NUMBERED MEMO 2014-03

TO: County Boards of Elections
FROM: Kim Strach, Executive Director
RE: 2014 Candidate Filing Information
DATE: January 28, 2014

Primary Elections
The 2014 candidate filing period will begin at noon on February 10, 2014 and end promptly at noon on February 28, 2014. As required by law, Notices of Candidacy forms for the following offices must be filed with the State Board of Elections:

- United States Senator
- United States House of Representatives
- District Attorneys
- Justices of the Supreme Court
- Judges of the Court of Appeals
- Judges of the superior courts
- Judges of the district courts

This year, the time for withdrawal of a Notice of Candidacy has changed. G.S. § 163-106 and G.S. § 163-323.

G.S. 163-165.6 requires the State Board to adopt a process for random selection of placing names on primary ballots. The relevant portion of that law is set out below.

(c) Order of Candidates on Primary Official Ballots. - The order in which candidates shall appear on a county's official ballots in any primary ballot item shall be determined by the county board of elections using a process designed by the State Board of Elections for random selection.

Since March 4, 2002, the State Board of Elections’ procedure for random selection in regards to the order of candidate names on primary contest ballots involves:
1. Every two years, the listing of candidate names for each contest on the ballot will alternate in either regular alphabetical order or reverse alphabetical order, based on the candidates' last name.

2. Every two years, the starting letter for the listing of candidate names on the ballot will advance to the next letter in the alphabet series depending on whether candidate names are listed in regular alphabetical or reverse alphabetical order.

Initially, in 2002, candidate names were listed on the primary ballot in reverse alphabetical order, starting with the letter “Z” and ending with the letter “A.” As described above, this candidate name order lasted for a two-year period, and starting in 2004, the order reverted to regular alphabetical order, but started with the letter “B,” ascended to the letter “Z,” and then ended with the letter “A.” In accordance with the procedures established in 2002, this random order process has continued. Hence, for all primaries conducted in the years 2014-2015, the listing of candidate names on the ballot for each contest will be in reverse alphabetical order beginning with the letter “W.” The complete order for candidate listings will be:

WVUTSRQPONMLKJIHGFEDCBAZYX

This random selection process only applies to primary elections. Candidates running for offices elected in May (some nonpartisan Board of Education contests, for example) will appear in strict alphabetical order. In multi-seat partisan election contests, candidates of the same party will be listed alphabetically within their party grouping.

**General Election**

In partisan contests on general election ballots, candidate names shall be grouped by party, with party nominees ordered as specified in GS § 163-165.6(d):

**d) Order of Party Candidates on General Election Official Ballot.** – Candidates in any ballot item on a general election official ballot shall appear in the following order:

(1) Nominees of political parties that reflect at least five percent (5%) of statewide voter registration, according to the most recent statistical report published by the State Board of Elections, in alphabetical order by party beginning with the party whose nominee for Governor received the most votes in the most recent gubernatorial election, and in alphabetical order within the party.

(2) Nominees of other political parties, in alphabetical order by party and in alphabetical order within the party.

(3) Unaffiliated candidates, in alphabetical order."

Accordingly, in the 2014 General Election, the names of party nominees and unaffiliated candidates for each partisan contest on the ballot will be listed as follows:
1. Republican nominee(s)
2. Democratic nominee(s)
3. Libertarian nominee(s)
4. Unaffiliated candidate(s)

Further, G.S. § 163-165.6(e), disallows straight-party voting. The ballots for the general election will no longer provide a place for a voter to mark one vote for the candidates of a party for more than one office.