- 1 HB516
- 2 149853-1
- 3 By Representative Johnson (R)
- 4 RFD: Constitution, Campaigns and Elections
- 5 First Read: 02-APR-13

1	149853-1:n:03/05/2013:PMG/mfc LRS2013-1243
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8	SYNOPSIS: This bill would change certain absentee
9	voting deadlines concerning the qualification and
10	certification of candidates running for office,
11	printing and distribution of ballots, and
12	contesting nominations in order to facilitate
13	compliance with state and federal law pertaining to
14	individuals voting by absentee ballot pursuant to
15	the Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting
16	Act, 42 U.S.C. 1973ff.
17	
18	A BILL
19	TO BE ENTITLED
20	AN ACT
21	
22	Relating to absentee voting laws; to amend Sections
23	17-6-21, 17-9-3, 17-11-5, 17-11-12, 17-13-5, 17-13-18,
24	17-13-22, 17-13-23, 17-13-81, 17-13-82, 17-13-85, and
25	17-13-86, Code of Alabama 1975, to change certain election
26	deadlines to facilitate compliance with the federal Uniformed
27	and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act, 42 U.S.C. 1973ff.

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BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF ALABAMA:

Section 1. Sections 17-6-21, 17-9-3, 17-11-5,
17-11-12, 17-13-5, 17-13-18, 17-13-22, 17-13-23, 17-13-81,
17-13-82, 17-13-85, and 17-13-86, Code of Alabama 1975, are
amended to read as follows:

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"§17-6-21.

7 "(a) The official ballots shall contain the names of all candidates nominated by caucus, convention, mass meeting, 8 primary election, or other assembly of any political party or 9 10 faction, or by petition of electors and certified as provided in Section 17-9-3, but no person's name shall be printed upon 11 12 the ballots who, within the time period set forth in 13 subsection (b) (c), notifies the judge of probate in writing, 14 acknowledged before an officer authorized by law to take acknowledgments, that he or she will not accept the nomination 15 specified in the certificate of nomination or petition of 16 17 electors. The name of each candidate shall appear but one time on the ballot and under only one emblem. 18

"(b) A nomination for a candidate in a primary or 19 general election shall be finalized by the respective state 20 21 executive committees not later than 76 days prior to the 22 primary or general election. Any amendment to a certification 23 of a candidate by a state executive committee shall be filed 24 with the judge of probate, in the case of a county office, or 25 the Secretary of State, in the case of a state or federal 26 office. Any such amendment filed after the 76th day before a 27 primary or general election shall be accepted by the judge of

probate or Secretary of State; however, the candidate's name 1 2 shall remain on the ballot but the appropriate canvassing board may not certify any votes for the candidate. 3 4 "(b)(c) The notification deadline for persons who do not wish to accept nomination in a primary or second primary 5 6 election is 20 days before the date of the election is 76 days 7 before the date of the election. A person who does not wish to accept nomination in a second primary election shall submit 8 the notification set forth in subsection (a) prior to the 9 10 printing of absentee ballots. The notification deadline for persons who do not wish to accept nomination in a general 11 12 election is 45 76 days before the date of the election. In the 13 event that a candidate submits a notification of withdrawal 14 after the applicable deadline, the candidate's name shall 15 remain on the ballot but any votes cast for the candidate shall not be certified by the appropriate canvassing board. 16 17 "§17-9-3.

18 "(a) The following persons shall be entitled to have 19 their names printed on the appropriate ballot for the general 20 election, provided they are otherwise qualified for the office 21 they seek:

"(1) All candidates who have been put in nomination by primary election and certified in writing by the chair and secretary of the canvassing board of the party holding the primary and filed with the judge of probate of the county, in the case of a candidate for county office, and the Secretary of State in all other cases, on the day next following the 1 last day for contesting the primary election for that office 2 if no contest is filed. If a contest is filed, then the 3 certificate for the contested office must be filed on the day 4 next following the date of settlement or decision of the 5 contest.

