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

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

964   of Registered Voter";

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

966   (Optional)";

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

968   City, Zip Code"; [and]

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

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

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

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

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

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

975   voter registration records."; and

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

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

978   "Verification

979   State of Utah, County of _____

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

981   I am at least 18 years old;

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

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

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

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

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

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

988   _____

989   (Signature)   (Residence Address)   (Date)."[.]

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

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

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

993   whose presence each signature sheet is signed:

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

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

996   signature sheets that are bound together.

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

998   sheet bound to the verification.

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

1000   (i) knowingly sign a certificate of nomination signature sheet:

1001   (A) with any name other than the person's own name;

1002   (B) more than once for the same candidate; or

1003   (C) if the person is not registered to vote in this state and does not intend to

1004   become registered to vote in this state before the county clerk certifies the

1005   signatures; or

1006   (ii) sign the verification of a certificate of nomination signature sheet if the person:

1007   (A) has not witnessed the signing by those persons whose names appear on the

1008   certificate of nomination signature sheet; or

1009   (B) knows that a person whose signature appears on the certificate of nomination

1010   signature sheet is not registered to vote in this state and does not intend to
1011   become registered to vote in this state.
1012   (b) Any person violating this Subsection (4) is guilty of a class A misdemeanor.
1013   (5)(a) To qualify for placement on the general election ballot, the candidate shall, no
1014   earlier than the start of the applicable declaration of candidacy period described in
1015   Section 20A-9-201.5 and no later than 5 p.m. on June 15 of the year in which the
1016   election will be held:
1017   (i) comply with Subsection 20A-9-503(1); [and]
1018   (ii) [submit each signature packet to the county clerk where the majority of the
1019   signatures in the packet were collected, with signatures totaling] collect signatures
1020   in an amount totaling:
1021   (A) at least 1,000 registered voters residing within the state when the nomination
1022   is for an office to be filled by the voters of the entire state; or
1023   (B) at least 300 registered voters residing within a political division or at least 5%
1024   of the registered voters residing within a political division, whichever is less,
1025   when the nomination is for an office to be filled by the voters of any political
1026   division smaller than the state[.] ; and
1027   (iii) submit the signatures to the county clerk of the registered voter's residence.
1028   (b) A candidate has not complied with Subsection (5)(a)(ii), unless the county clerks
1029   verify that each required signature is a valid signature of a registered voter who is
1030   eligible to sign the signature packet and has not signed a signature packet to nominate
1031   another candidate for the same office.
1032   (c) Except as provided in Subsection (6), the county clerk shall use the procedures
1033   described in Section 20A-1-1002 to determine whether a signer is a registered voter
1034   who is qualified to sign the signature packet.
1035   [(c)] (d) In reviewing [the signature packets, the county clerk shall count and certify only
1036   those persons] a signature packet, the county clerk shall count only an individual who
1037   signed with a holographic signature[, who]:
1038   (i) [are registered voters within the political division that the candidate seeks to
1039   represent] who is a registered voter residing within the county clerk's county and
1040   the political division that the candidate seeks to represent; and
1041   (ii) who did not sign any other certificate of nomination for that office.
1042   [(d)] (e) [The] Except as provided in Subsection (7), the county clerk shall [count and]
1043   certify the number of registered voters who validly signed a signature packet[,] no

1044   later than 30 calendar days after the day on which the candidate submits the signature

1045   packet.

1046   [(e)] (f) The candidate may supplement the signatures or amend the certificate of

1047   nomination or declaration of candidacy at any time on or before 5 p.m. on June 15 of

1048   the year in which the election will be held.

1049   [(f) The county clerk shall use the procedures described in Section 20A-1-1002 to

1050   determine whether a signer is a registered voter who is qualified to sign the signature

1051   packet.]

1052   (6) If, in verifying signatures under Section 20A-1-1002, the county clerk determines that a

1053   registered voter who signed a signature packet is not a resident of the county clerk's

1054   county, the county clerk:

1055   (a) shall declare the signature invalid under Subsection 20A-1-1002(3); and

1056   (b) may not certify the signature.

1057   (7)(a) In an election for federal office, constitutional office, or multicounty office, the

1058   county clerk shall, instead of taking the action described in Subsection (5)(e):

1059   (i) count the number of valid nomination petition signatures submitted by the

1060   candidate; and

1061   (ii) no later than the day of the deadline described in Subsection (5)(f), certify the

1062   number of valid signatures to the lieutenant governor.

1063   (b) The lieutenant governor shall, upon receiving the certification described in

1064   Subsection (7)(a)(ii) from the county clerk of each county where the candidate

1065   submits signatures for verification:

1066   (i) add together the total number of signatures declared valid by each county clerk;

1067   and

1068   (ii) if the aggregate number of valid signatures is equal to or more than the total

1069   number of signatures required for the candidate to qualify for placement on the

1070   general election ballot, certify the signatures no later than August 1 of the year on

1071   which the election will be held.

1072   [(6)] (8)(a) A voter who signs a signature packet under this section may have the voter's

1073   signature removed from the signature packet by, no later than 5 p.m. three business

1074   days after the day on which the candidate submits the signature packet to the county

1075   clerk, submitting to the county clerk a statement requesting that the voter's signature

1076   be removed.

1077   (b) A statement described in Subsection [(6)(a)] (8)(a) shall comply with the

1078   requirements described in Subsection 20A-1-1003(2).

1079   (c) The county clerk shall use the procedures described in Subsection 20A-1-1003(3) to

1080   determine whether to remove an individual's signature from a signature packet after

1081   receiving a timely, valid statement requesting removal of the signature.

1082   Section 12. Section **20A-9-701** is amended to read:

1083   **20A-9-701 . Certification of party candidates to county clerks -- Display on ballot.**

1084   (1) No later than August 31 of each regular general election year, the lieutenant governor

1085   shall certify to each county clerk, for offices to be voted upon at the regular general

1086   election in that county clerk's county:

1087   (a) the names of each candidate nominated under Subsection 20A-9-202(4) or

1088   Subsection [20A-9-403(5)] 20A-9-403(10); and

1089   (b) the names of the candidates for president and vice president that are certified by the

1090   registered political party as the party's nominees.

1091   (2) The names shall be certified by the lieutenant governor and shall be displayed on the

1092   ballot as they are provided on the candidate's declaration of candidacy. No other names

1093   may appear on the ballot as affiliated with, endorsed by, or nominated by any other

1094   registered political party, political party, or other political group.

1095   Section 13. **Effective Date.**

1096   This bill takes effect on January 1, 2027.