

March 19, 2009

**S 731. ELECTORAL FREEDOM ACT OF 2009.** Filed 3/19/09. *TO CHANGE THE DEFINITION OF A "POLITICAL PARTY" BY REDUCING THE NUMBER OF SIGNATURES REQUIRED FOR THE FORMATION OF A NEW POLITICAL PARTY AND FOR UNAFFILIATED CANDIDATES TO OBTAIN BALLOT ACCESS ELIGIBILITY.*

Amends GS 163-96 to provide that a group of voters can qualify as a political party by filing a petition of 10,000 registered and qualified voters (was, 2% of voters in most recent gubernatorial election), provided there are at least 200 registered voters on the petition in each of three (was four) congressional districts.

Amends GS 163-122 to allow a person to appear on ballots for statewide office as an unaffiliated candidate upon petition of 5,000 qualified voters (was, 2% of voters in most recent gubernatorial election), provided there are at least 200 registered voters on the petition in each of three (was, four) congressional districts. If the office is a district office, county office, or single county legislative district, a person desiring to be on the ballot must present a petition of 3% (was, 4%) of those registered to vote in that election.

Effective January 1, 2010, and applies to all primaries and elections held on or after that date.

**Intro. by Jacumin.**

GS 163