6 "(2) All candidates who have been put in nomination 7 by any caucus, convention, mass meeting, or other assembly of any political party or faction and certified in writing by the 8 9 chair and secretary of the nominating caucus, convention, mass 10 meeting, or assembly and filed with the judge of probate, in the case of a candidate for county office, and the Secretary 11 12 of State in all other cases, on or before 5:00 P.M. on the 13 date of the first primary election as provided for in Section 17 - 13 - 3. 14

"(3) Each candidate who has been requested to be an 15 independent candidate for a specified office by written 16 17 petition signed by electors qualified to vote in the election to fill the office when the petition has been filed with the 18 judge of probate, in the case of a county office and with the 19 Secretary of State in all other cases, on or before 5:00 P.M. 20 21 on the date of the first primary election as provided for in 22 Section 17-13-3. The number of qualified electors signing the 23 petition shall equal or exceed three percent of the qualified electors who cast ballots for the office of Governor in the 24 25 last general election for the state, county, district, or 26 other political subdivision in which the candidate seeks to 27 qualify.

1 "(b) The Secretary of State, not later than 45 74 2 days after the second primary, shall certify to the judge of probate of each county in the state, in the case of an officer 3 4 to be voted for by the electors of the whole state, and to the judges of probate of the counties composing the circuit or 5 district in the case of an officer to be voted for by the 6 7 electors of a circuit or district, upon suitable blanks to be prepared by him or her for that purpose, the fact of 8 nomination or independent candidacy of each nominee or 9 10 independent candidate or candidate of a party who did not receive more than 20 percent of the entire vote cast in the 11 12 last general election preceding the primary who has qualified 13 to appear on the general election ballot. The judge of probate 14 shall then prepare the ballot with the names of each candidate 15 qualified under the provisions of this section printed on the ballot. The judge of probate may not print on the ballot the 16 17 name of any independent candidate who was a candidate in the primary election of that year and the name of any nominee of a 18 political party who was a candidate for the nomination of a 19 20 different political party in the primary election of that 21 year.

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"§17-11-5.

"(a) Upon receipt of an application for an absentee
ballot as provided in Section 17-11-3, if the applicant's name
appears on the list of qualified voters produced from the
state voter registration list in the election to be held, or
if the voter makes an affidavit for a challenged vote or

1 provisional ballot, the absentee election manager shall 2 furnish the absentee ballot to the applicant by: (1) Forwarding it by United States mail to the applicant's or 3 4 voter's residence address, or upon written request of the voter, to the address where the voter regularly receives mail 5 or (2) by handing the absentee ballot to the voter in person 6 7 or, in the case of emergency voting, his or her designee in person. If the absentee election manager has reasonable cause 8 to believe that the applicant has given a fraudulent address 9 on the application for the absentee ballot, the absentee 10 11 election manager shall turn over the ballot application to the 12 district attorney for any action which may be necessary under 13 this chapter. The absentee election manager may require 14 additional proof of a voter's eligibility to vote absentee 15 when there is evidence of continuous absentee voting. The absentee election manager shall mail any absentee ballot 16 17 requested to be mailed as provided in Section 17-11-3 no later than the next business day after an application has been 18 received unless the absentee ballots have not been delivered 19 to the absentee election manager. If the absentee ballots have 20 21 not been so delivered, the absentee election manager shall 22 hold all requests until the ballots are delivered and shall 23 then respond by placing ballots in the mail no later than the 24 next business day.

25 "(b) The official list of qualified voters shall be 26 furnished to the absentee election manager by the judge of 27 probate using a printout from the state voter registration

1 list of registered voters for that county containing vote 2 voter registration information useful in the identification of absentee voters. The information provided in this report shall 3 4 be established by rules adopted by the Secretary of State with the advice of the Alabama Circuit Court Clerks Association or 5 its members and shall indicate whether the individual is 6 7 obligated to produce identification in accordance with Sections 17-9-30 and 17-10-1. The Secretary of State may 8 9 further provide by administrative rule for electronic access 10 to this list for optional use by the absentee election 11 manager. This list shall be made available beginning at least 12 45 days before the election. In municipal elections, the 13 official list of qualified voters shall be furnished to the 14 absentee election manager at least 35 days before the 15 election. Any supplemental list of qualified electors shall 16 also be provided to the absentee election manager as soon as the list becomes available. The absentee election manager 17 shall underscore on the list the name of each voter who has 18 applied for an absentee ballot and shall write immediately 19 beside his or her name the word "absentee." The Secretary of 20 21 State by rule may provide for electronic access to the 22 absentee election manager's county list of registered voters 23 and for the method of identifying applicants for absentee 24 ballots in conjunction with the state voter registration list.

