

HB 329 -- Elections

Sponsor: Diehl

This bill changes the laws regarding elections. In its main provisions, the bill:

(1) Requires each local election authority to establish one advance voting center in each senatorial district in the state or at least one center in each county in a senatorial district if there is more than one county in a senatorial district. Any registered voter may vote by advance ballot in person at any election for federal or statewide offices. Advance voting will begin on the second Saturday prior to the election until the Wednesday immediately preceding the election, excluding Sundays, using absentee ballots and those procedures. No statement of the person's reason for voting an absentee ballot will be required as is currently required to vote by absentee ballot. All current procedures for casting and counting absentee ballots and the appointment of election judges and polling places will apply to advance voting. The Secretary of State and each local election authority must provide adequate public notice of the advance voting centers and voting times including a posting at each local election authority's respective office and on the web site of each authority that maintains a web site. All costs associated with advance voting centers must be reimbursed by the state. If there is no appropriation, an election authority must not conduct advance voting;

(2) Specifies that a person seeking to vote in a public election must establish his or her qualifications as a United States citizen lawfully residing in this state by presenting to election officials a form of personal identification containing a photograph of the individual. All costs incurred by an election authority to implement the photo identification requirements must be reimbursed by the state. If there is no appropriation, the election authority must not enforce the photo identification requirement;

(3) Allows an individual to vote by casting a provisional ballot after signing an affidavit if he or she does not possess a required form of personal identification because of the inability to pay for a birth certificate or other documentation necessary to obtain the identification;

(4) Requires the state to provide at no cost at least one form of personal identification required to vote to a qualified individual who does not already possess the required identification and desires the identification in order to vote; and

(5) Repeals the provision requiring a disabled or elderly person to be able to obtain a nondriver's license photo identification through a mobile processing system operated by the Department of Revenue.

If any portion of the bill is held invalid for any reason, the entire bill will be invalidated.

The bill will become effective upon voter approval of a constitutional amendment that authorizes the General Assembly to require the photo identification, advance voting, and voter registration requirements by general law.