



## Primary Election Reform

### *The state of play in state legislatures in 2022*

Legislators of diverse political affiliations have been increasingly exploring and advancing primary reform proposals in recent years. Primary reform continues to attract attention as a method to reduce the polarizing effect of gerrymandering, account for the preferences of independent voters in the primary process, and to improve working conditions for bipartisanship in legislatures by diversifying candidate pools.

Several reforms to the typical partisan primary have been proposed, with the most popular being a “blanket primary”. In this system, all candidates from all parties run together in one large primary. The candidates who receive the most votes in the primary then proceed alone to the general election, regardless of party. In a “Top-2” primary system, two candidates move from the primary to the general election, while a “Top-4” or “Top-5” allows additional candidates to move forward.

#### State initiatives pursuing a Top-2 primary system

1. [CA SB442](#): Grants permission to establish a top-2 primary system for community college district governing boards. (Signed into law, July 2021).
2. [MA HB822](#): Establishes a state commission to investigate implementation of a top-2 primary system. (Referred to Joint Committee on Election Laws, March 2021).
3. [MS HB723](#): Abolition of partisan primaries and implementation of a top-2 primary system with a first-round election occurring three weeks before election day. (Died in Committee, February 2021).
4. [NV SB121](#): Implementation of a 2-round nonpartisan blanket primary for all currently-partisan offices except for president. (Died in Committee, April 2021).

#### State initiatives pursuing a Top-4 or -5 primary system

5. [WI AB244](#) (Bipartisan): Implementation of a top-5 primary system, with the second round requiring the use of instant-runoff voting. (Referred to Committee on Campaigns and Elections, April 2021).
6. [Alaska Ballot Measure 2](#): While not a legislative effort, Alaska recently implemented a top-4 primary system, where candidates who advance from the primary compete against each other in a general election using ranked choice voting.

For more details on any of these bills, more examples of each type of legislation, or any other RCV related questions, please reach out to [policy@millennialaction.org](mailto:policy@millennialaction.org).

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