"(c) The absentee election manager shall enroll the name, residence, and voting place of the applicant, and the date the application was received on a list of absentee

1 voters. Each day the absentee election manager shall enter on 2 the list the names, addresses, and voting places of each voter who has that day applied for an absentee ballot and shall, for 3 4 all elections other than municipal elections, post a copy of the list of applications received each day on the regular 5 6 bulletin board or other public place in the county courthouse. 7 In municipal elections, the absentee election manager shall post a copy of the list of applications received each day on 8 the regular bulletin board or other public place in the city 9 10 hall. The absentee election manager in all elections shall deliver to the board of registrars the day following the 11 12 election, a copy of the list of all absentee voters. The list 13 shall be maintained in the office of the circuit clerk for 60 14 days after the election, at which time it shall be delivered 15 to the judge of probate. Before the polls open at any election 16 on election day, the absentee election manager shall 17 effectuate the delivery to the election officers of each voting place a list showing the name and address of every 18 person whose name appears on the official list of qualified 19 20 electors for the voting place who applied for an absentee 21 ballot in the election. The name of the person who applied for 22 an absentee ballot shall be identified as an absentee voter on 23 the list of qualified electors kept at the voting place, and 24 the person shall not vote again, except that in county, state, 25 and federal elections the person may vote a provisional 26 ballot. Applications for absentee ballots are required for 27 elections which are more than 30 days apart, except as to

individuals voting pursuant to the federal Uniformed and
 Overseas Absentee Voting Act, 42 U.S.C. 1973ff.

"(d) For individuals voting pursuant to the federal 3 4 Uniformed and Overseas Absentee Voting Act, 42 U.S.C. 1973ff, the Secretary of State shall by rule prescribe use of 5 standardized military and overseas voter registration 6 7 applications and applications for absentee ballots adopted by the United States government for such use. The Secretary of 8 9 State shall also prescribe by rule provisions within the standard state application form for absentee voting which 10 permit the voter to identify himself or herself as a military 11 12 or overseas voter. Unless otherwise indicated by the military 13 or overseas voter, an application for an absentee ballot by 14 such a voter shall remain valid through the next two regularly 15 scheduled general election cycles for federal office. The 16 circuit clerk shall confirm by January 1 of each election year 17 the address of the military and overseas voters prior to mailing the ballots during each election cycle, and the for 18 any election for a federal, state, or county office or for any 19 proposed constitutional amendment or a state or county 20 21 referendum held through the end of the calendar year in which 22 the application is filed. The absentee election manager shall 23 provide an absentee ballot to the military and overseas voters 24 for each such subsequent election. The absentee election 25 manager, within seven days after each regularly scheduled general election for federal office, shall report the number 26 27 of military and overseas ballots mailed out and the number of

ballots received to the Secretary of State who shall report
 this information to the Federal Election Assistance Commission
 within 90 days of each regularly scheduled general election
 for federal office.

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"§17-11-12.

6 "Not less than 40 55 days prior to the holding of 7 any election, except a municipal election, to which this chapter pertains, or in the case of a runoff primary election, 8 not more than seven days after the first primary election, the 9 10 officer charged with the printing and distribution of the official ballots and election supplies shall deliver to the 11 12 absentee election manager of each county in which the election 13 is held or to the person designated to serve in his or her 14 place a sufficient number of absentee ballots, envelopes, and 15 other necessary supplies. Not more than seven days after the last day to qualify as a candidate in a municipal election, or 16 17 in the case of a runoff municipal election, not more than 14 days after the first election, or in the case of a municipal 18 election held for a purpose other than the election of 19 20 municipal officers, not more than seven days after the giving 21 of notice of the election, the officer charged with the printing and distribution of the official ballots and election 22 23 supplies shall deliver to the absentee election manager of the 24 municipality in which the election is held, or to the person 25 designated to serve in his or her place, a sufficient number of absentee ballots, envelopes, and other necessary supplies. 26 27 If the absentee election manager is a candidate with

opposition in the election, he or she shall immediately, upon receipt of the ballots, envelopes, and supplies, deliver them to the person authorized to act in his or her place, as provided in Section 17-11-13.

