

**Testimony in support of prompt passage of House Bill 7116, regarding candidates for Delegate to their Party's national convention, in R.I.'s Presidential Primary**

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I am the Administrative Assistant to Rep. Ramon Perez, who has introduced this bill.

I ask you to **promptly** pass **House bill 7116**, before candidates for Delegate to their Party's Presidential convention file **next week**.

Candidates need to get 150 signatures in just 4 days, an extremely difficult task at any time, but especially in the middle of Winter. This is due to an **unintentional** oversight several years ago. Here is the history behind that.

When the federal government required that military mail ballots go out 45 days before an election, the Legislature changed the law, in order to accommodate that. They made the date to turn in signatures 10 days earlier. But they forgot to make the starting date 10 days earlier. So candidates had 4 days, instead of 14 days, to get the same number of signatures.

The proposed bill would change this to 50 signatures in 6 days. The Secretary Of State's office is supportive of this. I have worked with Deputy Secretary Rob Rock and Elections Division Chief Kathy Placencia, to draw up a bill they support.

The **identical** Senate bill 2097 was introduced by Sen. Frank Ciccone, and is in the Judiciary Committee. I am meeting with them, and I have talked to Senate President Ruggerio about it.

This is probably the most non-controversial bill that the House will consider this year. Nobody objects to it. **We just need to make it happen quickly.**

FYI, the House passed a similar bill (sponsored by Rep. Perez) last year, but it fell through the cracks when it went to the Senate, and never came to a vote. So we have been trying to take care of this, for over a year. We are not just now trying to do this. But we are now up against a deadline.

Feel free to give me a call, at the number above, to discuss this. Thank you, in advance, for prompt action on this matter.