

FLORIDA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

BILL ANALYSIS

This bill analysis was prepared by nonpartisan committee staff and does not constitute an official statement of legislative intent.

BILL #: [HB 535](#)

TITLE: Candidate Qualifying

SPONSOR(S): Benarroch

COMPANION BILL: [SB 620](#) (Mayfield)

LINKED BILLS: None

RELATED BILLS: None

Committee References

[Government Operations](#)

14 Y, 3 N

[State Affairs](#)



SUMMARY

Effect of the Bill:

The bill requires candidates seeking to qualify for office to provide a statement disclosing dual citizenship.

Fiscal or Economic Impact:

None.

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ANALYSIS

EFFECT OF THE BILL:

The bill requires candidates seeking to [qualify for nomination or election](#) to federal, state, county, multicounty, district, or judicial office or to a district school board to provide the person to whom they are qualifying—the filing officer—a statement disclosing any other country the candidate is a citizen of. (Sections [1](#) and [2](#))

The bill is effective on July 1, 2026. (Section [4](#))

RELEVANT INFORMATION

SUBJECT OVERVIEW:

Qualify for Nomination or Election

Generally, a person seeking to qualify¹ for nomination or election to public office must ensure that the filing officer receives the following items by the end of the qualifying period:

- Qualifying fee paid by check drawn on the campaign account, if applicable.
- Candidate oath, if applicable.
- Written statement of party affiliation or no party affiliation if the office is partisan.
- Completed form that designates the campaign treasurer and depository.
- Financial disclosure (the full and public disclosure of financial interests or the statement of financial interests, whichever is applicable).
- Loyalty oath, if applicable.
- Statement of Candidate for Judicial Office, if applicable.²

The person to whom a candidate submits his or her qualification papers, the filing officer, performs a merely ministerial function in reviewing those papers.³ The filing officer reviews the qualifying papers to determine

¹ “Qualify” means to fulfill the requirements required of the candidate in the Florida Election Code. S. 99.012(1)(b), F.S.

² [Ss. 99.061\(7\)\(a\)](#) and [105.031\(5\)\(a\), F.S.](#)

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whether all items required for candidate qualification have been properly filed and whether each item is complete on its face, including whether items that must be verified have been properly verified. If all required items are complete, then the filing officer must deem the candidate qualified. The filing officer is prohibited from determining whether the contents of the qualifying papers are accurate.⁴

BILL HISTORY

| COMMITTEE REFERENCE | ACTION | DATE | STAFF DIRECTOR/ POLICY CHIEF | ANALYSIS PREPARED BY |
|--|-----------|-----------|---------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Government Operations Subcommittee | 14 Y, 3 N | 1/13/2026 | Toliver | Walker |
| State Affairs Committee | | | | |

³ *Jones v. Schiller*, 345 So. 3d 406 (Fla. 1st DCA 2022). Because the filing officer performs merely a ministerial function, there is no enforcement mechanism to remove a person from the ballot if the person submits false information. However, there could be criminal and financial consequences to lying under oath. See [S. 837.012, F.S.](#)

⁴ S. 99.061(7)(c), F.S.