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"§17-13-5.

6 "(a) All candidates for nomination to public office 7 or for election to party office in the primary election provided for in this chapter shall file their declaration of 8 9 candidacy with the state party chair if they seek any federal, 10 state, circuit, or district office, or the state Senate, House of Representatives, or any other office that is not a county 11 12 office not later than 5:00 P.M. 60 116 days before the date of 13 the primary election. All candidates for nomination or 14 election to a county office shall file their declaration with the county party chair not later than 5:00 P.M. 60 116 days 15 before the date of the primary election. 16

17 "(b) The state party chair shall, no later than 5:00 P.M. 55 82 days before the primary election, certify the names 18 of all primary election candidates, except candidates for 19 20 county offices, to the Secretary of State. The county party 21 chair shall, not later than 5:00 P.M. 55 82 days prior to the 22 date of the primary election, certify to the judge of probate 23 the names of all candidates for nomination to county offices 24 or election to county party offices. The Secretary of State 25 shall, not less than 50 74 days prior to the date of the 26 primary election, and not less than 25 days prior to the 27 primary election in the 1992 election cycle only, certify to

the judge of probate of every county in which the election is to be held the names of the opposed candidates for nomination to federal, state, circuit, or district offices, the state Senate, House of Representatives, and all other opposed candidates to public or party office, except candidates for county offices.

7 "(c) The judge of probate of each county shall have the ballots prepared for the primary election. If a legally 8 qualified candidate for nomination to an office is unopposed 9 10 when the last date for filing declarations of candidacy has passed, his or her name shall not appear on the ballots to be 11 12 used in the primary election, and he or she shall be the 13 nominee of the party with which he or she has qualified for 14 the office. If a legally qualified candidate for election to a 15 party office is unopposed when the last date for filing declarations of candidacy has passed, his or her name shall 16 17 not appear on the ballots to be used in the primary election, and he or she shall be declared elected to the party office 18 for which he or she qualified. 19

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"§17-13-18.

"(a) At the respective meetings of the respective executive committees, the county executive committee, as to candidates in the primary election for office, except candidates for county office, shall publicly ascertain, determine, and declare whether any candidate for office in the primary election has received a majority of the votes cast for the office, and, if so, declare the candidate the nominee of the party for the office for which he or she was a candidate and for which he or she received a majority of the votes cast for that office in the primary election.

4 "(b) If no candidate receives a majority of all of the votes cast in such primary election for any one office or 5 6 offices for the nomination to which there were more than two 7 candidates, then there shall be held a second primary election on the sixth Tuesday following the primary election, and the 8 9 chair of the state executive committee shall certify to the Secretary of State, immediately upon the completion of such 10 canvass, the names of the two candidates of the party to 11 12 receive the highest number of votes in the first primary 13 election for such office or offices, except county officers, 14 and who are to be voted for in the second primary election. The chair of each county executive committee shall, 15 immediately upon the completion of such canvass, certify to 16 17 the judge of probate of the county the names of the two candidates who received the highest number of votes in the 18 first primary for nomination to any county office. The 19 Secretary of State shall, within not more than six two 20 21 business days from the date the certificate is received from 22 the chair of the state executive committee, certify to the 23 judge of probate of any county where a second primary election 24 is to be held the name or names of the candidates certified as 25 herein provided by the chair of the state executive committee. 26 The judge of probate of each county in Alabama shall in the 27 manner and form as required by this chapter and the general

1 laws of Alabama, have prepared and printed all election 2 supplies and all ballots to be voted in the second primary election, which ballots shall contain, under appropriate 3 4 headings or titles of the offices to be filled, the names of the two candidates for each office so certified by the 5 6 Secretary of State and the chair of the county executive 7 committee, as herein required, as well as such other matters as are required by this chapter and the general laws of 8 Alabama, on ballots for the first primary election. 9

10 "(c) At the second primary election, no person can 11 be a candidate except the two persons who receive the highest 12 number of votes for the offices for which they were candidates 13 in the first primary election.

