

HCS HB 1857 -- ELECTIONS

SPONSOR: Shaul (113)

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass with HCS" by the Standing Committee on Elections and Elected Officials by a vote of 9 to 1. Voted "Do Pass" by the Rules- Administrative Oversight Committee by a vote of 10 to 3.

This bill modifies laws relating to elections. In its main provisions, the bill:

- (1) Applies the rules in Chapter 115, RSMo, to all public elections if there is no more specific statute;
- (2) Makes technical changes to references and names;
- (3) Requires the state to pay proportional costs for all types of elections under Sections 115.063 and 115.065. Allows rental of certain voting machines not purchased with federal funds;
- (4) Sets rules for state and political subdivision payment of election costs to local election authorities. The state will pay costs by the seventh Tuesday prior to the election and special districts and political subdivisions will submit estimates by the fifth Tuesday prior to the election and pay costs within two weeks of the estimate. Rules for reimbursement are also specified in the bill;
- (5) Prohibits removal of candidate names or ballot issues less than eight weeks prior to an election for any reason and sets candidate withdrawal limits at eight weeks prior to the election under Section 115.127;
- (6) Specifies that voter registration complaints may be filed with the Election Division within the Secretary of State's Office;
- (7) Changes the absentee ballot deadline from one week to two weeks prior to an election;
- (8) Prohibits independent parties or candidates from submitting candidates for vacancies in state representative or state senate special elections after the 21st day after the Governor issues a writ of election to fill the vacancy;
- (9) Sets uniform time period of 10th Tuesday prior to an election for specified rules on vacancies under Sections 115.361 and 115.363; and

(10) Requires election authorities to keep specified ballot envelopes and ballot applications and includes the Secretary of State's office in permissible entities that can access such materials during an investigation.

The bill has an effective date of November 7, 2018, except that it also has a delayed effective date of January 1, 2019, for certain sections involving election costs.

PROPOSERS: Supporters say that the bill will make many technical changes to election law favored by local election authorities and the office of the Secretary of State. The bill should allow military members to vote absentee in special elections.

Testifying for the bill were Representative Shaul and Missouri Secretary of State Office.

OPPOSERS: There was no opposition voiced to the committee.

OTHERS: Others testifying on the bill say the bill makes many necessary changes and the portion on sharing election costs is essential for discussion and resolution in the near future.

Testifying on the bill was the Missouri Association of County Clerks and Election Authorities.