"(d) The returns from the second primary election 14 15 shall be made and the votes canvassed, tabulated, and certified and the results declared in the same manner provided 16 17 in this chapter for making, canvassing, tabulating, certifying, and declaring the results of the first primary 18 election. The county executive committee of the parties 19 20 participating in the primary election shall meet at the 21 courthouse of their respective counties not later than the 22 second Friday following the second primary election and 23 receive the returns, canvass and tabulate the same by 24 precinct, and publicly declare the results thereof. The chair 25 of each county executive committee shall forthwith, and not 26 later than noon on the second Monday following the primary 27 election, certify and return to the chair of the state

1 executive committee a statement and tabulation by precincts of 2 the results of the second primary election and of the number of votes received by each candidate for office therein voted 3 4 for, except candidates for county office. Not later than noon on the third Wednesday following the second primary election, 5 the state executive committee, or such subcommittee thereof as 6 7 may have been appointed by the chair thereof for such purpose, shall meet at the State Capitol in Montgomery and receive the 8 9 returns and canvass and tabulate the same by counties, and publicly declare on that day the result thereof as to all 10 candidates voted for, except as to candidates for county 11 12 office, which results shall be final. At such respective 13 meetings of the respective executive committees, the county 14 executive committee, as to candidates for county office voted 15 for in the second primary election, and the state executive committee, as to candidates for office in the second primary 16 17 election voted for therein, except candidates for county office, shall publicly ascertain and determine the candidates 18 receiving a majority of all of the votes cast in such second 19 20 primary election for any one office, and the candidates so 21 ascertained and determined to have received a majority of all 22 of the votes cast in such second primary election for the 23 office shall be declared the nominee of the party for such 24 office by the respective county and state executive 25 committees. Thereupon and immediately upon the completion of 26 such canvass, the chair thereof shall certify to and file with 27 the judge of probate of the county the names of those who have

1 been nominated in the first or the second primary election or 2 as otherwise authorized or provided by this chapter, as candidates of the party for county offices; and in like 3 4 manner, and immediately upon the completion of such canvass, by the state executive committee, or subcommittee thereof, the 5 6 chair of the state executive committee shall certify to and 7 file with the Secretary of State the names of those who have been nominated in the first or second primary election or as 8 9 otherwise authorized or provided by this chapter as candidates of the party for office, except candidates for county office, 10 and the names of the persons so certified shall be placed upon 11 12 the official ballot of the general election to be held in 13 November next thereafter as the candidates of the party for 14 the offices for which they, respectively, have been so 15 nominated.

"(e) The state executive committee or such
subcommittee as provided in this section shall also provide
the Secretary of State with the second primary election
returns by precincts according to county on a form authorized
by the Secretary of State on the third Wednesday following the
secondary primary, county and municipal returns excepted.

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"§17-13-22.

The Secretary of State shall, within 45 74 days after the second primary election, certify to the judge of probate of each county in the state a separate list of nominees of each party for office and for each candidate who has requested to be an independent candidate and has filed a written petition in accordance with Section 17-9-3, except
 nominees for county offices, to be voted for by the voters of
 such county.

4

"§17-13-23.

"The state executive committee, in cases where the 5 6 office to be filled is not a county office, and the county 7 executive committee, in cases where the office to be filled is a county office, but subject to the approval of and in 8 9 accordance with the method prescribed by the state executive 10 committee, where a vacancy may occur in any nomination, either by death, resignation, revocation, or otherwise, or in case of 11 12 any special election, may fill such vacancy, either by action 13 of the committee itself or by such other method as such 14 committee may see fit to pursue. The respective state or 15 county executive committee shall file with the Secretary of State, for a state or federal office, or with the judge of 16 17 probate, for a county office, the name of the candidate to fill such vacancy not later than 76 days before the election. 18 "§17-13-81. 19

20 "The chair of the county executive committee, upon 21 the filing with him or her of any contest as provided in this 22 article, shall, within five days, call the committee together 23 at the county seat at a time not less than five days nor more 24 than 10 days after and the committee shall meet not more than 25 five calendar days from the filing of such contest to hear and 26 determine the same.

27 "\$17-13-82.

"(a) Either party to a contest under this article 1 2 shall have the right of an appeal to the state executive committee from the final decision of the county executive 3 4 committee upon the same. Notice of such appeal shall be filed with the chair of the state executive committee within five 5 6 two business days after determination of such contest by the 7 county executive committee. At the time of filing with the chair of the state executive committee the notice of appeal, 8 9 such appellant shall deposit with the chair of the state 10 executive committee the sum of one hundred dollars (\$100) to 11 cover such cost and expenses as may be incurred by the state 12 executive committee to hear and determine the appeal. Upon the 13 filing of any such appeal, the chair of the county executive 14 committee from whose decision the appeal is taken shall 15 certify to the chair of the state executive committee, forthwith upon receiving notice of such appeal, a transcript 16 17 showing a complete record of the proceedings before the county executive committee in such contests, and also a statement of 18 the substance of the testimony of each witness taken on the 19 trial of the contest before the county committee. Such 20 21 statement may be offered in evidence upon the hearing of the 22 appeal by either party to the appeal.

"(b) The chair of the state executive committee
shall, upon the filing of any such appeal, call the committee
to meet at a time not less than five days nor more than 10
and the committee shall meet not more than five calendar days
from the time of the filing of any such appeal for the purpose

1 of hearing and determining the same. Upon a final 2 determination of the appeal, the chair of the state executive committee shall issue to the county executive committee from 3 4 which the appeal was taken the order of judgment of such state 5 executive committee upon the appeal, and the county executive 6 committee shall immediately act thereon in accordance with the 7 terms of such order of judgment. Upon the failure or refusal of such county executive committee to comply with the terms of 8 9 such order or judgment within the time named in such order or 10 judgment, such state executive committee, if it is then in session, otherwise, the chair of such state executive 11 12 committee, is hereby vested with full and complete authority 13 to take such measures or adopt such steps as it may deem 14 necessary to carry out such order or judgment, and is invested 15 with all the powers of such county executive committee or its 16 chair insofar as such powers may be necessary or convenient in 17 carrying out such order or judgment.

"(c) The chair of the state executive committee may 18 appoint a subcommittee of not less than three to hear and 19 20 decide any contest, and the subcommittee so appointed shall, 21 if so authorized by the chair of the state executive 22 committee, have all of the power and authority given to or 23 possessed by the state executive committee to hear such 24 contest. The subcommittee may be appointed to hear evidence 25 and report their recommendations to the full state executive 26 committee.

27 "§17-13-85.

1 "The chair of the state executive committee shall, 2 upon the filing of a contest with the chair, be called by such chair to meet at a time not less than five days nor more than 3 4 10 him or her, as provided in this article, call the committee to meet and the committee shall meet not more than five 5 calendar days from the time of filing such contest for the 6 7 purpose of hearing and determining the same, or, without calling the committee to meet, the chair may appoint a 8 subcommittee as herein provided for and the subcommittee shall 9 10 meet not more than five calendar days from the time of filing such context for the purpose of hearing and determining the 11 12 same.

13

"§17-13-86.

"Upon the hearing of any contest, if the state or 14 15 county executive committee finally determines who is the legal nominee for any office, it shall make a declaration of its 16 judgment upon the question, but a failure or refusal by the 17 committee in which the contest is brought to hear and 18 19 determine the same as much as 40 days before the general election in November not later than 90 days before the general 20 21 election for a county office or not later than 83 days before 22 the general election for a state office. If, however, the 23 committee fails or refuses to hear or determine the outcome of 24 a contest by the 90th day before the general election for a 25 county office or the 83rd day before the general election for a state office, the failure or refusal shall be treated as a 26 27 dismissal or the rendition of judgment against the contestant,

and a certificate thereof shall be forwarded, not later than 1 2 76 days before the general election so as to get the nominee on the ballots for the general election in November, by the 3 4 chair to the proper destination: The either the county chair to the judge of probate within five days, or by the state 5 chair to the Secretary of State within five days, and the 6 7 Secretary of State to the judge of probate within six days after the result, but all certificates shall be made so as to 8 get the nominee on the ballots for the general election in 9 10 November."

11 Section 2. This act shall become effective on the 12 first day of the third month following its passage and 13 approval by the Governor, or its otherwise becoming law.